Title: A comparative analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Polish and English Facebook chats

Author: Mateusz Arkadiusz Ostalak


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UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY
INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES AND VOCABULARY IN POLISH AND ENGLISH FACEBOOK CHATS

The doctoral thesis was written under the supervisor of prof. dr hab. Rafał Molencki

Auxiliary supervisor: dr Iwona Dronia

SOSNOWIEC 2019
Mateusz Arkadiusz Ostalak

ANALIZA PORÓWNAWCZA POLSKICH I ANGIELSKICH STRUKTUR GRAMATYCZNYCH I SŁOWNICTWA W ROZMOWACH INTERNETOWYCH NA PORTALU SPOŁECZNOŚCIOWYM FACEBOOK

Rozprawa doktorska
napisana pod kierunkiem prof. dr hab. Rafała Molenckiego
Promotor pomocniczy: dr Iwona Dronia

SOSNOWIEC 2019
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Autor pracy doktorskiej pt.:

“A comparative analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Polish and English Facebook chats”

"Analiza porównawcza polskich i angielskich struktur gramatycznych i słownictwa w rozmowach internetowych na portalu społecznościowym Facebook"

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¹ Uwzględniając merytoryczny wkład promotora (w ramach prowadzonego seminarium doktoranckiego)
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to my supervisor prof. dr hab. Rafał Molencki, whose valuable criticism, insights and suggestions served as a guideline throughout the planning and development of this dissertation. I am much obliged to him for all the remarkable comments and ideas.

My appreciation is also due to my auxiliary supervisor dr Iwona Dronia who always had time to discuss some matters with me, suggest what else should be included, offer some additional books and sources and motivate me in writing. I am also grateful to her for her interest in my research.

Special thanks are also due to my colleague, mgr Anna Stwora, for her kind interest in my work, constant words of encouragement, enabling me to think positively, cheering me up, and offering help.

Finally, it would be unthinkable to accomplish this study without the patience and understanding I received from my family. Thank you!
**ABBREVIATIONS**

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<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>Bulletin Board Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMC</td>
<td>Computer-mediated Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICQ</td>
<td>I Seek You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Sender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWW</td>
<td>World WideWeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Personal computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Face-threatening act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>exempli gratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL</td>
<td>Average Sentence Length</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHW</td>
<td>Percent Hard Words</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is concerned with a comparative analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Polish and English Facebook chats. The thesis is divided into eight chapters.

Chapter I is an introduction to social networks. It starts with the theoretical framework connected with the emergence of information technology and its definitions suggested by some scholars (e.g. Łosko 2006, Markham 2005). In order to have a general outlook on all social media which are ubiquitous now, it is necessary to provide a brief history of the Internet, from times when only a few people had access to it, to our present times when almost everyone can use it. One can find out more about the general perception of social media. Not only are we provided with their definitions, but also with the main functions. For example, for Fabjaniak-Czerniak (2012) social media have mostly communicative functions and they aim to inform everyone about changes which are noticeable around us whilst for Ryan (2011) social media help us to maintain successful dialogues between interlocutors. Malecki (2008), on the other hand, comes to the conclusion that social media create a virtual world which is much better for people since it reflects some features from our real world.

We approve all these views presented by various scholars on the grounds that they find their practical implications in the section which is devoted to research analysis.

Chapter I also includes the history of social networks. It starts with the very first social websites which were popular abroad to those which became more and more popular in Poland. One can find out more about their background and ups and downs. The biggest attention is paid to Facebook which functions as the main source of language material in this dissertation. We also present a modern definition of new media seen from two perspectives – the beneficial one, which shows that thanks to all social websites we are becoming more active, talkative, and communicative in comparison to what was many years ago, and the destructive one, which illustrates that spending too much time in the virtual world, which is full of illusion and blitheness, makes us more limited. Nevertheless, if it had not been for the old media, new media would not have appeared and would not exist in the form which we have nowadays. There is also a section devoted to the stages of new media’s evolution where one can read very detailed descriptions of each phase and get to know what ‘mediamorphosis’ is. The most
characteristic features of new media are pointed out in a logical sequence together with more detailed explanations. In order to maintain a successful communication with interlocutors, one has to know what social media communication process is. A more advanced explanation of this phenomenon is based on the model which is included in this part of the chapter together with some other relationships which may appear between particular elements.

Chapter II opens with a description of language seen from three perspectives: linguistic, sociological, and cultural. Each of them shows us that language cannot function on its own and it always consists of interrelated elements which contribute to its functioning in everyday communication. Three approaches such as behaviorism, structuralism, and generativism are also presented in this chapter and they function as the background needed to show and explain how language was perceived and modified over the years. This chapter also includes descriptions of various types of correlations between senders and viewers, and diversified models of communication such as Shannon or Jakobson’s model of communication. Taking into consideration the fact that some norms and principles have changed in our society, we have also decided to pay attention to Chester’s Hierarchy of Communication Needs which illustrates some differences between generation X and Y.

In the further part of this chapter, one can find out more information about differences between sociolinguistics which aims at the role of language in society, and sociology of language which enhances the position and the role of society over language itself. We also discuss briefly some different variations of constant language developments such as dialects, sociolects, idiolects, registers, jargons, and even slangs. The next section is quite complex and starts with a very general description of written texts which is only a prelude to latter discussions about differences and similarities between spoken and written texts included various functions and perspectives. Undoubtedly, Crystal (2006), who is a proponent of Internet linguistics, also contributed to the development of the language of the Internet. Some other views concerning the role of written and spoken forms together with the comparison of primarily written texts which became spoken ones and the other way round are presented by various scholars (e.g. Wilkoń 2000, Labocha 2004, Ricoeur 1989, Wierzbicka 1968, etc.)

Chapter III starts with the discussion of a relatively new phenomenon which has gained its popularity over the years – computer-mediated communication. Apart from its definition and description, one can find out more about its advantages and
disadvantages presented by some famous scholars (e.g. Grzenia 2006, Zając 2007, Belmore 1996, Bargh 2002, etc). Particular attention is focused on the comparison of computer-mediated communication with face-to-face conversations. The characteristics of the language of the Internet considered from various points and suggested by some famous scholars (e.g. Grzenia 2004, Castels 2003, Jagodziński 2015, Golus 2004, etc) are presented here as well. In the following section, one can become familiar with another phenomenon called Netspeak, which is the result of the combination of elements of written forms together with some spoken features typical of everyday conversations. Thus, not only is this form of the language described here, but also compared with face-to-face conversations in order to distinguish the most significant differences and similarities. Following the idea of focusing on Netspeak, prosody and paralanguage are described here as well. Thanks to this we are able to notice what kinds of techniques allow us to express our spoken, inner thoughts by means of writing.

One cannot forget about the language of emotions which will be analyzed in the chapter devoted to research analysis. For this reason, a brief description of the source of emotions is provided together with some theories of emotions (e.g. physiological, cognitive theories of emotions) which help us to understand why we react in various ways depending on the situation and how emotions are perceived in written forms such as comments, posts, and messages. We also should pay some thought to the role of emoticons and their varieties (e.g. emojis, stickers). This chapter also includes a brief description of clipping and acronyms which also will be the subject of the analysis in the chapter connected with research analysis. Owing to the fact that the main aim of this chapter is to focus on Netspeak and its features, it is crucial to discuss briefly speech acts (John Searle and J. L. Austin).

Taking into account that users of various characters and personalities can become our potential interlocutors, it is also important to focus on positive and negative politeness as well as face-threatening acts which can appear in discussions on various social media. Unfortunately, ‘face’ can be lost very easily if we are not careful enough in a conversation with the second person. Finally, this chapter ends with the description of a potential social media user, and various types of competence which are present during conversations: linguistic, intercultural and media. The first type concerns the division of language competence into competence and performance as well as sociolinguistics matters. The second type of competence is connected with social norms and rules. Gricean maxims’ are described here as well. Finally, the last type of
competence is linked with creating an image of a potential media receiver taking into consideration some typical features which are attributed to such a receiver.

Chapter IV is devoted to methodology and the empirical part of this dissertation. It starts with an outlook on two research tools used in this thesis: a questionnaire study and a corpus analysis. The views of some famous scholars concerning descriptions and typical features of these tools are included here (e.g. Wilczyńska 2010, Soloma 2002, Ruane 2005, Meyer 2004, Widdowson 2004). There are also some tips how to prepare a well-thought questionnaire study and how it should be conducted in the most successful way. In the further part, one can get familiar with the main aims of this study and research questions. The main aims and research questions are precise and well-thought-out so that the analysis of them could provide us with reliable and informative results. This chapter ends with the description of the research tools used in this dissertation together with the process of conducting them.

Chapter V aims at analyzing and comparing the results obtained from the surveys of the Polish and the American respondents who took part in this research. In this chapter, we focus on similarities and differences in the answers provided by both groups of the respondents. The data are gathered and presented in the form of tables and charts (quantitative analysis) together with very detailed descriptions (qualitative analysis).

Chapter VI includes a detailed corpus analysis, to be more specific, the analysis of grammatical and lexical structures which appear in various posts, comments and messages written by the Poles and the Americans on Facebook. The topics are divided into two categories: informal one (including social chit-chats, Christmas and summer holidays themes) and more formal ones (elections and breaking news themes). The results are collected and presented in the form of tables. Each table contains the frequency of grammatical and lexical structures which are noticeable in the analyzed posts and the comments. Additionally, the most significant extracts of these comments and posts are included in the analysis to show certain examples of the above mentioned structures and expressions, and to highlight similarities and differences in the answers provided by the Poles and the Americans. Naturally, there are also several descriptions which show the use of particular expressions, phrases, and structures in both languages.

Chapter VII is devoted to the recapitulation of research results. In this chapter, one can find out conclusions concerning those research questions which had been formulated in chapter IV.

Chapter VIII includes conclusion remarks.
CHAPTER I

SOCIAL NETWORKS – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

The present chapter aims to describe and compare the functioning of social networks. Section 1.2. is dedicated to the description of information technology and a brief history of the Internet. In section 1.3. one can find out various definitions of social media provided by some famous scholars such as McLuhan (2004) or Skowronek (2014). Section 1.4. will cover the history of social media, their description, development, occurrence, and functions. In section 1.5. the emphasis is laid on similarities and differences between old and new media. In particular, stages of new media’s evolution are described here together with some unique features which are attributed to new media. Moreover, the process of communication is illustrated in section 1.6.

1.2 The emergence of information technology and the history of the Internet

Current social media would not exist without information technology and the Internet which gave birth to the appearance of all social websites which are so widespread nowadays. Łosko (2006: 15) believes that with the advent of the computer, information technology began to develop as a new scientific and technical field. IT deals with various methods of representation, storage, and transmission of information. Due to the fact that nowadays modern technology has a crucial importance in our society, it is believed that the end of the twentieth century is perceived as the era of information and technology. In fact, the term ‘information technology’ can be defined as a combination of IT and its application with related technologies such as information, computers, and communication.
According to Markham (2005: 261), information technology is seen as a set of modern equipment that can be used in the process of communication. Thus, it involves:

- some elements of information technology,
- social communication through media,
- social and ethical aspects of human activities in the field of information technology,
- the process of information analysis and synthesis,
- the usage of aspects and methods of science,
- security systems and basa.

Education which is seen as a crucial factor in the development of information society should be considered as one of the most important investments for the future. One should create more opportunities both for students and teachers to gain more knowledge and experience which can help them to live in a digital century. Additionally, teachers’ skills should be improved especially when it comes to the usage of modern tools in the classroom. It is common knowledge that traditional blackboards are replaced by interactive boards and more and more classrooms are equipped with devices which are supposed to facilitate the process of learning (Lomborg 2012).

Łosko (2006: 46) states that the Internet or a Global Computer Network is a multifunctional network of interconnected computers. This connection enables people to provide and deliver services in different parts of the world. It is also a place where one can conduct research and take part in various debates and discussions. Naturally, one cannot forget about other applications (messengers, chats), softwares, and other special devices (microphones, cameras) which enable us to extend the range of transmission and receiving information. All these factors make that the Internet is useful in many branches of everyday life and it would be difficult to imagine functioning without its presence.

Teeler and Gray (2000: 2) claim that the history of the Internet started in the 1960s in the United States where the bases for its working were developed. The first computer networks were designed for military purposes and their main function was to facilitate communication over long distances. In 1969 ARPAnet – a defence department network was established and the Internet became a part of it. Later on, it was used mainly for scientific and educational purposes. At the very beginning, just two computers were
connected with each other and thanks to that sending messages was possible. However, over time, more and more computers were joined so that both communication and sending messages became easier and more accessible. The Internet started to develop on a large scale in 1973 when ARPAnet was linked with the United Kingdom and Norway. From that moment, most countries in Northern Europe started to extend access to that Net. Until the 1980s, countries such as Japan, Canada, Germany, China, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, and even Puerto Rico established connection with the Net. Not only did the European countries obtain access to the Internet, but also countries from Africa and other continents. Tunisia turned out to be the first African country that succeeded in joining the Internet in the early 1990s. Antarctica was the last continent that obtained access to the Internet in 1992.

When it comes to the history of the Internet in Poland, it must be stated that the first Internet connection with Western countries was possible thanks to the network called ‘Fidonet’ initiated by Jacek Szelożynski in 1987. Then, in 1990 the first e-mail was sent to Poland and 1991 is considered to be the beginning of the Internet in Poland. Nowadays, access to the Internet is nearly everywhere, however, sometimes using it might be either limited or too expensive. Due to the fact that the history of the Internet took place in the United States of America, both communication and other operations through the Internet are in the English language. Until today, it is the most common and popular language which seems to be a perfect way for English language teaching (Hofmokl, 2009: 66).

1.3 Definitions of social media

According to Fabjaniak-Czerniak (2012: 183), in order to define the term ‘social media’, it is necessary to consider both of the words which are included in this term: ‘social’ and ‘media’. When we hear the word ‘media’, we easily associate it with some traditional channels of conveying messages through the radio or by means of using television. However, it also refers to some other tools which are supposed to deliver some news to us such as the press, radio and television signals, and even photos. It can be stated that nowadays media help us to meet new people and improve good relations between particular members of society. A fast-growing modern technology provides us with all necessary tools which we need to start and maintain dialogues with other
interlocutors. This dialogue is the most crucial feature which makes a distinction between old and new media and everyone can take part in maintaining it, regardless of their age, social status or education.

Ryan (2011: 100) provides us with the following definition of social media: “These are all behaviors and actions performed by the members of society who gather together on line in order to exchange news, information, comments, photos, and even knowledge. Dialogue which is the main representative feature of new social media enables them to exchange information by means of photos and videos.” It can be noticeable that both scholars pay attention to the role of dialogues in maintaining successful relations between various users.

Malecki (2008: 5) suggests another definition which is based on observations seen from a totally different perspective. He believes that all social media, which developed so fast, are successful due to the creativity of their authors who were able to adjust them to people’s needs and behaviors. A very careful and precise observation in some local environments resulted in creating new social media which helped people to discover a new world. This new world is totally different from the one in which we live. It is called ‘a virtual world’ and it tries to reflect some features from our real world. This new world is more attractive owing to the fact that people can stay anonymous there. For many people this anonymity is favorable for being more open-minded and self-confident. Even making new friends sometimes seems to be impossible for those who are shy. There is one more important feature which is crucial for Malecki (2008: 6)- we need to set certain social frameworks so that the users of these social media could feel comfortable enough and develop themselves.

Kita (2016: 116) perceives the notion of social media from more linguistics perspective. She claims that for an average user of the Internet, social media can be characterized as the main channel of conveying messages. However, rarely are people aware of the fact that social media are the main sources of influence on our attitude towards languages and changes within them. This is the reason why in her opinion social media can be defined as social and intellectual environment created by the Internet where people can observe differences in the use of various languages, their similarities, differences, and influence on social relations.

Fabjaniak-Czerniak (2012: 178) states that new social media influence our senses. According to her viewpoint, books have an impact on our sight and the radio on our hearing. Furthermore, she also points out the division of social media into hot and cold
ones. Hot social media are those which do not require taking an active part in the process of receiving information. Radio, films, books, or the alphabet can be classified to the category of hot media due to the fact that they are full of all necessary news and information; consequently, people do not have to seek for more. Cold social media have a totally different impact on us and our way of thinking. Dialogues, television, phone conversations do not convey too much information so that they automatically force other users to be engaged in the process of receiving feedback.

Fricker et al (2002:351) provide us with another definition of social media which differs a great deal from the ones mentioned before. They claim that social media do not reflect reality, they just modify it. According to social constructionism, social media create their own reality called ‘media reality’ which functions on its own. These media modify some visions of reality which is shaped by culture and to some degree is embedded in human minds. Moreover, Fricker et al (2002: 351) state that each society can be characterized by cultural common ground which consists of various norms and values. All of them are shared and obeyed by members of society and just some of them are chosen and converted into their own ideologies. Thus, particular social groups create their own beliefs and norms based on cultural common ground.

1.4 The history of social media

Before we consider various types of social media and their roles in our recent times, it is important to mention their history which has developed over the years. Miotk (2013: 15) is of the opinion that social media appeared as the consequence of the development of modern technology. First of all, modern and capacious Internet connections enabled people to send bigger files such as films, audio records, and even photos. Second of all, social media are also the product of the Internet which has been growing rapidly recently. Not so many years ago, the Internet was used only by scholars and white-collar workers who had higher education. However, later on social hierarchy has changed and nowadays almost everyone is able to use the Internet in all possible places. These phenomena initiated the process of developing more and more websites which became very popular in the USA. People were able to create their own websites, exchange their content with other users, create blogs, chat rooms, and even special programs for recording short and long videos. This trend was called ‘Web 2.0’ or ‘User
The range of this trend was so broad that it also appeared in Poland in 2004. The term ‘social media’ was translated as ‘nowe media’ and ‘media społecznościowe.’ The history of social media is vividly illustrated in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The period of time</th>
<th>The development of social media</th>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Gadu-Gadu – the most famous Polish communicator. In 2012, 6 millions of people were using it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Fotka.pl – a kind of social network where users can post photos and comment them. At the same time, the development of Wikipedia can be observed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The following social media are becoming more and more popular: LinkedIn, MySpace, Del.icio.us, Last.fm, and network game Second Life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Another social network named ‘Grono’ is gaining its popularity in Poland. Initially, not everyone could be a part of this community. A free entrance was possible only by receiving a formal invitation. At the same time, one can observe the development of other social networks such</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>This year is the heyday of YouTube – the first social network where people can upload videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Two social networks are developing at the same time: Twitter in the USA and Nk.pl in Poland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>The heyday of the Polish version of Facebook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The development of Pinterest and Google Buzz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>The Polish version of Twitter and Google+ debuted in Poland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>The fall of “Grono” social network.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: The history of social media (Miotk, 2016: 13).
accepting Friend requests, there was nothing more to do and people were not willing to meet strangers from unknown areas or other countries.

From 1997 to 2001, a great number of social networks such as AsianAvenue, BlackPlanet or MiGente allowed people to create their own profiles, add photos, and make contacts with other people. In 2001, a social network called Ryze.com was launched. It was the first site which helped people to start and develop their business. It was introduced to people who were members of big companies, entrepreneurs, investors, and some other businessmen. Shortly after it, other social networks such as Tribe.net, LinkedIn, and Friendster were created. The founders of these sites believed that their mutual cooperation was possible without competing (Wallace, 2001: 48).

Year 2002 was the time when Friendster was launched as a social complement to Ryze. It was another site which enabled people to create accounts and share photos; however, the emphasis was put on dating. Very soon it became popular among three groups of adopters such as bloggers who published their comments and posts there, attendees of the Burning Man arts festival, and gay men. Unfortunately, too rapid growth of this social network caused that services and databases could not easily adjust to upgrade changes and innovations which constantly appeared. This is the reason why systems often crashed and the users of this site made complaints to the main administrators. Furthermore, strict restrictions of this website prevented people from seeing friends of their friends; consequently, they had to add some strangers in order to expand their reach. The process of collecting friends was getting bigger and bigger and some people started to create fake accounts in order to collect as many friends as possible. For example, only by creating a fake account of University were they able to find some old friends or people who they would like to have in their friends lists. Due to some technical problems and social collisions many users decided to delete their accounts and leave this website (Boler, 2008: 112).

MySpace was another social website which gained its popularity in 2003 when Friendster was not used anymore. The main idea of MySpace was to encourage Friendster users to join this new website. Indie-rock band was the first group who showed their willingness for joining MySpace owing to the fact that they were expelled from Friendster for failing to comply with some rules and regulations. At the very beginning, MySpace did not have any purposes to link their website with some bands; however, the moment these Indie-rock bands started to promote MySpace through advertisements and leaflets, they changed their minds and decided to give such bands a
chance. Obviously, these bands were not the only source, but this mutual relationship between bands and their fans was extremely important in developing this website. It appeared to be beneficial for both sides: bands wanted to contact new fans and fans wanted to promote their favorite bands. What is more important, MySpace did not introduce any restrictions and rules. In 2004, many teenagers from different parts of the world joined MySpace because they wanted to be in contact with their favorite bands. In fact, one can distinguish three various groups which decided to join MySpace: musicians/artists, teenagers, and post-college urban people. In July 2005, MySpace was purchased for $580 million. Unfortunately, some rumors concerning consumer affairs and sexual interactions spread so quickly that MySpace lost its popularity and soon became infamous (Loader et al., 2012: 89).

Some thought should be given to another social website which is close to our heart since it functions as the source of the language material needed for conducting necessary research for this dissertation. Facebook which unexpectedly became the most famous and prestigious website was launched on February 4, 2004. This social network was supposed to function as a service supporting only college networks. Mark Zuckerberg who was the student of Harvard College decided to create a social network which could make people’s lives easier. Its name comes from students’ directories called ‘face books’ which included photos and some basic information about students. Initially, Facebook was popular only among those who were the members of Harvard College and its primary name was ‘TheFacebook’. To be a user of this service, students were obliged to possess a hardvard.edu email address. Within two weeks, more than 2/3 of students became members of this on-line social network. It was the main reason why Mark Zuckerberg decided to encourage other schools and universities to use it on a larger scale. The moment Facebook began supporting other schools and universities, their students were also required to log in by means of email addresses which were strictly connected with their places of studying. Only by implementing such a requirement could the users of Facebook be sure about their privacy and security.

In September 2005, Facebook became so famous that high school students, workers of corporate networks, and eventually everyone were allowed to use it on a regular basis. The fact that a vast majority of people were able to use it, did not mean that access to it was so easy. Members of corporate networks were supposed to possess an appropriate .com address and high school students were obliged to have a permission from the school headmaster of administration. Nowadays, Facebook is so popular that
more than 2.2 billion active users are using it on a regular basis. In Poland, in 2018 more than 16.3 million people were using Facebook. However, it is crucial to mention about the division into Facebook which functions as a social network devoted to writing some comments, opinions, sending photos, and Facebook Messenger which is used mostly for talking to new people and friends. It is not necessary to log in on Facebook in order to talk to friends on Facebook Messenger and it is not obligatory to have someone in a friends’ list in order to talk to him or her. Nonetheless, it is compulsory to have an account to function in this community (Tereszkiewicz 2014). Facebook possesses some important goals and features:

- meeting new people and making friends,
- uploading photos and commenting on them,
- promoting important events and organizations,
- sharing some interesting information and posts with other users,
- talking to people,
- posting advertisements and announcements,
- playing on-line games,
- joining various groups.

Boyd (2008: 217) believes that taking into consideration the fact that these social websites became so popular, one may say about a global phenomenon which soon was present in other countries. Table 2 presents the names of other social networks which were created later on together with the place of their occurrence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The name of the social network</th>
<th>The place of its occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. MySpace</td>
<td>The USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Friendster</td>
<td>Pacific Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Orkut</td>
<td>India, Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mixi</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23
Taking into account definitions and the history of social media, it is crucial to pay attention to the term ‘new media’ or ‘nowe media’ which has been in use for many years. New media can be characterized by many factors such as mutual correlation, an easy access to the users who are both senders and recipients, interactivity, ubiquity, and openness. Undoubtedly, the Internet can be classified as new media due to some important reasons; however, it would be wise to consider whether these new media really differ a lot from old media which used to be so popular in the past. Due to enormous infinity and ubiquity, the Internet is glorified by everyone who wants to broaden their horizons and find new opportunities in life. Very often it is called ‘metamedium’ on the grounds that it is the base for other social networks which spread in a very short time. Sometimes it is called ‘macromedium’ because of its global size, the range of influence, and sending thousands of information within few seconds. Finally, it is also known as ‘multimedia’ which is the combination of these two terms (Szpunar 2013: 11).

It is important to notice how new media are perceived by different researchers, and how this perception differs from each other. Halavais (2012: 15) observes that new media can be compared to the art or religion due to the fact that both of them are
worshiped by society. He claims that we believe in everything what we find in web browsers and that everything what is included in Google and Wikipedia is indisputable and reliable. We are so trustworthy owing to the fact that new media satisfy our needs and thanks to them our life is easier. We do not have to buy newspapers or magazines in order to read news because the Internet provides us with all this information within few seconds. We do not need to switch on the radio in order to listen to some songs because the Internet offers us thousands of websites devoted to music channels. Finally, there is no need to go out to talk to our friends because by one click we can pass information to all the others. Davis (2002: 55) contends that with the advent of electricity, our minds became more free and we ourselves became more independent and unlimited. Previous media such as television or the radio enabled us to be informed about everything what was going on around and we were just passive recipients. Yet, everything changed when electricity together with cables allowed us for a mutual interaction with other people and we became more active respondents (Rogers 2003: 58).

Nevertheless, Jakubowicz (2011: 172) provides us with the results which show that 79% of respondents from various countries agree that an easy access to the Internet is treated as one of the most fundamental human rights just as the freedom of expression or access to all information. These results prove that both members of society and their ways of thinking are under the influence of modern technology which is ubiquitous nowadays. According to Korab (2010: 37), new media are perceived as ‘new’ due to the fact that they create idealistic, wonderful, and utopian world where everyone can feel as a totally new person, with new personalities and opportunities. A wide variety of social networks offering us entertainment enable us to forget about grey reality and everyday problems, and experience something new and innovative. It may be stated that technology shapes us and is shaped by us as well. It is us who decide how we are going to use it and how we are going to change its features and the form.

On the other hand, Diamond (2010: 69) argues that even if the Internet and new technology are perceived as an oracle, they may bring some negative consequences and a bad influence on society and its subsequent development. He reminds us that the development of the press made people’s life easier, but it also gave birth to centralized state and censorship. Similarly, we should look at the Internet which on the one hand gives us huge opportunities and chances for a better life, but on the other hand discourages us from facing a real life. Apart from all these features mentioned above which show us that new media can be called ‘new’, it is important to notice that new
media are treated as the extensions of old media which used to be so popular in the past (McLuhan 2004, 16). He claims that the development of new technology has a very evolutionary character and it does not appear out of sudden. It is a kind of a combination of features which were typical of old media just with some new elements which make them more innovatory. Krzysztofek (2006: 41) points out that we cannot be separated from old media when talking about new ones. We cannot forget about the past and create something totally new because very often new devices are presented as the new form of old ones. To be more precise, one can take into consideration current soap operas which are so popular nowadays. They are based on radio plays which draw inspiration from the novels and the poems which used to be popular in the 19th century. We are fully convinced by the arguments advanced by Diamond (2010) and Krzysztofek (2006) that modern technology and its influence on people and society are inevitable and they bring both positive and negative outcomes which shape our attitudes and ways of thinking.

1.5.1 Stages of new media’s evolution

Szpunar (2013: 18) claims that the development of new media is the consequence of the evolution of old media which started this process a long time ago. One can enumerate seven stages of new media’s evolution:

1. birth
2. penetration
3. growth
4. maturity
5. self-defence
6. adaptation
7. obsolescence

This process of the evolution of media is called ‘media constructivism’ due to the fact that it puts emphasis on the mutual interaction between new and old media. It is believed that new media can be a key to success on condition that old media do not bring the failure of this evolution. According to Fiut (2011: 68), it can be concluded
that this evolutionary model of mass media development can be compared to the biological cycle of life. It means that the end of one life is strictly connected with the birth of a new life or this old one will be continued in a totally different form. Similarly it can be explained within the category of mass media. With the advent of the telephone, the telegraph stopped being used on a regular basis; however, the radio gave birth to online radio stations which are now widespread. The Internet could not function without the invention of the computer. For this reason, this first stage of the evolution is called ‘birth’.

The second stage called ‘penetration’ is strictly connected with the emergence of new media on property market. During this stage, one can think either about their success or failure. It is important to mention that there are many factors which contribute to it. During heydays of new media, it is crucial for them to attract as many users as possible. To complete it, they must be easily available to the public. They also must be new and modern in order to show something which had not been known before. Innovative and practical implications, a widespread use, a proper design, and multifunctional purposes are keys to success. It is commonly believed that if a new device attracts around 16% of users, it will automatically move on to another stage, if not, it will fade away. In 1995, Bruce Sterling prepared a project entitled ‘Dead Media Project’ which aimed at collecting as many old and forgotten technologies as possible and till 2001 he managed to gather more than 600 instances which turned out to be unsuccessful during the stage of penetration. That is why, it is necessary to point out three smaller phases which are typical of this stage such as premature failure, long-standing stagnation or immediate success. These phases are under the influence of some internal factors (new technology and its functions) and external ones (willingness to use a new device in some particular situations and its perception by the rest of society) (Earl, 2011: 48).

The third stage of the evolution called ‘growth’ depends mostly on society and users. It is people who decide how practical or unpractical a new device is and where they can use it. Practicality, uniqueness and capability are the most important factors in this stage. It is also this moment when users may find some faults which should be either replaced with new ones or completely changed (Joyce, 2010: 68).

During the fourth stage called ‘maturity’ a new device achieves its high point which means that it is more and more popular on property market and it is relatively stable. It is also the time when people and users are satisfied with its functioning and they use it
as much as possible. Another stage called ‘self-defence’ is focused on competition between old and new media. During this stage, people notice that previously used devices and gadgets did not meet their expectations and as a result they are not needed anymore. For example, the computer became a threat for typewriters, but at the same time with the advent of the Internet, media such as the press, the radio, television were in danger (Newman, 2009: 69).

The stage called ‘adaptation’ helps old media to adjust to a new situation either by means of their functions which can be improved or by finding new, potential clients who will be interested in using them. Very often old media try to consolidate with new ones due to the fact that they would not be able to function on their own for a longer period of time. Here, discrepancies between old and new media are almost unnoticeable. Old media must cooperate with new ones if they want to survive and exist on property markets, whereas new media must base on old ones due to the fact that there are always some people who will be devoted to previously used devices (Cross & Parker, 2004: 111).

The last stage of this evolution is called ‘obsolescence’. During this stage, one can notice that old media are not able to adjust to changes and they slowly disappear. Another situation when old media become useless is when a new device appears and it is more practical, functional, and useful than the previous one. Napoli (1998: 317) states that old media can use some strategies which will help them to survive difficult conditions caused by the appearance of new technology. One can enumerate three strategies such as self-satisfaction, endurance, and diversity.

Self-satisfaction is present in the situation when the creator of the particular device is content with its current condition and functioning. He does not see any negative aspects, he is not willing to introduce some changes which could allow for some development and improvements. Such a situation may lead to negative consequences such as stagnation, tiredness, boredom, monotony, regress, and finally extinction. Very often creators do not to use any innovative methods owing to the fact that they are afraid that something may go wrong or they simply believe that old and traditional methods of using them are tested and reliable.

Endurance, in this context, is understood as ignoring new entrants and not paying attention to their new devices. Not being aware of such a way of thinking, creators try to persuade other customers that despite the fact that their devices are old, they are still popular on property market. In order to prove it, they provide clients with some
statistics concerning viewership or reading. Unfortunately, the last strategy called ‘diversity’ is not always as helpful as one could think. One can take into consideration a very famous social network called ‘nasza-klasa.pl’ which was founded in 2006. This social network used to be popular for many years; however, later on step by step it was losing its appeal with the advent of Facebook. Although the creators of ‘nasza-klasa.pl’ were using various methods and strategies to come up to Facebook, they were not able to meet people’s expectations. Nowadays, it is stated that ‘nasza-klasa.pl’ is in its last stage called ‘obsolescence’ due to the fact that it still exists, but not many people use it. There are many dead accounts which spell its inevitable end.

Fidler (1997: 22) provides us with a new conception called ‘mediamorphosis’. He explains that media transformations are caused by factors such as human needs, time pressure, competition, social and technological changes. He claims that mediamorphosis is strictly connected with coexistence of both old and new media which belong to the same group and to some degree they cooperate with each other. Moreover, he mentions that we should not look at media as two totally different systems which compete with each other, but as two subsystems which have the same aim: to attract as many customers as possible and achieve long-distanced goals such as popularity or practical implications. Taking into consideration his way of thinking, one can enumerate six stages of the process called ‘mediamorphosis’. Table 3 illustrates them.

| The name of the stage          | Descriptions                                                                                                                                                                                                
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coexistence</td>
<td>During this stage all media (both old and new ones) are present on property market and they exist on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metamorphosis</td>
<td>It is the moment when new media appear and they are based on old ones. Celiński (2009: 13) states that the moment new media are born, they are forced to share some features of old media which used to be useful in the past. For instance, television owes its success to the radio and a film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread of dominant features</td>
<td>During this stage, new media which are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
becoming more and more popular use strong and dominant features of old media in order to introduce new elements and finally create something totally new and innovative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survival</th>
<th>Old media are forced to introduce some changes and implement some new elements in order to survive this difficult period when new media appear.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The phase of possibilities and needs</td>
<td>It is the moment when one should realize that new media are created for specific reasons. Sometimes it happens because of some social changes, sometimes because of technological breakthrough and occasionally under the influence of culture and traditions which shape our way of thinking and a general outlook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed acceptance</td>
<td>During this stage, we are trying to get used to new devices even if it is not easy and fast process owing to the fact that some elements from previous media are strongly embedded in our mind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Six stages of mediamorphosis (Fidler, 1997: 30).

Saffo (1992: 18) goes straight to the heart of the matter when he states that new media need 30 years in order to be fully developed and fulfilled. The first ten years are characterized as the period of enjoyment, enthusiasm, and general satisfaction over capabilities of new media. The second decade may be described as the moment when new media try to do their best to be well-perceived by potential customers and to satisfy their needs and expectations. Finally, the last decade is the moment of stabilization and standardization. The conception of mediamorphosis was modified by Gillmor (2004, 15). He enumerated four stages of the development of mediamorphosis. He believes that the printing press was the first stage of this cycle. Thanks to it, words which were
spoken orally, finally could be used in written forms. During the next stage, by means of using the telegraph people were able to send long-distanced messages to others. Direct messages started to be delivered to everyone thanks to the radio and television which became popular in the third stage. Finally, the Internet made that all of these functions were gathered all together.

A totally different conception was presented by Sperlich (2011: 133). He came to the conclusion that there were four stages which differed a lot from the ones described by Fidler (1997) or Gillmor (2004). He ironically talks about the division suggested by these two scholars. For him, the first stage called ‘graphic’ was associated with the emergence of the script, ink and the papyrus. The second stage ‘reprographics’ was characterized by the appearance of the printing press invented by Gutenberg. The third one ‘chemical-mechanical’ was the time when the photography, the film and the sound became popular. Finally, during the last stage digitization was present everywhere and it caused that all new technologies became even more popular than they used to be.

It also needs to be noted that one can distinguish some models of the development of media. Among them, Merill and Lewenstein (1971: 45) implemented the model which consists of three groups of recipients: elite, popular, and specialists. They believe that the most privileged group which has access to new media is elite. They decide about practicality and functionality of new media as well as about their advantages and disadvantages. Later on, new media become available for a larger group of people who can use them for their own purposes. Finally, a group of specialists such as engineers, technicians, IT specialists can verify their practical use. A slightly different model is suggested by Shaw (1991:121). He introduced the model of new media which is based on the metaphor of society. In this model, one can distinguish young people (teenagers) who use new media for entertainment (funny films, games), adults who need new technology for more practical purposes (looking for a job, advertisements, announcements), and elderly people who use new media in their free time (watching a good movie). Yet, another model of new media development was suggested by Rogers (2003: 58) who stated that the development of new media was strictly connected with their adaptation in society.
Knowledge is perceived as the most crucial element of new media development due to the fact that people become more and more aware of the existence of a new device and they learn how it works. During this stage, potential customers find out advantages and disadvantages of new technology. Later on, users form their own opinions which lead to decision making process. A new device can be either accepted by society or rejected. In the situation, when a new device earns approval, it can be used in some practical situations. During the final stage called ‘confirmation’ people judge the effectiveness of a new product on property market.

**1.5.2 Characteristics of new media**

After discussing the term ‘new media’, their classification, and various models, it is important to focus on some of their features. New media differ from old ones due to their practicality and innovation. They introduce new elements which improve their functioning. McQuail (2007: 156) enumerates some important features of new media:

1. speed
2. interactivity
3. completeness
4. sociability
5. diversity
6. autonomy
7. entertainment
8. privacy
9. personalization
One of the most important features provided by McQuail (2007: 156) is speed. When talking about speed, we have in mind the amount of time between sending a message and receiving it. The shorter this period is, the more profitable these media become. The notion of speed is on a par with interactivity which also plays a very important role in the functioning of new media. Interactivity is understood as the possibility for communicating and giving feedback for the message at the same time. However, it is important to notice that among all those new media, there are some of them which are highly-interactive and others which may cause some delays in giving back the answer.

This division stems from two types of communication: synchronous and asynchronous. A synchronous communication is characterized by maximum speed, an immediate feedback, and a high level of interactivity. This type of communication is very similar to face-to-face communications. Talking on Facebook or in other chat groups are examples of a synchronous communication. Electronic mails, blogs, and forums can be defined as an asynchronous communication due to the fact that we are not able to receive an immediate feedback when using them (Baym et al. 2009: 67). When we send an e-mail, some time is needed to receive an answer. When posting a comment or a message on some forums, we also have to observe whether someone has already answered and how much time he needed to do this. In the case of an asynchronous communication, the notion of emotionality in conveying these types of messages is quite ambiguous. Using acronyms, emoticons or capital letters function as indicators of our real feelings and emotions which we possess at the particular moment (Szpunar 2008: 36).

The idea of interactivity was suggested by Kiousis (2001: 157). He explains that new media can be interactive in the situation when they activate our senses. The more we have to focus on such a device, the more interactive it is. In his opinion, the radio is the least interactive device due to the fact that we do not have to focus completely on it. At the same time we can listen to some radio programs and do some other activities such as cooking or washing. Television is considered to be more interactive on the grounds that we need to pay attention to what we are watching if we want to understand the plot or the context. However, in his estimation, PowerPoint presentations require the biggest attention and affect our senses the most. Recently, such presentations have became so popular that almost everyone uses them during lessons, lectures or important conference meetings. They are profitable owing to the fact that one can include almost everything on slides, from texts, pictures to some charts, graphs, and even videos. That
is why, during the performance where PowerPoint presentation is present not only can we see some information on slides and listen to the person who is speaking about it, but we also can take an active part in the conversation and ask some questions, which seem to be interesting for us. Such an active engagement leads to the growth of interactivity which is crucial when talking about the effectiveness of new media.

As stated by Lister et al (2009: 34) interactivity means making good choices. We live in the decade where people constantly broaden their horizons and gain new experience. It is strictly connected with the fact that we follow all changes and try to adjust to them easily. Thanks to this, we are more aware what is beneficial for us and what is not. For this reason, we are not passive consumers anymore and we are able to take into consideration all pros and cons before making the final choice. We decide whether the advertisement which we encounter appeals to our senses or not. We also make a decision about giving either a positive or negative feedback for some comments or posts which we happen to read. However, apart from considering good and bad choices, one can also give feedback to what he or she encounters. This kind of interactivity is called ‘registration interactivity’. It gives us the opportunity to express our opinion or make a comment connected with the text offered by new media.

Guiller and Durndell (2007: 2250) state that hypertextuality is another feature which distinguishes new media from old ones. The prefix ‘hyper’ comes from Greek and it means ‘over’, ‘above’. Thus, the notion of hypertextuality refers to the text which is full of links to other websites containing some additional information connected with the main text. It is stated that we can look at the idea of hypertextuality from two historical perspectives. The first one refers to the theory of literature and culture from different periods of time. It is wise to notice that any paintings or masterpieces had to base on some other drawings which were a kind of inspiration and encouragement. Only by being inspired by some other pieces of work, were they perceived as famous and admirable. Similarly, texts which are found nowadays on some social networks are fruitful, profitable, and understandable only if they contain some references which come from outside the primary text. Annotations, indexes, glossaries, and even bibliographies may function as examples of hypertexts due to the fact that they refer users to some additional sources which may be helpful during reading. The second historical perspective was inspired by the development of language, which became so popular in all social websites. That is why, according to this belief, everything what one can find in audio and visual aids can be interpreted as hypertext (Loewe 2006: 97).
The diversity of media and completeness are another two factors of a great importance. It is stated that new media should appeal to all our senses: vision, auditory, and vestibular. Such media should allow us to take part in both verbal and non-verbal communication. Only by possessing such features can new media be diversified. There are few electronic devices which combine all the features mentioned above. Among them one can enumerate Skype, Gadu-Gadu or any others communicators which have access to the microphone and the web camera. These gadgets give us the possibility to see and hear our interlocutor at the same time. This convenience makes that our conversation is very similar to face-to-face communications. Apart from the features of verbal communication (words), we can also use some elements of non-verbal communication (mimics, gestures, face expressions, an eye contact) which are extremely helpful in maintaining a good conversation (Markham 2004: 20).

New media, in comparison to old ones, allow us to be more sociable and at the same time stay private in few aspects of our life (Taras 2014: 75). In the past, people did not have too many opportunities for making new friends. Technology was not as developed as it is nowadays, access to the Internet was very limited and not everyone could use it for free. There were not so many devices which allowed people to develop their social life. Times have changed and we have entered a new era of technology. This breakthrough led to the situation that nowadays we do not have to leave our house to be in touch with people and at the same time stay private. Martens (2012: 21) presents Facebook as an classic example of such a situation. It is a social website which allows us to meet hundreds of people around the world and at the same time not reveal all information from our life. Choosing proper settings makes that we can hide information concerning our age, education or even our hometown. The degree of privacy depends on us and our own preferences (Markham, 2012: 52).

Nowadays more and more people crave for another two features of new media such as entertainment and personalization. McQuail (2007: 157) agrees that times have changed and people are no longer satisfied with monotony and uniformity. It is in their nature to show off, boast about their achievements and successes, and be independent in their decisions. Only by being familiar with new media and using them on a regular basis are they able to reach their goals. The word ‘entertainment’ is strongly embedded in our everyday routines and habits. It is enough to open YouTube to listen to new songs or watch some funny programs. The moment we log in on Facebook, we see hundreds of advertisements encouraging us to play various games or join some groups.
Thanks to all these functions, we have access to all facilities which did not exist in the past. Listening to the radio or watching TV provided us with basic news and information without serving fun and entertainment (Niewiadomska 2011, 17).

Not only can we benefit from entertainment, but we also can make our person more popular in the net. Thanks to Facebook we can create our own profile and make it as personal as possible by adding more photos and videos. We can publish some news from our life and collect as many comments and likes as possible. Additionally, Instagram allows us to observe our followers and other people who want to make contact with us. These are the reasons why new media differ so much from old ones and make that we pay more attention to them. Grzenia (2006: 21) depicts and compares all these features of new media which stem from differences in communication. This comparison is included in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The name of media</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>The number of receivers</th>
<th>Broadcaster</th>
<th>The activeness of receivers</th>
<th>The relation between the broadcaster and receiver</th>
<th>Assumed receivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The press</strong></td>
<td>Local (homegrown, regional)</td>
<td>Limited (locally, linguistically environmental)</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Not too high</td>
<td>Inequality of roles</td>
<td>Local group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The radio</strong></td>
<td>Local (homegrown, regional)</td>
<td>Limited (locally, linguistically, environmental)</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Inequality of roles</td>
<td>Group of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Television</strong></td>
<td>Local (homegrown, regional, in case of satellite broadcasting – more than local)</td>
<td>Limited (locally, linguistically, environmental)</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Inequality of roles</td>
<td>Group of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer network</strong></td>
<td>Local, global</td>
<td>unlimited</td>
<td>Institutional, Individual</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Equality of roles and mutual interaction</td>
<td>Group of people, individuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: The comparison of media in terms of communicational features (Grzenia 2006: 21).

Grzenia (2006: 21) points to the fact that the range is one of the most important features which distinguishes old media from new ones. As one can notice, the Internet has a global range due to the fact that at the same time thousands of people from
different countries can use the same news service. The rest of the media mentioned above will not be able to possess a global range unless they choose the Internet as their main channel for spreading information. Not only will they be able to expand their range, but also have an easier access to potential receivers. Nowadays, we can notice a very strong correlation between the radio and the Internet owing to the fact that more and more radio shows and programs are transmitted online and a great number of people are willing to listen to them. Even though television still encounters some technological barriers caused by not sufficient numbers of the Internet connections, it is believed that soon its range will be similar to this one reached by the radio.

It is important to mention that the activeness of receivers and the relation between broadcaster and receivers shape the general outlook and functioning of new media. Table 4 illustrates that the highest activeness of receivers appear when talking about computer networks. It is caused by the fact that these recipients have already started to take an active part in matters connected with the process of communication and at the same time one can observe that the interaction between broadcasters and receivers is much higher than in the case of other media such as the radio or the press (Krejtz & Zając 2007: 195).

1.6 Social media communication process

The point to which we shall now turn is elaborating on the process of communication which is present on social networks. Communication between two interlocutors in a real life differs from this one which is held on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram or in some other chat groups. It is crucial to point out these similarities and differences which can be distinguished together with many other factors which shape this online communication. As stated by Noelle et al (1994: 20) the simplest act of communication must consist of three elements:

1. **a sender** (the person who is responsible for conveying messages directly or indirectly). Such a person is also called ‘communicator’ or ‘the main source of information’. One can enumerate three different types of senders:
- individuals: a friend, a doctor, a shop assistant,
- collective: family, community,
- institutional: the police, church, political parties.

2. a channel (it is used for conveying intellectual and emotional messages between two interlocutors).

3. a receiver (the person who is responsible for receiving information from the sender. This is the person who listens to others, who observes, and reacts somehow for this information).

Taking into consideration this model, it can be stated that the successful process of communication takes place in the situation when the message which is delivered to the receiver is fully understood by him and information included in this message is meaningful. Meaningfulness in this context means that the receiver is able to give feedback or elaborate more on it. Unless this requirement is fulfilled, one cannot say about the process of communication, but about an attempt of communication process (Merrill et al. 1971, 121).

Another important factor which must be taken into account when describing the process of communication is the channel which is used for conveying various messages. One cannot forget that each message is perceived as a combination of different signs which consists of a content and a form. The content is everything what we want to pass (news, gossips, an important announcement) whereas the form is defined as the way which we use in order to deliver information (by means of sounds, pictures, graphics or any other genres). It is believed that the content is the most important due to the fact that the sender wants to convey an informative message which will be received and understood in a good way by the receiver (Pisarek, 2008: 28). Researches which are conducted in order to analyze all processes which are present in the situation when messages and information are exchanged between the sender and the receiver are called ‘content analysis’ (Meyer 2004: 109). Undoubtedly, the content is the most crucial factor which is taken into consideration during such researches; however, we have to remember about other relationships which take place between internal and external elements of the communication process. Among them, one can enumerate the following relationships:
- between the channel and the sender,
- between the content and the form of messages and their code,
- between the content of messages and reality,
- between the content and the form of messages and various canals of communication,
- between the content and the form of messages and the specific time when they were created,
- between the content and the form of messages and receivers,
- between the content and the form of messages and cultural, social, political, and economical factors which have an influence on them,
- between the content and the form of messages.

Pisarek (2008: 30) contends that not only are senders, receivers, the content and the form of messages important in the communication process, but also codes which we use in order to communicate with other people. According to his way of thinking, we can divide codes (languages) into natural and artificial. Natural languages include national and ethnic languages together with their territorial diversity (dialects), social (environmental, occupational) and functional (colloquial, official and stylistic). Artificial languages are the ones created in order to ease communication between various nations which use different languages, metalanguages, and specialized languages (programming languages). Finally, the last element in the process of communication called ‘reception’ is another sub-process which consists of the following categories:

1. perception (it affects our senses: sight, hearing, and touch),
2. understanding,
3. interpretation (which may result in approval or rejection),
4. learning,
5. implication

The range finds its practical implications in the process of communication as well. It helps us to observe how many people noticed, understood, interpreted, remembered, and used the message which was sent to them, taking into account the whole population who took part in this process.
1.7 Recapitulation

Chapter I sheds some light on very important aspects which function as the background of this thesis. It must be stated that present social media, which are ubiquitous, could not exist without two important elements: information technology and the Internet. The expansion of information technology and the Internet led to the situation that nowadays social networks function as the source of entertainment, information, and even knowledge.

The history of social media shows how they evaluated and changed over the years. All of them went through some stages which contributed to their success or failure. We cannot make a generalization that there is just one rule which decides about the future of a particular social network. In fact, it must be noticed that each of them has different framework, different functions, and different aims. Some of them focus on interactions between people and mutual conversations, whereas others aim at various ways of promotion and advertising. Undoubtedly, it is crucial to underline that new media, which are becoming more and more popular, never exist on their own; they always function as the products of previous social media with some, new, additional elements which make them new and more modern.

New social media, which are so ubiquitous nowadays, have many important functions. Apart from communicative and informative purposes, they create a new, idealized and utopian world for people who are either lonely or seek for entertainment. It was mentioned in this chapter that new media are worshiped by people on the grounds that everything can be found there. Some of these media are of limited range (e.g. the local press) and others are more widespread or even global (e.g. the Internet).

Social media communication process, which has been introduced in this chapter, shows us that any kind of communication could not take place without some essential components such as the sender, the channel, and the receiver. Correlations which are created between these particular aspects of social media communication process have an influence on the conversation held between interlocutors on social websites and decide about its success or failure.

This first part of theoretical background presents a very general outlook on social media and their functioning. The following chapters will discuss more detailed specific
elements of social media such as various models of communication, language variations and the language of the Internet.
CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE, ITS FEATURES AND VARIATIONS

2.1 Introduction

Having discussed various types of social media, their history and development, we give some thought to language, its descriptions, features, variations, and development in the present chapter. It begins with a general description of language perceived from various perspectives (linguistic, sociological, cultural) and approaches (behaviorism, structuralism, generativism) which shaped its functioning over the years (section 2.2). Section 2.3. includes the division and the description of various models of communication which can be present on social networks. Section 2.4. is dedicated to relations between language and society, differences between sociolinguistics and sociology of language, and terms such as dialect, idiolect, sociolect, register, jargon, and slang. Section 2.5. covers similarities and differences between spoken and written language.

2.2 Language, its description and approaches

According to Ziolkowski (1998: 371), language seen from a linguistic point of view can be perceived as a system of signs which is shaped by certain rules and used mostly for communication and conveying information. Language is typical only of human beings and by means of using it people can maintain relationships and make new friends. Undoubtedly, language seen from this perspective functions as the basis for further discussions about spoken and written forms, yet we cannot forget about some other functions which are of a great importance as well.

Rogalski (2011: 39) points out that from the sociological point of view, language is strictly connected with society and culture and it is determined by those factors and changes in languages which influence relations between people and norms which ought to be obeyed. Here, we are able to notice that language is something more than signs and structures which are used in order to have a successful conversation. Society itself
and norms which are obeyed by particular groups also contribute to the development of language and its functioning. For those reasons, Benveniste (1980: 27) remarks that societies create languages and languages create society. On the one hand, language is the result of people’s mutual interactions, relationships, actions, performances and it is also constantly changed and modified by society. On the other hand, language is seen as a final product of culture which is fundamental in every society and there are some significant features of language which remain unique, fixed, and handed-down from generation to generation.

It is important to mention three approaches which describe the perception of language and its changes throughout centuries: behaviorism, structuralism, and cognitivism. According to Akmajian et al (2001: 480), behaviorism was the first approach which stated that only external experience of the world could provide us with a proper knowledge about other phenomena, whereas internal experience, feelings, and emotions do not exist. This approach is based on four currents:

1. naturalism (human beings are perceived as the final product of evolution),

2. mechanical philosophy (reaction to stimuli is more important than performing particular actions),

3. determinism (both human and animals behaviours are determined causally),

4. materialism (humans are physical and there is no difference between humans and animals).

Taking those currents into account, behaviorists postulate that humans react when they are exposed to certain stimuli (stimulus-organismus-reactio), and when they receive either positive or negative reinforcement for their actions (operant conditioning model). For example, speaking is motor reaction and the effectiveness of it depends mostly on positive reinforcement in the form of an award. The more rewards we get, the more willing we are to perform particular actions.

De Saussure (1916: 40) who is the father of structuralism resisted this approach by proving that language is perceived as a hierarchical system of signs which is determined by strict rules, not by our behavior and rewards. He also made a distinction into the
shared system of language in society (language), and individual speech acts (parole). However, the approach suggested by Saussure was totally rejected by Noam Chomsky (1968) who claimed that our nature, behavior, and signs were not enough to talk about learning. Apart from being exposed to certain language stimuli, we also must possess knowledge and competence. Only by integrating all these elements can we talk about schemata: stimulus-organismus-reactio (Chomsky, 1968: 56). Moreover, he laid emphasis on the fact that language functioned as the final product of the speech and depending on people it could be extremely creative. There are some other assumptions within his approach:

1. the idea of using languages creatively,
2. the division of language into deep structure which is more abstract and hidden, and surface structure which is connected with the general outlook of utterances,
3. the difference between language competence (our subconscious linguistic ability) and language performance (the output of our competence),
4. Language Acquisition Device (LAD),
5. Universal Grammar.

To conclude, it must be stated that language itself functions both as a system of human communication and a branch of human knowledge which help us to identify, analyze, and explain all phenomena which take place in languages and which shape our functioning.

2.3 Models of communication

Fauconnier (1975: 40) provides us with his definition of communication model described as a verbal or graphic presentation which depicts communication process in a very simple and schematic way. Following his definition, there are four types of models:

1. structural models (focus on particular elements of each model),
2. dynamic models (focus on the evolution and the development of each model),
3. functional models (focus on relations between all elements),
4. operative models (allow to design and predict the process of communication)

Before discussing various models of communication, it is vital to mention different types of correlations between senders and receivers which one can encounter. According to Pisarek (2008: 92), one can enumerate following types of relations between interlocutors in the process of communication:

a) one sender (S) to one receiver (R) with delayed feedback (for example: a letter to a friend, an e-mail).

![Diagram of one to one correlation with delayed feedback](image1)

**Figure 2: One to one correlation with delayed feedback (Pisarek, 2008: 92).**

b) one sender (S) to one receiver (R) with immediate feedback (for example: phone conversation, talking on Skype)

![Diagram of one to one correlation with immediate feedback](image2)

**Figure 3: One to one correlation with immediate feedback (Pisarek, 2008: 92).**
c) one sender (S) to some chosen receivers (R) (for example: circular letters)

![Diagram](image)

Figure 4: Correlation between one sender and some chosen receivers (Pisarek, 2008: 93).

d) one sender (S) to unlimited number of receivers (R) (for example: TV, the radio, social networks, websites, online books, magazines and newspapers)
e) some chosen or potential senders (S) to one receiver (R) (for example: reports which are supposed to be submitted in an electronic version).

Figure 5: Correlation between one sender and unlimited number of receivers (Pisarek 2008: 93).

Figure 6: Correlation between some potential senders and just one receiver (Pisarek, 2008: 94).
f) Many chosen or potential senders and receivers (S/R) to a great number of potential or chosen senders or receivers (S/R) (for example: letters, e-mails, chats, comments, communicators etc)

Figure 7: Correlation between a great number of senders and receivers (S/R) (Pisarek, 2008: 94).

Goban-Klas (1999: 77) grouped systems of correlations between people taking into consideration interlocutors who are engaged in the process of exchanging messages. Following his way of thinking, one can enumerate systems presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of the system</th>
<th>A short description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allocution</td>
<td>This system is typical of one sender and a great number of receivers, for example: during a lecture, important speeches, radio programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversation</td>
<td>It functions as a total opposition to allocution. In this case, it is in a form of a dialogue between two interlocutors, for example: face-to-face conversations, talking on Skype, phone conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consultation</td>
<td>This system is typical of a correlation between one interlocutor who is looking for some information and a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite the fact that the field of communication has changed over the last few years, there are some models of communication which remain unchanged or some new elements were added in order to modify slightly their structure and functions. Chosen models of communication which will be discussed in this part of the chapter illustrate the role of these models and their practical implications in our everyday conversations (Adler et al, 1991: 50).

\section*{2.3.1 Shannon’s Model of the Communication Process}

Shannon’s model of communication dates back to the World War II times and is called ‘mother of all models’. Shannon together with his friend Weaver were trying to prove that the efficiency and the accuracy of this model were good enough in order to guarantee a successful communication between people during this period of time. Moreover, this model of communication became so popular that it found its practical implication in disciplines such as linguistics, rhetoric, journalism, and even science. There are some crucial factors which contributed to this fact. First of all, this model consists of some basic constituents which show us how communication starts and why sometimes it fails. Second of all, it is the only model which is introduced to students who start taking up their introductory communication class. Finally, this model focuses on the accuracy of the message, to be more precise, whether the message which is sent from the information source is exactly the same in content like this message which is perceived and decoded by the receiver (Shannon, 1948: 381).
As one can notice, Shannon’s model breaks the process of communication down into the following components:

1. **Information source**: it is usually the person who creates a message.
2. **The message**: it goes from information source and its main goal is to reach the final destination.
3. **A transmitter**: according to this model, one can enumerate some levels of transmission which can be present during face-to-face communications. The first one is connected with our mouths which produce sounds and the second one with our body which is responsible for gestures. Thanks to them we can create and modify signals. The second level consists of the air which produces sound and the light which is responsible for gestures. The combination of these two elements enables us to send various signals from one person to another. Obviously a television broadcast or a radio transmission would consist of more levels which are more complex.
4. **The signal**: it flows through the channel and it may have various forms depending on the context, for example: electronic signals, waves, words or pictures.
5. **A channel**: in Figure 8 a channel is illustrated as a small and unlabelled box in the middle of the model. Similarly to the signal, one can encounter various types of channels such as air, light, electricity, postal systems, and even paper.
6. **Noise**: taking into consideration telephone transmission or talking on Skype, some thought should be given to disturbances within the channel; however, during face-to-
face conversations noises may come from the environment or from other people who are around us during the conversation.

7. A receiver: During face-to-face communications our ears receive sounds and our eyes receive gestures, when it comes to television it may be an antenna or the TV set and when using the computer, it is mostly the screen.

8. A destination: it is the person who receives the message which comes from the information source.

### 2.3.2 Jakobson’s model of communication

Jakobson (1960, 355), who was a Russian-American linguist, decided to base his model of communication on language and its functions. To some degree, his model of communication is similar to the one presented by Shannon; however, there are some modifications concerning the role and functions of each constituent. He believes that each element in the process of communication has some unique functions which correspond to the quality of the conversation held between interlocutors. Table 6 illustrates the description of functions of each element present in a verbal communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of a verbal communication</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Referential</td>
<td>- It provides us with some basic, real and factual information about crucial topics, problems, situations, and mental states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresser</td>
<td>Emotive</td>
<td>- Expressing feelings, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressee</td>
<td>Conative</td>
<td>- By using vocatives and imperatives, it engages the addressee to perform a particular action. It is also the final effect of the message on the addressee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Phatic</td>
<td>- the main role is to maintain a good contact and relations between</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
interlocutors during the conversation. This goal may be achieved by asking questions about weather or by using various forms of greetings.

**Table 6: Jakobson’s model of communication (on the basis of Jakobson, 1960: 355).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Metalingual</th>
<th>- it is about the language itself (what kind of language we use during the conversation, how we use it, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message</td>
<td>Poetic</td>
<td>- the main aim of this function is to make our talking as poetic as possible, for example by means of using various figures of speech such as metaphors, oxymorons, similes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3.3 An intermediary model of the communication process

According to Goban-Klas (1999: 55), an intermediary model of the communication used to be famous under the occupation of Poland during the Second World War. Due to its characteristic features, this model is also described as ‘injection, hypodermic model’, ‘bullet model’ or ‘arrow model.’ All of these names contribute to the fact that this model of communication presents people’s defenselessness and helplessness against authorities. It is commonly known that during those times not everything could be said, shown, written or transmitted because of the censorship. People were afraid to share their opinions, beliefs due to the fact that it was forbidden and there were some restrictions introduced by the authorities. The main idea of this model is to put emphasis on the importance of the intermediary called ‘gatekeeper’ who very often controls the process of exchanging messages. It is typical of mass communication texts where there are special editors who are responsible for controlling messages, which later on will be published in the newspaper or transmitted in the radio. Very often such editors change some messages, adjust them to the current situation, add some new elements or totally prevent them from reaching an audience. Such gatekeepers or censors are present in most mass media (editors), Internet chats, groups, forums (moderators), reviewed publications (reviewers) or even during a postal delivery (delivery workers).
2.3.4 Lasswell’s model

Fiske (1990: 30) provides us with another verbal model of communication which is focused on mass communication. He claims that in order to understand the process of communication, one has to study each of the stages presented by him:

Who
Says What
In which channel
To whom
With what effect

It is another linear model which sees communication as the transmission of messages. Even if it consists of various stages such as who speaks, what, and in which channel, yet the final stage is the most important. It is crucial to mention that changing one of these elements will change the effect. Very often this model of communication is used in some advertisements or political speeches. First of all, the final effect which will be evoked in the receiver depends on the person who is sending the message. The more coaxing person, the better final effect may be achieved. Second of all, the way we talk and select words also may have a huge influence on our thinking. People who are good at rhetoric will be able to use proper words and expressions which will be helpful in
persuading others to follow and achieve settled goals. Finally, it must be stated that only by adjusting each of these stages to the process of communication will we achieve either positive or negative effect. This final result will be a vital part of a success or a failure.

We must turn to another point of this model which should be mentioned here. Brevity and linear style of this model contribute to the fact that this model is perceived as being too short and simple. Because of this simplicity and shortness, the content of sent messages is very often incomplete and unclear. A great number of scholars (e.g. Kafel 1966, Braddock 1958, Klapper 1960) were trying to introduce some additional questions which could make this content more clear and advanced, for instance: ‘Why?’, ‘In which situations?’, ‘What for?’, ‘To what degree?’, In which circumstances?’. Nevertheless, the number of questions which theoretically could be added to this model of communication could disturb the process of communication connected with sending and receiving messages.

2.3.5 Newcomb’s model

Fiske (1990: 31) illustrates another model of communication which is not linear anymore. This new model is presented in the form of the triangular which has a significant role here.

![ABX model of communication](image)

**Figure 11: ABX model of communication (Fiske, 1990: 31).**

It is the first model which focuses on society and social relationships, and its main goal is to achieve equilibrium within the social system. A and B function as communicators and receivers, whereas X is a part of the environment which is mutual for A and B. The relations between A, B and X are interdependent. It means that if A changes, B and X will have to change as well, if A changes its attitude towards X, then
B will have to change attitude either towards B or X. If A and B are friends and have much in common, then it will be important for X to find as many common features with A and B as possible. Only by maintaining such relations are we able to achieve the equilibrium. However, the situation may look a bit different if there are clashes between these relations. If A likes X and it agrees with X, and B does not, then B will have to decide whether:

a) he wants to stay in touch with A and become neutral to X,

b) he wants to improve its relations with X on his own,

c) he wants to find a totally different solution which will be suitable both for A and X.

According to this model of communication, communication is perceived as the process aimed at maintaining good relationships between A, B, and X by means of conveying information in the form of the message. However, one has to remember that this information is shaped by various behaviors, attitudes, and some other potential changes which may appear between interlocutors.

### 2.3.6 Chester’s Hierarchy of Communication Needs

Another model of communication is presented by Eric Chester who provides us with various communication needs which differ depending on the generation.

![Chester’s Hierarchy of Communication Needs](https://highflyingdivas.wordpress.com/2012/02/25/how-to-choose-the-best-communication-channel/)

*Figure 12: Chester’s Hierarchy of Communication Needs (Source: https://highflyingdivas.wordpress.com/2012/02/25/how-to-choose-the-best-communication-channel/).*
Despite the fact that all the models of communications mentioned before are connected with sending and receiving messages, this model appeals the most to us because of some reasons. One of them is that it shows us current situation which is connected with the division between people who were born before 1980 and who were traditionalists from generation X and those born after 1980 who are millennials from generation Y and Z. The main idea of this model lays in the hierarchy of communication needs. It is easy to notice that for people born before 1980 the most important were personal meetings. They lived in times when the Internet was not as popular as it is nowadays. People preferred meeting and talking to spending hours in front of the screen. Telephone calls were preferred as well. Facebook and other social media were used by them only in the situation when all else failed. They were of the least importance for them.

However, a totally reverse situation takes place after 1980 when the Internet was becoming more and more popular, together with social media and other useful applications. It is very noticeable that the hierarchy which used to be obeyed before 1980 has changed significantly and now the most important and preferred ones became the Internet, social media, and texting messages. If all else fails, then phone calls and personal meetings can be used in order to communicate with others.

The second reason why we find this model of communication useful and helpful is that it serves the basis for the research part. The main idea of the research which is used in this dissertation is based on text messages, posts, and comments which can be found on social network – Facebook. According to Chester, those people who post their messages and comments are from generation Y and Z. Thanks to this theory and the survey, which has been implemented during the process of conducting the research, it is possible to check and compare whether those people are really into moving around the virtual world and forgetting about interpersonal communications or it is just a stereotype. Moreover, a great number of the users’ posts and comments allows us to focus on grammatical and lexical structures which are present in their messages.

2.4 Language and society

According to Labov (1972: 48), some thought should be given to differences between sociolinguistics and sociology of language. Sociolinguistics aims at the role of
language in a social life and interdependency between changes and socio-cultural phenomena. The following are the features of sociolinguistics:

* it describes mutual relations between language and society,

* it presents the relation between language and social life (ceremonies, salutations, gender, age, social status),

* it shows the influence of changes in languages on cognitive processes of people who use a particular language,

* it verifies various dimensions of using languages in different social situations,

* the most crucial for sociolinguists are changes in languages and in styles,

* style is often determined by social patterns and is often associated with sociolect.

Sociology of language, however, aims at society which is perceived as a more important and wider category than language due to the fact that it functions as a context in which all language changes are analyzed and verified (Rogalski 2011: 48). Thus, sociology of language describes:

* changes in languages,

* people’s reaction for these particular changes,

* people’s opinions about these changes and the way they express their reactions for them.

For example, most students at French-Canadian universities are against introducing the English language in Quebec. Some nationalists in Wales destroy English signs which are put along the road, whereas most Irish people fight for a bigger support for the development of the Irish language from the government. In some languages, in order to maintain their functions of being officially used by most people, new vocabulary is
introduced and some grammatical rules are improved. Thanks to that, society can be proud of having their own languages which might be forgotten in few years’ time. However, there are still some nations which do not feel any connections with their languages and by neglecting them, sooner or later those languages will disappear. Fishman (1980: 225) distinguishes two types of sociolinguistics:

1. descriptive sociolinguistics which describes commonly accepted social rules which have an influence on who speaks (or writes), to whom, when, what for, and with which type of language (or its variety)?

2. dynamic sociolinguistics which is trying to solve out the problem concerning reasons for rapid changes in language structures and development within a particular period of time.

Constant changes in languages and their development are the reasons which contribute to the appearance of dialects which focus on different aspects of a language (e.g. grammar, pronunciation), and sociolects which are strictly connected with various social classes and groups (Trask, 2010:111; Minkowa & Stockwell, 2009: 85). The first class called ‘middle class’ groups people who have only few years of education and perform mostly manual work, and the second one called ‘upper-middle-class’ which groups people who are mostly educated and who possess desks jobs. Nonetheless, one cannot forget about idiolects which function as the official languages used by their speakers in the period of time in which a particular language develops (Edwards, 2011: 56).

Quinlan and Dyson (2008: 185), however, provide us with a totally different phenomenon taken from cognitive psychology. From what they have observed, we use this language which we learnt in our early childhood. We call this language ‘mother tongue’, whereas we call ourselves ‘native speakers’ of this language. Thus, it is interesting to notice that our idiolect can change over time. Even if we are raised in society where we use a particular language, later on it happens that we attend distinct schools, universities, we often change our place of living by moving to another city, and we are exposed to different environments and various groups of people who may have an influence on language which we used to use on a regular basis (Trudgil, 2002: 134).
Yet, when talking about the relations between language and society, we cannot forget about a register and a jargon which are also important. A register is connected with using language which is appropriate in a specific context or a situation. Naturally, the priest who says mass will be using only this language which is typical of such religious ceremonies, whereas talking to our boss or a headmaster will require only this type of language which is formal and proper for such types of conversations (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2002: 134). A jargon, however, which is one of the features of a register is understood as using special and technical vocabulary associated with specific occupations, interests or areas of work. In other words, a jargon is clear for people who are inside a specific group and unclear for outsiders who are not familiar with such specialized terminology. That is why, people who are perceived as outsiders or who are not included in higher-status groups, developed their own style of language which is less formal and more colloquial called ‘slang.’ The main idea is that those people use words or phrases which are not commonly used in everyday conversations by the rest of society. It is typical mainly of adolescents and teenagers who grow up and are exposed to different environments (Jaspaert & Kroon, 1989: 44). It is important to notice that it changes year by year and for instance phrase ‘Jest dobrze’ was replaced by ‘Spoko’ and later on by ‘sztosikowo.’ It shows us that age is another social factor which is responsible for changes in languages (Bergs, 2005: 201).

2.5 The comparison of a written and spoken language

Crystal (2006: 8) provides us with some features which distinguish the written language from the spoken one. In his opinion, there are five main features which can be attributed to a written language:

a) graphic features:

These features are responsible for a general outlook of written texts or messages. Page designs, spacing, a proper font, a good choice of colors, illustrations, headlines, captions, and tables contribute to a general perception of written forms. These features are extremely important owing to the fact that either they will encourage us to read
something which is written correctly and in accordance with all rules, or discourage us and make that we will not show any willingness to deal with particular articles or texts.

b) orthographic (graphological) features:

The moment we are familiar with the general outlook of written text or an article, we pay attention to details which make that our reading will be either a pleasure for us or a total failure. First of all, we focus on some basic elements such as capital letters, a proper punctuation, spelling, and later on we move on to more advanced features such as using asterisks, italics, boldface, squares, and being consistent with using either American or British version (e.g. neighbor vs. neighbour) (Hong and Park, 2012: 911).

c) grammatical features:

Having gone through all these orthographic features, we verify whether the text which we are reading is grammatically correct or not. A proper syntax and morphology play a very important role here; moreover, a good knowledge of grammar helps us to create more advanced and complex sentences. One can think about introducing passive constructions, impersonal forms, various forms of participles and, even some archaic forms of pronouns (e.g. thou, thee, thine) (Lester and Paulus, 2011: 684).

d) lexical features:

Not only is grammar important in written forms, but also lexis. We can make our texts more sophisticated by means of using proper phrasal verbs, idioms or collocations. Instead of using simple words, which are commonly known, we can implement some words which are not used on a regular basis and will enhance the level of the language of our written text (Crystal, 2006: 12).

e) discourse features:

Even if one could think that discourse features are similar to graphic ones or that they are almost the same like them, there is a huge difference between these two categories. Discourse features are connected with deeper and hidden structures of the written forms.
These features include elements such as coherence, relevance, an adequate number of paragraphs, a logical composition, and a proper use of linking words. Only by considering all these mentioned features can we be sure that the text which we are reading is acceptable (Meyer, 2003: 60).

Crystal (2006: 9) points out that apart from these features which are typical of written forms, we also have to remember about two additional features which can be attributed to a spoken language which we often hear on the Internet. Some of us may not be fully aware of the fact that sometimes something which is primarily written is later on read aloud by some presenters or journalists. Very often instead of reading proclamations or some interviews which are posted on the Internet, we just watch them and listen. Therefore, the next two features must be considered here:

f) phonetic features:

these features are responsible for an auditory perception of a spoken language. When listening to a speech or live performances, we pay attention to details such as voice quality (whether we can hear the performer clearly), voice register (whether someone is using tenor or bass) or even voice modality (whether someone is speaking, singing or murmuring).

g) phonological features:

these features are connected with the sound systems of particular languages. It is obvious that some features which can be found in one language do not have to be necessarily found in another or that languages differ from each other. For instance, we need to remember that in English we have different stress patterns, whereas in Polish stress usually falls on the penultimate syllable (Plantin, 2011: 86).

Having discussed general features which can be attributed to a written language, we can present some more detailed differences between a spoken language used in everyday communication and a written language which we usually encounter on social networks and on some other websites. The table below illustrates some significant features suggested by various scholars.

61
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Speech is typical of this kind of interaction in which both participants are present and engaged in having a conversation. That is why, one can state that speech is:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* time-bound (it is strictly connected with the time we are having a particular conversation),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* dynamic (apart from spoken words, we can also include some movements and gestures),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* transient (it happens here and now and it ends the moment we finish the conversation) (Crystal, 2006: 28).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Writing is typical of this kind of interaction in which participants do not have to be present at the same time and do not have to be engaged in having a conversation. Thus, writing is:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* space-bound (it depends whether we talk to someone on Facebook or we send an e-mail),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* static (we just see some written texts, and messages without any additional elements such as movement or gestures),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* permanent (messages which we have on Facebook chats or in our inbox can stay there for a longer period of time and we can open them and read whenever and wherever we want to (Crystal, 2006: 29).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Having a face-to-face conversation is connected with using spoken words, facial expressions and gestures. In this type of a conversation both participants receive feedback automatically due to the fact that there is no time for postponing the answer for a given question (Crystal, 2004: 26).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The lack of gestures and a visual contact make that sometimes it is harder for us to understand the intention of our interlocutor. Very often we cannot deduce whether his or her writing contains undertones, irony or even sarcasm. Through writing we are not able to notice how our participant reacts for a question and sometimes we do not receive feedback automatically. At any time we can stop our conversation, get off-line and leave our interlocutor without any notification (Crystal, 2004: 40).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Simple and not too complex sentences are typical of spoken language. One needs to remember that too complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Complex and advanced sentences are possible when it comes to written forms. In this case, we do not have to worry how</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sentences could be too difficult to remember for our participant. Words also should not be too sophisticated so that our interlocutor could understand us without any problems (Sinclair, 2004: 97).

4. It happens that speech has some phatic functions which help us to maintain a conversation. By asking about someone’s health, current mood or family, we are perceived as more polite and caring (Bialek, 2012: 30).

5. Interruptions and overlapping are typical features of a spoken language. It is important to mention that in a face-to-face conversation it is impossible to withdraw mistakes which have already been made. We need to think twice before we say something because consequences could be irreversible (Crystal, 2006: 33).

6. Speech is more real due to some prosodic features. Writing a message to someone would be perceived totally different if it was expressed orally. There is no comparison between conveying the same message in a written form and by means of spoken words. Thanks to intonation, our speech will be less long our utterance will be owing to the fact that the second person who is going to read it will have enough time for it. Here, we can use more sophisticated vocabulary which normally does not occur in speech (Crystal, 2006: 30).

4. In comparison to speech, writing has more informative function. By sending an important e-mail, we want to convey some crucial information. We create tables to show contrast, similarities and differences. By means of graphs and charts we want to show important dates and statistics. We make lists in order to have references later on. Everything what we want to record by means of writing is of a great importance for us (Crystal, 2006: 31).

5. Interruptions and overlapping are rather not so visible in writing. However, we have enough time to change or even delete the sentence before sending it to our participant. We have much more time to think about proper forms and suitable greetings (Crystal, 2006: 40).

6. Even if writing does not include typical prosodic features, it is still possible to mark them in some written forms. For instance, by multiplying question marks, we can express our surprise or curiosity. Exclamation marks and capitalization are used in order to emphasize something important for us. By means of using
monotonous, by changing the tone of our voice we can create more suspicious and mysterious atmosphere (Tereszkiewicz, 2014: 51).

emoticons, we can show our feelings and attitude. However, it is crucial to mention that these features usually occur in informal written forms. More official documents are rather more conventional and strict (Tereszkiewicz, 2014: 58).

Table 7: The comparison of a speech and writing (on the basis of Crystal, 2006).

Labocha (2004: 5) makes a clear distinction between written texts and language which is perceived as a system of rules and signs. In her opinion, a written text is defined as a sequence of linguistic, phonic, and even graphic elements related to extralinguistic features which have communicative functions. In comparison to a written text, a spoken one is defined as a sequence of sounds which is only the final product of speaking and cannot be equivalent with the action of speaking. She also claims that even if a written text is permanent and noticeable, a spoken text, which is just audible, can be recorded by means of transcript and some other instruments.

As observed by Lalewicz (1975: 73) the division of texts into written and spoken ones is determined by the criterion responsible for creating a proper statement. Written texts are usually devoted to passive recipients who are not necessarily engaged in the process of communication which takes place in a particular moment. That is why, coding and decoding are so crucial in this process (Gajda, 2010: 152). One has to be sure that the message is meaningful enough and it will be decoded by the second person in a right way. In a spoken communication, the message which we produce is not separated from the act of communication owing to the fact that both talking and hearing function as both sides of the same act of communication.

As Ricoeur (1989: 120) states, in the process of time, the text which becomes written is gaining semantic autonomy. To be more precise, the meaning of the text itself becomes more important than what the author had in mind while he was writing it. This division into the real meaning of the text and the author’s intention leads to the situation that the same text can be interpreted in many various ways by different people. It is one of the features of hermeneutics which assume that when we read and interpret a given text or a message, we do not focus on the author’s idea and inspiration, we just concentrate on what the text ‘speaks’ itself.
A totally different view is presented by cognitivists (Chomsky, 1968; Langacker, 1987). For them, both written and spoken texts function as a recollection of something which had happened before. It can be one moment or a sequence of actions. When we use written forms, we just use words so it is strictly verbal communication, whereas when we speak, we may use both verbal signs (words), and non verbal ones (gestures, mimics, movements) so we are talking about nonverbal communication then. Written texts have mainly communicative functions, whereas spoken ones function as one of the three forms of expression. Moreover, a text is only one of the elements of the communication process and it is necessary to consider something more spiritual which is needed the moment we are trying to interpret the text. We need to take into consideration our general knowledge about history, culture, and events from the world (Labocha, 2004: 7).

Wierzbicka (1968: 11) makes a distinction between texts which were primarily written, but became spoken later on, or the other way round, primarily spoken texts which became written ones. She states that a spoken message can be presented in the written form, however, it will not contain features which are typical of writing, and the text which is written can be read aloud or even learnt by heart, yet, it will not become a typical text with features of speaking. Wilkoń (2000: 37) distinguishes the following classification of texts:

1. Texts which are primarily spoken split into:
   a) spontaneous texts,
   b) prepared texts.

2. Texts which are read aloud which primarily were written.

3. Texts with a “bookish” theme.

4. Texts which were primarily written:
   a) texts which are not intended to be read aloud,
   b) texts which are intended to be read aloud (speeches),
   c) acceptable to be read aloud (novels which are read in the radio).

5. Texts which were primarily spoken, but later on became written.
6. Texts with a spoken theme (dialogues in novels or in dramas).

Ong (1992: 33) presents his own similarities and differences between a written and a spoken language:

* words contribute to the development of anthropocentrism which states that human is in the centre and everything what happens around him is the most important. Thanks to that we can talk and exchange ideas.

* words are full of emotions and expressions in comparison to written texts.

* due to the fact that oral conversations are evanescent, it is impossible to analyze them from beginning to end. We can analyze only these fragments which we hear in a particular moment. In order to analyze earlier fragments of the conversation, we need to recall them, and use our brain, however, such an analysis will never be the same like the analysis of written words which we have in paper.

* writing itself is called ‘technology’ since it started what computer continued later on, to be more precise: putting dynamic sounds into soundless space where oral words are changed into something visible.

* writing is linear, chronological, and ordered. Written texts are logic and they focus on matters which are important for us.

* In written texts we can notice and observe words by means of using proper fonts, paragraphs, and underlines.

* Written texts require using proper grammar, vocabulary, obeying rules, and remembering about proper punctuation and spelling (Loewe, 2007:89).
2.6 Recapitulation

Drawing together all the information presented in this chapter, the following conclusions of the most important matters focused on can be offered:

1. Our present language which is used on social websites combines features of the language which can be found in three approaches provided in this chapter: positive and negative reinforcement from behaviorism, system of signs from structuralism, knowledge, competence, and creativity from cognitivism.

2. Most models of communication presented in this chapter despite being linear seem to be quite complex and complicated in understanding. Even if most of them focus on communication, there are some more aspects which are taken into consideration. It may happen that because of some external factors such as cultural, social, or political our conversation fails and it is no longer successful or there are other more disturbing factors like the channel itself which may be difficult to decode or encode by two sides of the communication or even other people, authorities, or institutions which contribute to success or failure of the conversation.

3. Chester’s Hierarchy of Communication Needs, which is included in this chapter, aims at showing us what is the most important for people when everything else fails. Chester shows very distinctly that people who were born before 1980 focus on personal meetings which are a base for them whereas for people born after 1980 text messages seem to be most essential. Asking about what is the most and the least preferable for people was included in one of the questions in the questionnaire. The results are presented in the following chapters.

4. A very precise comparison of a written and a spoken language illustrates that despite many significant differences between these two forms, yet it is possible to find some other elements which can help to make that a written language will become slightly similar to spoken language. One of them concerns prosodic features. In spoken language it is very easy to change our voice and intonation to show surprise, irritation, or even anger. When it comes to written language similar results can be achieved by
means of multiplying question and exclamation marks, using capitalization and implementing proper emoticons and emojis which reflect our mood and inner feelings.
CHAPTER III

NETSPEAK AND ITS FEATURES

3.1 Introduction

Section 3.2. is concerned with a relatively new phenomenon called computer-mediated communication which describes communication on the Internet and contrasts it with conversations which we have in everyday situations. In section 3.3. one can find out the description of the language of the Internet in terms of certain categories attributed to it. Section 3.4. is quite complex and consists of the description of Netspeak together with the most distinctive features. Since there are some differences in expressing our inner, spoken thoughts in writing, some thought should be given to prosody and paralanguage used in written forms. In this section, one can find out more about the language of emotions, various theories of emotions, emoticons, their varieties and the role. There is also a short description of clipping and different abbreviations which we may encounter when browsing websites on the Internet or exchanging messages with friends. Section 3.5. includes the description of speech acts introduced by two famous scholars: Austin (1962) and Searle (1979). In section 3.6. one can find out more about positive and negative politeness which can be attributed to our potential interlocutors. One cannot forget that both of them are strictly connected with another phenomenon called face-threatening act (FTA) which can make that our speaker can either lose his or her ‘face’ or save it by means of various techniques. Section 3.7. is devoted to the description of the potential social media user and three types of competence present on social networks.

3.2 Computer-mediated communication

After discussing the overall description of language, together with its variations and connections with some other areas such as sociology or culture, we start with a definition and description of the phenomenon which is relatively new and which will
function as a background for further discussion. This new phenomenon is commonly known as *computer-mediated communication*. According to Grzenia (2006: 59), the term *computer-mediated communication* (CMC) has two equivalents: ‘electronic communication’ and ‘media communication.’ These two terms are strictly interrelated on the grounds that there must be a sender who uses electronic devices in order to send electronic messages which later on will be delivered to an electronic receiver who also by means of electronic gadgets will be able to decode information. As one can notice, a word ‘electronic’ has been recently overused and nowadays it appears in many various forms such as electronic mails, electronic calls, electronic people, electronic culture, electronic society, and even electronic linguistics (Herring, 2009: 48).

It must also be stated that apart from some electronic features, this communication is strictly connected with media due to its ubiquitous implication. Moreover, it is important to point out that there is one significant feature which distinguishes computer-mediated communication from other forms of communication. CMC is strictly symmetrical in comparison to other forms of communication which are asymmetrical. Symmetrical media are those which allow the sender and the receiver for a mutual interaction. By means of using various forums, chat groups, Skype, and other messengers users are able to exchange information, share ideas or even express emotions. It is impossible when it comes to media such as the radio, television or the press where such an interaction does not exist. Such a distinction contributes to the fact that asymmetrical media do not function as a tool of communication, but as a tool of sending a message (Baron, 2002: 65).

Zając (2007: 1) is trying to find out the answer why computer-mediated communication is becoming more and more popular nowadays despite some significant and negative features which influence its functioning. One of them is connected with the fact that people who communicate only by means of electronic devices do not have a chance to take part in nonverbal communications which are very important in maintaining good interpersonal relations. In comparison to a face-to-face conversation, typing on the keyboard means sending and receiving messages without any options to observe our interlocutors. In everyday communication, messages which we want to convey may be in the form of spoken words or expressed in some other ways such as mimics, gestures, postures, eye sights, touch, intonation, movements, and even a timbre of voice. Thanks to all these features we are able to see how our interlocutor behaves in a particular situation, which emotions are evoked inside him and even when he or she
lies. In the meanwhile, computer-mediated communication is based strictly on sending and receiving text messages which our interlocutor would like to convey by using his or her own spoken words.

Nevertheless, one cannot deny the fact that with the advent of modern technology and all these electronic devices, this type of communication is becoming an integral part of our everyday life. Nowadays we can be in touch with people who live in different parts of the world and exchange both text and voice messages by having access to the Internet. On the basis of this consideration, we may come to the conclusion that we are influenced by technological determinism. One should wonder whether all these features of new media and modern technology determine our behavior and shape our way of thinking and attitudes or maybe it is all created by people who state that their needs, actions, and desires are as important as all these possibilities which are offered by media (Collot et al, 1996: 20).

Despite all these negative features of computer-mediated communication, which have already been mentioned, Frobish (2013: 25) claims that impersonal communication may become beneficial in the situation when particular teams are supposed to accomplish tasks only by using various computers which are linked by means of the network. In the situation when there are fewer channels and the pace of the interaction is also limited, particular participants are more motivated to focus on the task than wasting time on having unnecessary conversations or doing things which could distract their attention.

Belmore (1996: 16) focuses on grammatical differences between computer-mediated communication and other written or spoken forms. In her research which was conducted on Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs) she called this new variety of language ‘Electronic Language’. BBSs are devoted to people who want to have discussions ranging from political debates to very personal conversations. Thanks to computer-mediated communication people who post their messages on these systems can stay in touch almost all the time. A very rapid increase in a number of people who started using these systems contributed to even bigger growth of the popularity of BBSs. On the basis of observation and research, which Baron conducted, she came to the conclusion that Electronic Language which is used on these systems is neither ‘written’ nor ‘spoken’ in the conventional meaning of these words. Even if there is a constant interaction between participants due to the fact that they send messages to each other, it cannot be called a spoken language because those people do not see and hear each other. On the other
hand, messages which are sent to other people cannot be labeled as written ones owing to the fact that participants very often send them spontaneously, without checking grammar or paying too much attention to the proper layout or the structure of the text which should be written according to all rules. Thus, this new variety of language functions as “talking in writing” or “writing in talking” (Eisenlauer, 2013).

Finally, it must be stated that there is one more factor which contributes to a very rapid growth of computer-mediated communication. Bargh et al (2002: 35) came to the conclusion that from the psychological point of view, people who use different social networks to stay in touch with other people and make new friends are more willing to reveal their “true self” than during a face-to-face conversation. Talking to someone online makes us more anonymous, but at the same time helps us to talk freely about things which for sure we would not bring up during face-to-face conversations. In this situation, lack of visible gestures, mimics, movements, and voice make that we can create a perfect description of ourselves without taking into consideration all negative aspects which may occur. That is why, on the basis of these descriptions, which are sometimes fake, we can take a liking to somebody much faster and more willingly than in the situation when we would meet this person in real (Panek, 2016: 18).

3.3 The language of the Internet

Having described features of a written and a spoken language, similarities and differences between them together with a new form of communication called computer-mediated communication, we turn to the language which we use on a regular basis not in real and everyday communication, but in the virtual space and on the Internet. It is worth starting this section with the point of view presented by Żydek-Bednarczuk (2004: 11) who pays attention to differences between language used in real-life conversations and this form of the language which appears on social websites. In her opinion, the most important is the goal of the communication. It is not problematic in everyday situations owing to the fact that people start conversations in order to exchange information or discuss some matters. The situation looks a bit different on the Internet since there are two kinds of communication. The first one takes place within the text when we talk to someone on instant messengers or chat rooms. In this situation we
usually have some precise goals which determine the way we talk. The second type of communication happens outside the text when someone write messages and comments without informing other people about it (e.g. on some websites, blogs). In this case, we cannot be sure about the real purpose of such a message since we do not know fully the intention of the author.

The language of the Internet can be described by means of the following categories:

1. monologic and dialogic character

Undoubtedly, not only is a dialogue essential in everyday conversations, but also in most situations which take place on the Internet. It is important to notice that the Internet is the only new medium which functions as the tool of communication in comparison to other new media which just convey important information without expecting feedback from the side of recipients. A great variety of social networks give us chances to maintain and develop different forms of dialogues such as commenting on videos on YouTube, talking on instant messengers, exchanging e-mails, organizing video conferences. Nevertheless, it is crucial to have in mind that sometimes messages which are left on some websites are starting to gain some monologic features. It happens when for example we do not receive feedback for the message which we wrote on a forum or when the post published by us remains without any comments. This monologic feature is typical of the language of the Internet and rather not associated with face-to-face conversations (Markham & Lindgren, 2014: 20).

2. spontaneity

Spontaneity of posts, comments, and messages can be characterized by features which are attributed to the specific genre:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>The level of spontaneity</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), a web guide</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Even if the main idea of this guide is to ask questions and answer for them, they are prepared in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
advance on the basis of experience and users’ expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forums</td>
<td>Not too high</td>
<td>The moment we initiate a conversation threading, we have in mind some certain ideas which we want to share with others. Yet, joining the discussion itself is more spontaneous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Game players need to react very quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic letters</td>
<td>Depending on the situational context</td>
<td>Very high in private letters, lower in public ones.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Private chats  | High           | - typical both of public and private texts and messages.  
- lack of using specific letters of the Polish alphabet (czesc, jak sie masz, gwozdz)  
- literal errors (pomieczszenie, desinged)  
- laconic messages, short sentences, simple vocabulary  
- punctuation which has a very emotive function: using question marks, exclamations, ellipsis. |

Table 8: Genres and their levels of spontaneity (on the basis of Grzenia, 2006: 104).
As one can notice, the language of the Internet has quite high level of spontaneity, however, it also depends on the type of text and its functions. Some authors have not developed yet a proper linguistic competence which should be used on such social networks, others do not pay attention to some rules which ought to be obeyed, and there are still some authors who want to attract as many users as possible and by means of some strategies mentioned above they seem to be more unique and extraordinary. The Internet creates a perfect environment for spontaneity owing to the fact that most texts and messages which are written there do not have to be reviewed by anyone as long as they are informal (Jagodziński, 2015; Meerman, 2010).

3. Situational context

Barak and Gluck-Ofri (2007: 411) note that most of the conversations which take place on social networks depend mainly on a situational context which need to be taken into consideration. The first situational context appears in chat rooms. Users who log in there have their nicknames which can be chosen randomly or on purpose. At the very beginning there is almost no context which could function as a background for further conversations. This situational context is created the moment we choose a particular person with whom we want to have a discussion. We ask some basic information about name, age, hobbies, and other things which are important for us. In such chat rooms, we can also choose whether we want to talk to someone by means of public forums or private messages. Sometimes we can have this context, for example, by choosing a particular chat rooms where we want to talk. By asking about age or the place of living we make a short introduction to our further conversations and at the same time we get to know to our potential interlocutors who are also logged in a particular chat room. The emphasis should be put here on the importance of linguistic elements of speech acts which determine the situational context.

In comparison to everyday conversations, in such places like chat rooms or forums these elements need to be used in order to have a context. This situational context looks a bit different in discussion groups. Before joining such a group, we pay attention to its name which gives us a general outlook on topics and matters which are brought up in a particular discussion group. It is the moment when we can either take part in such a discussion or quit it. The moment we join a particular group we can easily recognize other participants’ interests and hobbies which are strictly connected with topics which
are discussed. It is much easier for us due to the fact that we choose this discussion group which appeals to our views and beliefs. We also must be aware of the fact that introducing any other topics which are not connected with the main goal of the discussion group may result in us being rejected by other participants (Sakr, 2012: 121).

4. Multimedia character

The advent and the development of computers led to the evolution of the language of the Internet which started to expand on a larger scale. The most significant difference between old computers from the past and modern ones concerns changes within a text mode. In the past people created documents and files only by means of text modes without any additional supplements. Over centuries changes connected with the development of the Internet and modern technology resulted in the appearance of various types of fonts, colors and their hues, and other features such as bold print, italics or underlines. Thanks to that, nowadays we can edit texts in as many ways as we want which was available only for printing houses in the past. Nowadays not only can we edit our texts by changing fonts or colors, but also by means of introducing some visual elements (pictures, images, gifs) we can make them more vivid, audible (music, songs, voice records) or dynamic and kinesthetic (movements, gestures, mimics) (Adamski, 2010; Jackson, 2013).

5. Hypertextuality

Hypertextuality is strictly connected with the visualization of the language due to the fact that thanks to hyperlinks which are activated by means of a mouse click or touching the screen we can easily move on to other fragments or texts which seem to be interesting. It is extremely important not only from the editorial point of view, but also the linguistic one owing to the fact that by choosing a particular hyperlink we can be redirected to many other various websites which contain similar information. In such a situation when we have different sources which come from verified websites we are able to make a comparison concerning the reliability of given information and originality. Hyperlinks may redirect us not only to other fragments of the texts, but also to some pictures, tables, charts, videos, and even records. Moreover, hypertext is
characterized by its openness and the lack of time limitation. Regardless of the place and time, we will always have a free access to all sources.

It is also important to mention that hypertext is not characterized by any chronological order and does not have anything in common with the linear structure of the text. Neither does it have contents page and index due to the fact that the range of potentially accessible words is still increasing and it would be impossible to gather them all together. Hypertext is perceived as one huge cobweb which is linked with hundreds of other smaller cobwebs. It is not controlled by anyone and it is generated automatically. It also gives other users opportunity to take part in discussions, exchange opinions and views. Thanks to this feature we may ascertain that hypertext takes part in interpersonal communication and at the same time helps people to change their attitude towards the written text. Since it is no more linear text, people are supposed to get used to a new organization of the text which is full of references, links, hyperlinks, and other supplements (Castells, 2003: 227).

6. Hierarchical character

Even if this feature is typical of most of the written forms, yet it is very noticeable and pointed out in computer-mediated communication, especially in some forums and chat groups.

* Re: Włochy - Korea
  timber  17-06-2002 18:26 odpowiedz na list odpowiedz cytując

JESTEM ZA!!!!!!!

* Re: Włochy - Korea   adres: *czestochowa.comp.ppp.pnap.pl
  Gość: thedude  17-06-2002 18:39 odpowiedz na list odpowiedz cytując

Po raz pierwszy będę całym sercem za Włochami.

* Re: Włochy - Korea   adres: *kaptol.pl
  Gość: Kąpek  17-06-2002 18:48 odpowiedz na list odpowiedz cytując

> Rozumiem, że po wyjściu z grupy Koreanczykom węda sodowa uderzyła do głowy, ale trochę przesadzają. Z ich wypowiedzi wynika, że mouse z Wło-
  chami mają już wygrany i teraz zyka się na Hiszpanie. Kurece, Włosi
  to Włosi, Koreanczyccy mogli by sie od nich piłki aczyć, a nie lekcewazyć.
  Mam nadzieję, że Azzurri im przyloza, choćby za brak szczęścia.

Najbardziej mnie cieszę, że jednej z tych drużyn już wkrótce nie będzie :)

* Re: Włochy - Korea   adres: *baukolding.pl
  Gość: Kąpek  18-06-2002 12:59 odpowiedz na list odpowiedz cytując

Gość (portalu: kąpek napisał(a):

> Najbardziej mnie cieszę, że jednej z tych drużyn już wkrótce nie będzie :)
> Tylko żeby nie było karnych, bo twoja aagonia nie przedłuży...

Figure 13: Hierarchical character (Grzenia, 2006: 112).
This hierarchical character is noticeable in answers which appear one after another below the main topic of the discussion or the main message. In fact, this hierarchy is imposed by the structure which is typical of a specific social network and it determines its final outlook. This hierarchical character becomes pragmatic on the grounds of the fact that each user can cite previous messages sent by someone else (fragments with a sign >), take part in an active part in the discussion by means of adding comments, leave the discussion if they see that they do not receive any feedback or even introduce a totally new topic for the discussion and start it with other users (Filiciak et al, 2010: 89; Wyrwas, 2004: 55, Javed et al, 2016: 82).

7. Dynamic character

Texts which appear on the Internet are characterized by being dynamic and prone to various changes. Articles or comments which are available on websites during one day can be modified or deleted the next day; hence very often it is compulsory to mark the date of the last update. Unfortunately, this feature makes them less stable and reliable than texts which can be found in newspapers. However, having seen that either an article or the website are before the latest update, we will be more eager to come back and read it again in order to find out what was modified and what new was added. Paper newspapers or magazines do not give us such a possibility. This dynamic character is also strictly connected with previously mentioned hyperlinks, which enable us to visit other websites which are connected with the topic we are interested in. Thanks to that we can divide texts according to our wishes, expectations, and interests. Sometimes accidentally we encounter some other texts which turn out to be useful and helpful. It can be stated that texts which are found on the Internet are open both for senders and receivers. Senders can edit and modify them whenever they want to and receivers are aware that future changes and modifications will introduce something new and innovative in these texts (Grzenia, 2004: 28; Fiske, 1990: 56, Sun, 2010: 100).

8. Range

As has been noticed by Golus (2004: 36), both a spoken language and the language of the Internet have their own range. Some space limitations are the reasons why people create their own jargons and local dialects. Such varieties of a spoken language cannot
be a part of social networks due to the fact that the Internet has a global range, however, it is possible to come up with some environmental varieties of the language, for example:

- environment for games lovers,
- environment for chat users,
- environment for discussion groups,
- environment for bloggers.

9. Permanency

Apart from all these mentioned features we cannot forget about the permanency of texts which are placed on the Internet. According to Boellstorff (2015, 53), to some degree, this feature is similar to dynamic character of online messages, however, some points need to be considered in this context:

- techniques aimed at making these texts more stable,
- a channel of communication,
- content of these texts,
- users’ needs and requirement.

As mentioned before, some texts may be exposed to further modifications, and the content before editing may differ a lot from the content which we receive after changes. In order to avoid such situations we save the most important information, texts or articles on CDs, DVDs, or memory sticks. Only by saving in such a way can we be sure that our content will remain the same. Presumably, in the future new devices will replace CDs and DVDs and people will not have any problems with saving important information (Rodney 2013). Another factor which decides about the stability of our information is the channel of communication. Table 9 presents the relation between certain channels of communication and their stability.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The channel of communication</th>
<th>Stability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Wide Web (WWW)</td>
<td>A couple of years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters and discussion groups</td>
<td>A couple of years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mails</td>
<td>Not many, a few years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small talks</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: The relation between channels of communication and their stability (on the basis of Grzenia, 2006: 117).

It is easy to observe that information which can be found on some websites remains there much longer than messages which we exchange in some chat rooms or during small talks. The moment we close the window of the conversation we lose all information which appeared during chatting. The last two features concern the content of messages and users’ needs and requirements. Some observations led to the conclusion that literary and scientific texts are the most popular on websites. The main aims of these observations are to monitor how often particular texts and articles are read by users of the Internet. Only by implementing these observations can we be sure about the needs of users. Sometimes unnecessary texts are deleted, sometimes they are modified and adjusted to requirements suggested by other users (Szczechaniak, 2012:90; Clarke, 2000: 115; Couper, 2000: 184; Dillman, 2000: 48).

3.4 Netspeak and its features

After discussing some general features of the language of the Internet, it is crucial to pay heed to some modifications and changes which can be observed in a written language. These modifications and changes include grammar, vocabulary, style, punctuation, register, and even text organization. It needs to be stated that a growing interest in changes connected with the language of the Internet is caused by an interdisciplinary character of some phenomena. Languages have always been used for various purposes: political, economic, medical, and even industrial. However, some thoughts should be given to a new form of the language which is created on websites and social networks. This form of the language is specific due to some reasons. First of all, it is a combination of some features which are typical of a written language and some which are attributed to a spoken one. Second of all, its main aim is to function
mostly as the form of the language which can be found only on the Internet, and third of all, it was created according to users’ needs, wishes, and requirements. This form of the language is called Netspeak. Crystal (2006:19) enumerates seven types of communication channels where Netspeak can be found. Those are:

1. electronic mails,
2. World Wide Web (WWW),
3. synchronic discussion groups,
4. asynchronous discussion groups,
5. instant messaging,
6. computer games,
7. blogs.

It is believed that these channels sometimes share the same features. For example, when going through some posts and comments on various forums, we can encounter some structural and organization features which are typical of e-mail messages or instant ones. Apart from these seven types of communication, one can point out some linguistic features which are attributed to Netspeak:

1. emoticons,
2. abbreviations and antonyms,
3. modifications in a written language,
4. Internet expressions and slangs.

Before discussing these seven types of communication channels and features of Netspeak, it is crucial to wonder whether the language of the Internet (Netspeak as well) possesses more features which are typical of written forms or speech. Tannen (2006, 600) claims that one of the greatest sources of information of the Net is the Web. In most cases, the language of the Web has features characteristic for written forms. All possible scientific, religious, journalistic, literary texts which appear in non-electronic forms such as newspapers, magazines, and journals can also be found on websites. For this reason, web page writers can never be sure who their readers are going to be, and texts which are posted there have features common both for written and spoken forms.
Nonetheless, it must be stated that the Internet websites sometimes possess functions which are much closer to speech and interactions (e.g. e-sales) or some empty space for leaving comments. In contrast to the Web, communication channels such as chatgroups, virtual worlds, instant messengers display more features which are characteristic for a spoken language. These channels require an immediate action. We receive the message and we are supposed to answer back the same minute we read the message. Even if we ‘write’ e-mails or messages, and not ‘speak’ them, we behave as if we were the participants of a face-to-face conversation. Despite the fact that we use the keyboard to type messages which we want to convey, the real metalanguage present in this environment is spoken in its character (Banyai, 2016: 245).

### 3.4.1 Netspeak and face-to-face conversations

Even if these electronic situations are speech-like, there are some significant differences which distinguish them from face-to-face conversations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Netspeak</th>
<th>Face-to-face conversations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The lack of simultaneous feedback – when we type on a keyboard, the message will not leave our computer until we ‘send’ it. It means that our interlocutor cannot react anyhow to our message when it is being typed because he or she even does not know what the content of this message will be. The message will appear on our user’s screen at once (Crystal, 2006: 34).</td>
<td>1. There is always an immediate feedback and the response – our interlocutor does not have to wait to hear the whole sentence, he or she can interrupt and somehow react to our message, make comments or even correct us. He or she can even predict the following content of the message and prepare some questions which they will want to ask (Crystal, 2006: 35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The rhythm of the interaction on the Internet is much slower – it is typical of asynchronous forms of communication such as e-mails or asynchronous chatgroups. Sending the message in one moment does not mean that we need to receive the answer few seconds later.</td>
<td>2. The rhythm of the interaction in face-to-face conversations is much faster – there are not any factors (apart from unexpected ones) which could disturb the reception of the message (Crystal, 2006: 36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unfortunately such situations often happen and they depend on the following factors:

* the recipient’s computer – whether our user set up some settings concerning the announcement of upcoming messages.
* the frequency of checking the inbox – sometimes people forget to check their inbox or they do not log in for a longer period of time. In this situation we can wait for the answer from few days to some months.
* other circumstances: easy or difficult access to the Internet

Even with the fastest instant messengers, the message which is typed immediately does not have to be necessarily delivered to our user because of some technical problems such as bandwidth processing problems or traffic density on the host computer (Szpunar, 2007: 85)

| 3. Lag problems and frustration – it is generally believed that the lag which lasts 2-3 seconds may evoke some negative emotions inside us, not to mention lags which last much longer, like over 10 seconds. Frustration, which appears, is common both for the sender and the receiver. From the sender’s point of view, frustration can be caused by the fact that in a quick time he or she wants to convey an important message and for some | 3. The lack (or barely) lag problems and frustration – in contrary to Netspeak, may have totally different sources. One of them may be connected with the fact that sometimes during a face-to-face conversation our interlocutor needs to go somewhere and our time and energy devoted to waiting may or may not evoke frustration in us (Chassy, 2015: 76). |
reasons it cannot be delivered. From the receiver’s point of view, the lack of an expected reaction is ambiguous. Our user may not know whether it is due to some technical problems or the attitude of the sender. Even if we introduce some turn-taking techniques such as ‘Hello? Are you there? Do you hear me?’ during phone conversations, they will not work out in chatgroups or instant messengers. The person X sent a message to the person Y, but the person Y did not receive it because he or she:
* had some technical problems.
* did not notice the message because of some other remarks appearing at the same time.
* was disrupted by some other factors such as other (real or online) conversations.
* did not log out and he or she was not present the moment the message appeared on the screen.
* ignored the message and decided not to answer (Chassy, 2015: 74).

4. The larger the number of participants involved in a conversation, the worse situation becomes – it is obvious that delays in a conversation between two people are annoying and ambiguous, but they are more manageable. The moment we encounter some problems, we can

4. In the case of face-to-face conversations, a large number of participants who take part in the discussion may be problematic, but not to such an extent like in the case of an online environment. As mentioned before, a turn-taking technique is very useful and helpful
make a call and dissolve them. The situation looks a bit different when some delays occur in chatgroups or instant messengers where more people are involved. Normally, people use a turn-taking technique which plays a very fundamental role in maintaining a good conversation. Mutual asking questions, receiving answers or even small interruptions make that our conversation makes sense. When there are too long laps on the Internet, the process of maintaining the conversation within the topic by means of using a turn-taking technique becomes impossible due to the fact that turn-taking is dictated not by the participants of the conversation, but by the software. Messages appear in a linear order on our user’s screen and are automatically generated by the software. These messages come from various sources and with different lags. When they appear on some groups or forums, the same message may be noticed by one user earlier, but by another one later. Some users may read the message and answer immediately, some others may lose the thread because of too many messages which gather at the same time. Such a mess leads to the situation that a conversation cannot be maintained and as a result, it fails (Boellstorff, 2015: 40).

in the situation when we need to deal with a great number of participants. By asking questions or giving others a chance to bring up some important matters we can easily maintain a conversation which will not end in a failure (Boellstorff, 2015: 45).

Table 10: The comparison of Netspeak’s and face-to-face conversation’s features (on the basis of Crystal, 2006).
Taking into consideration all differences between Netspeak and a face-to-face conversation it must be stated that the language of the Internet can sometimes mix features typical of face-to-face conversations and these attributed to Netspeak. Thus, this new kind of the language of the Internet can be characterized in terms of some more features.

### 3.4.2 Prosody and paralanguage

These two domains concern the notion of ‘it ain’t what you say but the way that you say it’. In everyday conversations we do not have any problems with prosody and paralanguage due to the fact that by means of using a proper intonation, speed, rhythm or a tone of our voice we can express feelings such as happiness, anger, frustration or even rage. The situation looks a bit different when it comes to writing, that is why special techniques and methods are implemented in order to express such feelings (Crystal, 2006: 39, Wimmer & Dominick, 2008: 211):

a) repeated letters:
   - hiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii
   - byeeeeeereeeeee
   - heeeeeeereeeej
   - naraaaaaaaa

b) multiplying punctuation marks (this technique requires an additional effort due to the fact that at the same time we need to press the button Shift and “!”). We may say that this technique is double expressive for two reasons. Firstly, we need to put enough effort in multiplying a particular punctuation mark, secondly this message itself will have an emotional tone):

   - leave me alone !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
   - what are you talking about ????????????????
   - Why ?????!!!!!!!
   - Daj mi spokój !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
c) capitalization (using mostly for ‘shouting’ and ‘giving orders’):
- I SAID NO
- OMG BYE
- LEAVE ME NOW IN PEACE!
- GET OUT NOW!
- NIE WIEM!

d) letter spacing (using for speaking louder and more clear):
- O k a y
- J A S N E
- C L E A R

e) using asterisks in order to:

I. emphasize a particular word or an expression:
- What is the *real* meaning of it?
- It was *eminently* perfect
- It was quite *chilly* evening
- Poszukaj w *katalogu* a nie *wyszukiwarce*

II. replace swearwords or parts of swearwords:
- What the f*** are you talking about?
- This bit** is driving me crazy!
- Don’t talk to this di**. He isn’t worth it.
- K**wa mam dość !

f) ignoring grammatical rules (the lack of capital letters, Polish signs, punctuation marks). There may be many reasons to explain this phenomenon. One of them is that again by pressing two buttons at the same time we need much more effort, for example in order to create “ą”, we need to press “alt” and the letter “a”. We may assume that people prefer sending a message in a very short time to paying attention to such minutiae (Warchala, 2003: 95). Some examples are presented below:
3.4.3 The language of emotions

Since emotions and the ways of expressing them will be analyzed in the research chapter, it is crucial to pay some attention to the language of emotions itself, its source, and the role in written texts. Undoubtedly, it is wise to start this section with a short description of the nervous system which is responsible for evoking different types of emotions. According to Rosen (2003: 18), our nervous system consists of two parts: the first one called somatic nervous system controls relations between muscles and signals which come from various organs and the second one named automatic nervous system which functions regardless of our will. Signals which we perceive from environment are linked both with higher and lower parts of our brain. Cerebral cortex is one of these parts of the brain which is responsible for interpreting messages, recognizing situations around us, and evoking certain responses. For this reason our sadness which may be evoked by hearing about people’s death in a plane crash cannot be compared with the death of the person who is closer to us.

There are some scholars who present different theories of emotions. Among them one can point out Deon & Teroni (2012: 25) who contend that our emotions are the result of physiological reactions to events. There are some outer factors which evoke particular physiological reactions. Our emotional reaction is dependent upon how we ourselves interpret those factors. For instance, when we see or read something funny, we start to smile or even laugh, when we notice something dangerous or troublesome, we start to tremble, our heart begins to race. The interpretation of those factors is pretty subjective and various emotions can be evoked in each of us (Griffiths, 2006: 101).

A slightly different approach to physiological theory of emotions is cognitive theory suggested by Myers (2004: 120) who claims that physiological arousal occurs first and then one has to recognize the reason for this arousal in order to label it as an emotion. For instance, if we anticipate a message concerning our job interview and we experience the feeling of having sweaty hands, it may be interpreted as a symbol of
stress and anxiety; however, if we are supposed to receive a message from our girlfriend or boyfriend, sweaty hands may symbolize falling in love, affection or passion. For this reason, cognitive function is extremely important in a written language. Firstly, we need to recognize whether a particular event is worth our attention or not. Secondly, when this event is of our interest, we need to develop emotions which are suitable for the situation. Finally, we need to react and make further steps in order to release our inner feelings. Still, a totally different view is presented by Roberts (1988: 186) who states that emotions can be described in the following categories. Here are some of them:

1. emotions are our attitude toward the events around us,
2. emotions are not only our thoughts and beliefs, but above all our experience,
3. emotions are highly subjective, which means that what we experience can be either true or false,
4. emotions are very often controlled by us and we may manipulate them in order to achieve our final goal,
5. emotions are our answers for moments we encounter in our life.

### 3.4.4 Emoticons and their role

Gestures, body movements, and facial expressions are normally used in face-to-face conversations. By using gestures we are perceived as being more reliable and trustworthy, movements help us to relax our bodies, and facial expressions are beneficial when we want to express our inner emotions and feelings. It would be difficult to imagine everyday conversations without using proxemics. Unfortunately, writing does not include it and very often we look for ways of showing how we feel, what we have in mind or simply to show our attitude. For these reasons, with the development of writing and at the same time the development of the language of the Internet smileys or emoticons became more and more popular. As pointed out by Crystal (Crystal, 2006: 39):
“emoticons are combinations of keyboard characters designed to show an emotional facial expression: they are typed in sequence on a single line, and places after the final punctuation mark of a sentence. Almost all of them are read sideways.”

Apart from the fact that emoticons are used mainly for expressing our feelings, emotions, and states of being, it must be noted that very often their semantic role is limited and a wrong interpretation of them can lead to a general misunderstanding which may have a bad influence on our conversation (Halpin, 2013: 46). Using emoticons and their interpretations are strictly connected with the situational context. The interpretation of emoticons is not ambiguous in the situation when users implement them in a proper way:

- ‘I am very sorry to hear that 😞’,
- ‘I feel so bad today 😞’,
- ‘I am extremely happy to see you here again 😊’,

Nevertheless, it looks different when the same emoticons will be used as one of the techniques of expressing irony, sarcasm, or even disappointment. Sometimes when we add a smile to the sentence which is perceived as rude or arrogant we will only increase the force of the ‘flame’:

- ‘Pity that you hadn’t informed me 😏 Maybe then I could join you’
- ‘Are you sick? Go out more often without a cap and a scarf 😔’
- ‘Thanks that you informed me about it 😒 Now, because of you, I am late’
- ‘I’ve asked you so many times for help. I will manage on my own now 😏’
- ‘Loser! 😏 I have won again!’

Another function of using emoticons is linked with pragmatics. Very often lack of emoticons in a sentence may be perceived as a warning by our interlocutors. Sentences or messages where words stand on their own are usually interpreted badly by our interlocutor. This problem is not so noticeable in face-to-face conversations owing to
the fact that by means of all gestures and mimics, which have already been mentioned, we can make our conversations more real and vivid. We see and hear each other, we can maintain our conversation in many various ways. When we talk to someone by means of using written forms we can just see sentences; however, it is easy to notice the tone of the conversation. This tone of the conversation may be observed by the length of sentences, the presence or lack of emoticons, and types of words which are used (Crystal, 2006: 40). The following examples illustrate a coldish tone of the conversation:

- ‘Hey. I’m fine’
- ‘Yes, come to me. I will be happy’
- ‘Nie jestem zły. Dlaczego?’
- ‘I ate, took a shower and I am relaxing. How about you?’

Together with the development of the language of the Internet we can also observe the development of emoticons. The very first emoticons consisted only of punctuation marks. Table 11 presents some of the most frequently used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>: - )  : )</td>
<td>A smile – used for expressing positive feelings and emotions such as joy, happiness, content. It is also used for jokes and turning too serious conversation into a funnier one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: - (  : (</td>
<td>A sad face – the symbol of bad news, and a bad mood. It may also indicate that something bad had happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>; - )  ; )</td>
<td>A wink – the most frequent interpretations of this emoticon are: ‘Don’t treat it too serious’, ‘Easy’, ‘Don’t worry. All is okay’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: - /  : /</td>
<td>A twist – it functions as the symbol of suspicion, discontent, dissatisfaction, and hesitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-D  :D</td>
<td>A laugh – used for expressing jokes or our reaction for hearing something funny.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ; - *  : *         | A kiss – one of the most intimate emoticons used in closer
relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoticons</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>:O -:O</td>
<td>A surprise – used to express shock or disappointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:'( ;'('</td>
<td>A cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-[ :]</td>
<td>Sarcasm, irony, criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-S :S</td>
<td>Shame, shyness, confusion, embarrassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:&gt;</td>
<td>Sarcasm, irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;: (</td>
<td>Anger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Emoticons and their interpretations (on the basis of Sanderson, 1993: 112).

Over time these punctuation marks, which primarily were used to make a particular emoticon, were replaced with icons (also called emoji) – graphic substitutions of traditional emoticons. By means of using these icons we can visualize the current mood or the atmosphere present during the conversation. These emojis are more reliable, and they outgrow the number of emoticons which consisted of punctuation marks. Table 12 presents some of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emojis</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emojis" /></td>
<td>Various ways of sending a kiss – from a gentle one to the most passionate ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emojis" /></td>
<td>Different ways of expressing content and joy – from a big smile, through laughing to crying from laugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emojis" /></td>
<td>- sadness,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- overwhelming,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- depressive mood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emojis" /></td>
<td>Used for expressing:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- enormous content and satisfaction,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- worship, adoration,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12: Emojis and their interpretation (on the basis of Bennett 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emojis</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 👿       | - falling in love,  
|         | - admiration.   |
| 😞       | - dissatisfaction,  
|         | - irritation,  
|         | - disgust.       |
| 🗣️       | - silence,  
|         | - shyness,  
|         | - lack of willingness for speaking. |
| 😠       | - irritation,  
|         | - being fed up,  
|         | - contemplation. |
| 🎈,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,$,
of stickers which are gaining popularity nowadays. They are defined as a combination of vivid pictures and words. Some of them reflect our feelings, emotions, and states of being, for example:

Some others illustrate particular activities:

And still there are some of them which may replace some expressions and phrases:

Using emoticons is not the only technique which we may implement in order to maintain a good conversation. Apart from them one can think about verbal glosses which used to be very popular in various chat rooms (e.g. gadu gadu). The main idea of using verbal glosses is to put in angel brackets:

a) our thoughts, ideas or suggestions as additional information to our conversation:

- I am so thirsty. <thinking about drinking water>
- I would like to have some fun <party time>
b) our emotions, irony, sarcasm:

- I am so fed up with it. <wall>
- You are so funny! <laughing out loud>
- Nie mogę wytrzymać ze śmiechu <hahaha>
- What an idiot! <facepalm>

c) to indicate some symptoms or states:

- You will do it for me, thanks! <smirk>
- I feel so bad today <sneezing>
- Jestem taki zmęczony <pać>

3.4.5 Clippings and Acronyms

Bauer (2003: 40) defines clipping as a process of shortening words without changing their meanings. In this process either beginning (fore clipping) or the end (back clipping) can be shortened:

a) back clipping:

exam -> examination
doc -> doctor
gas -> gasoline
cze -> cześć
nara -> na razie
pozdro-> pozdrowienia
spoko -> spokojnie

b) fore clipping:

phone -> telephone
gator -> alligator
Clipping is present both on the Internet and during face-to-face conversations. They are typical mostly of informal conversations (both written and spoken ones) and among people who are of the same age, social status, and occupation. According to Meyer (2009: 181), acronyms are formed by using the first letters of two or more words to form a single word: IDK ['I don’t know'], sometimes individual words are reduced to two or three letters: PLS ['Please'], and some of them are like rebuses which consist of both letters and numbers: GR8 ['Great'] (Crystal, 2006: 91). Some various examples of acronyms are presented in Table 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronyms</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDK</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRB</td>
<td>Be right back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMG</td>
<td>Oh My God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>As soon as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBH</td>
<td>To be honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>No problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKA</td>
<td>Also known as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIU</td>
<td>Yes I understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR8</td>
<td>Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L8R</td>
<td>Later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOL</td>
<td>Laughing out loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U2</td>
<td>You too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THX</td>
<td>Thanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTYL</td>
<td>Talk to you later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTW</td>
<td>By the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFAIK</td>
<td>As far as I know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLS</td>
<td>Please</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4N</td>
<td>By for now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYL</td>
<td>See you later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBL</td>
<td>Be back later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When talking about exchanging posts, comments, and messages on social websites, one cannot forget about various speech acts which appear there. Grundy (2000: 276) states that speech acts are aspects of language use and strong forces which are associated with an utterance. They are powerful enough to convince us that something is true or not. This definition of speech acts is modified by Werkhofer (2005: 168) who claims that speech acts are a kind of actions performed by means of utterances in speech and writing used in order to communicate in a successful way. Orzechowski (2007: 45) believes that grammatically well-formed sentences are used in order to express our inner feelings and emotions. The understanding of speech acts by Devitt and Hanley (2006: 153) suggests that speech acts help us to express our communicative intention which should be understood by our interlocutor. In their opinions, the choice of words plays a very important role here since the same utterance can be understood in two different ways by both sides. The example presented by them is connected with forgetting about someone’s birthday. By expressing our apology connected with this fact we want to express our inner sadness and confusion; however, our interlocutor may interpret it as a sign of laziness, forgetfulness, or even rudeness.

### 3.5 Speech acts – introduction

Table 14 illustrates the division and the descriptions of speech acts suggested by Austin (1962, 120).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of speech act</th>
<th>The description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Locutionary act        | - the most important act in the process of producing sentences,  
                          - by means of choosing proper sounds, putting them together, and using them in context we are trying to produce a meaningful sentence,  
                          - not being able to produce proper sounds and finding the context for them may result in producing meaningless and incomprehensible sentences for our interlocutors. |
| Illocutionary act      | - connected with a specific purpose of produced sentences,  
                          - aims at conveying information in the form of complaining, asking, or even promising,  
                          - imperative and interrogative sentences are used in order to get desired information. |
| Perlocutionary act     | - focuses on evoking particular feelings, emotions and effects in our hearer,  
                          - it functions as the final product of the speech,  
                          - it is the moment when our intention will be understood by our interlocutor or not. |

Table 14: Austin’s classification of speech acts (on the basis of Austin, 1962, 120).

### 3.5.2 Searle’s classification of speech acts

Searle (1979) modified the classification suggested by Austin (1962). He believes that we have to take into consideration many factors when talking about the idea of speech acts in general. First of all, each speech act can be interpreted in many different ways
depending on the person and the context. Second of all, well-formed speech acts are successful on condition that they meet certain criteria within the category called ‘felicity conditions.’ Those conditions help us to achieve the final goal of our conversation. For instance, if we aim at apologizing, we are obliged to take into account only those felicity conditions which are typical of expressing apologies and sadness. Otherwise, our intention may be interpreted differently. Finally, he decided to divide all speech acts into the following categories: declarations, representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives. Table 15 presents this division together with vivid descriptions and examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of speech act</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declarations</td>
<td>- used to create something new or changing current situation.</td>
<td>- I pronounce you husband and wife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td>- used to express our belief or disbelief connected with particular matters and situations.</td>
<td>- I know that the sky is blue. - I believe that the Earth goes around the Sun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissives</td>
<td>- used to express that particular actions will be performed in the nearest future.</td>
<td>- We promise we will solve this problem as soon as possible. - We won’t forget about it, don’t worry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directives</td>
<td>- used to show our desire and polite requests towards our interlocutors.</td>
<td>- Could you give me a cup of tea, please? - Be on time! - Can you lend me some money, please?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressives</td>
<td>- used to show inner feelings and emotions.</td>
<td>- I am so sorry! I hope it will be better soon! - I love it! Let’s do that again! - Poor you! I don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 Netspeak vs politeness principles

Naturally, the notion of politeness is strictly connected with both internal and external factors which shape the way we maintain conversation with people either in everyday conversations or on social networks. Among external factors, one can think of two, the most powerful ones: age and social status. Undoubtedly, they shape our social relations with interlocutors and the way we maintain the conversation. It is obvious that our way of talking will differ when it comes to our peer and elderly people who deserve to be given more respect and caring. Talking to someone who has a higher social status is another example of the situation which may require using more formal words and expressions than in the case of people who have the same education like we.

As mentioned above, there are also internal factors which contribute to the way we maintain a conversation. One of them is the level of friendliness. It may happen that we can know both the person who has a higher social status and the person with whom we are working, yet it may turn out that our relations are better with the person who is higher in the social hierarchy. In this case we may come to the conclusion that the social distance between us and this person is smaller; consequently, the level of friendliness and politeness automatically will increase.

For this reason Meyerhoff (2006: 82) provides us with his understanding of politeness which says that actions taken by particular members of the community aim at decreasing both social and interpersonal disturbances between people in this society. The definition proposed by Meyerhoff was criticized by Holtgraves (2008: 38) who states that people only focus on internal and external factors which shape the level of politeness, and everyone forgets about the practical use of language in a given social context. This view caused that politeness has become a subject of the discussion in many various fields such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, and philosophy.

Brown and Levinson (1987: 28) verified the theory of politeness by means of linking the practical use of language in a given social context and by introducing the idea of face which plays a very important role in all types of conversations. This face
can be either ‘lost’ if our interlocutor does something unacceptable or against moral norms, or ‘saved’ if we help him or her not to feel guilty, confused, or embarrassed.

It is also important to make a distinction between two kinds of people – those who are more autonomous and need more freedom in doing particular actions and those who need to be in constant contact with others. Thus, more reserved and distanced people are characterized by having a negative face and people who need to be accepted in society by possessing a positive face. Unfortunately, both kinds of people’s face may be threatened in the process of communication, no matter whether it is in a written language or spoken. For the person who possesses a positive face, it is crucial to be in the centre of the conversation, hence any failure during talking (e.g. forgetting to welcome him or her, sending a smiling emoticon, asking about his or her state of being) may result in losing a positive face. Similarly, a person with a negative face prefers to stay back and not to take an active part in the conversation, thus forcing such a person to talk and discuss some matters may diminish his or her desire to participate in the conversation (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2010: 38).

3.6.1 Positive politeness and face-threatening act

Arundale (2009: 41) & Bogdanowska-Jakubowska (2010: 41) state that positive politeness is strictly connected with face saving act. As stated before, people with positive politeness are very open-minded, sociable and want to be in the centre. All possible kinds of criticisms, disapprovals, accusations, or disagreements may result in threatening their face. For this reason, the main aim of this concept is to save the hearer’s positive face. One can do it by implementing the following steps:

* identifying with the participant of the conversation,
* making him feel more relaxed and stressed out,
* agreeing with his statements and opinions,
* showing desire to reach the same aim in the conversation,
* showing sensitivity towards his views.

There are also some strategies which can be used in both spoken and written conversations. One of them is called ‘solidarity strategy’ which aims at showing that
our aims and goals are exactly the same like the goals of our interlocutor. It may be achieved through using the same language or some expressions which are typical of the same group to which we belong. For instance, when talking to someone who is similar to us and has the same interests and passions, it is advisable to use the word ‘bro’ whereas if we meet someone on a social website and we are both users of the same social network, we may welcome each other by using the word ‘pal’ or ‘penpal.’ It is also important to pay a compliment from time to time (Holtgraves, 2008: 46).

Another strategy suggested by Spencer-Oatey (2007: 546) is linked with being flexible in the conversation. There are always some taboo topics which should be omitted due to some reasons. If we know that our interlocutor is characterized by having a positive face, we should remember that only non-controversial topics should be brought up. We also have to bear in mind that even if we do not agree with our speaker, we cannot say it directly. We can use some other ways to show that we respect his opinion despite the fact that ours differ slightly, for instance:

* ‘Yes, I know what you mean, but..’
* ‘I think that you are partly right; however, I would like to remark that..’
* ‘I see your point, yet mine is a bit different..’

Optimism is another strategy which should be implemented in the conversation with the person who possesses a positive face. Such people need only positive feedback and supportive encouragements, thus the following expressions can be useful:

* ‘I am sure you will manage!’
* Why don’t we go to the cinema?’
* ‘I am sure you will not mind if I help you a bit with..’

The last strategy is connected with maintaining a successful conversation with such a person. It may be assumed that much depends on such a conversation. One has to remember that apart from listening to our interlocutor, we also have to ask questions, nod head in order to show that we agree with him, show sympathy and understanding in situations when our speaker feels worried or lonely, advise or suggest a reasonable solution to solve the problem, or even joke a bit to make our interlocutor more relaxed and stressed out (Bousfield, 2008: 57).
3.6.2 Negative politeness and face-threatening act

In contrast to positive politeness, the conversation with a person who is characterized by possessing a negative face requires some strategies suggested by Locher (2004: 67):

1. A person with a negative face is perceived as someone who likes to save time. For this reason, we should respect his time and if needed apologize for interrupting him.

2. We should use indirect forms by means of using questions:

* ‘Will you open the door?’
* ‘Can you tell me..?’
* ‘I would like you to give me..’

3. People with a negative face do not like to be forced to do something, thus it is advisable to use “If clauses sentences” in order to ask about something, for example:

* ‘Open the door if you can’
* ‘If you can tell me., I would be very grateful’
* ‘Do it if you can of course’

4. In order not to threaten the hearer’s face, one has to:
a) minimize the imposition by means of apologizing:

* ‘I am sorry to bother you, but can you..’
* ‘I would not like to bother, but I have one task to solve’

b) using plural pronouns rather than singular:

* ‘we are supposed to inform you about..’
* ‘we are requested to ask you if..’

c) using passive constructions instead of active ones:
Only by implementing all these strategies can we be sure that we will not threaten our speaker’s face. It is extremely important on social networks the moment we get to know someone better. Very often it happens that we do not know much about our interlocutor and sometimes we are not aware that he or she may be characterized by having either a positive or a negative face.

### 3.7 Characteristics of social media user

After discussing matters connected with various speech acts which can be found on social networks, positive and negative politeness attributed to our potential users, and ways of losing or saving their faces, it is important to characterize our interlocutors in terms of three types of competence which they may possess: linguistic, intercultural and media.

#### 3.7.1 linguistic competence

Noam Chomsky (1965) made a distinction between linguistic competence and performance. Linguistic competence is understood as a subconscious ability to create sentences we have never heard before. He believed that everyone was born with a set of grammatical rules and components including phonetics, phonology, syntax, morphology, and semantics which were used for creating utterances. This ability also allows us to recognize which sentences are both grammatically correct and meaningful, but also these which are produced according to the rules of grammar, but seem to be meaningless. Performance, on the other hand, is perceived as using our knowledge in a practical way. It may fully reflect our competence including grammatical correctness, but it also may contain some mistakes which stem from some external factors such as distractions or memory limitations.

Chomsky (1965: 45) set linguistic competence in the centre of his studies owing to the fact that for him the language was useful on its own without considering any
additional features such as social or cultural factors. He states that we are able to use this language not because of some external determinants, but thanks to the fact that we are born with linguistics abilities which are embedded in our brain from the beginning. His theory used to be famous for many years; however, later on an American sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1967) proved that linguistics competence was not enough in the process of communication and we also have to pay attention to communicative competence which determines factors such as time and the place of having the conversation, the features of both interlocutors (their roles, views, opinions, beliefs) and relationships between them. When talking about communicative competence, one has to remember that we need to possess a general knowledge about topics which we want to bring up (Hymes, 1967: 65).

Pisarek (2008: 65) observes that one cannot talk about a successful communication without considering both linguistics and communicative competence. Some thought must be given to differences which may occur in the level of using the style of the language. We need to keep in mind people who take part in the conversation and our relations with them. Only by considering these elements, can we decide whether we can use more formal language (‘This investment looks really profitable. However, do we have enough money for it?’) or informal one (‘It looks fab! Do we have dough?’) Bachman (1990: 87) enumerates eight factors which contribute to two the most crucial aspects: linguistic and pragmatic. Linguistic aspects include:

- phonology and spelling,
- grammar,
- vocabulary,
- coherent discourse

whereas pragmatic aspects include:

- functional elements of our conversation (one needs to know the main aim of taking part in a discussion),
- sociolinguistics (one needs to recognize which version of the language is used or which dialects appear),
- interactional (an ability to use proper mimics, gestures, distance in order to maintain a good relationship with our interlocutor),
Finally, the last factors which cannot be omitted when talking about competence are these connected with sociolinguistics matters. Being aware of the fact that we have to remember about grammatical correctness, a proper style of the language, and situational context, we also have to bear in mind some sociological factors such as age, gender, social roles, and the position in the social hierarchy. If we have a look at two questions: ‘How could I help you, Sir?’ and ‘What do you wanna from me?’, it is easy to notice that both of them are grammatically correct, both of them are meaningful, both of them have the same function – asking about something desirable; however, the consequences of asking such questions will be noticeable when we take into account the mutual relationships between interlocutors. The first question is acceptable only if both of the speakers who are involved possess the same social status or if the receiver has higher position than the sender. The second question may be perceived as a polite one only if both interlocutors have the same position in the hierarchy or when the status of the receiver is lower than the sender’s. It is extremely important when we send an important e-mail or we take part in some serious discussions in various forums connected with medicine, law or administrative issues (Carmen and Watt, 2010: 58).

3.7.2 Intercultural competence

Holmes et al (2003: 24) provide an insightful explanation between intercultural and linguistics competence. According to his way of thinking, intercultural competence is strictly determined by norms which are obeyed by society. He claims that these norms are not embedded in our brain and we need to be fully aware in order to use them, in comparison to linguistics norms which are internally systematized.

For instance, one has to remember that in Poland we should open the door for women or that we usually kiss each other three times in cheeks. Very often it happens that we forget about these norms and either we recall them on our own, or someone has to remind us about them. A very similar situation happens when we go abroad and we need to have in mind that our Polish norms differ a lot from the ones obeyed in other countries. For example, it is crucial to bear in mind that in Africa giving a left hand may...
be perceived as an offence or that we should take off our shoes in front of the house in Japan.

In comparison to intercultural norms, Pisarek (2008: 66) provides us with an example of linguistics norm which does not require our awareness when using it. For instance, when it comes to inflection, Polish perfective verbs do not possess present participle (with ending “ący”). For that reasons, verbs such as ‘omówić’, ‘opisać’, ‘zrobić’ will not be accepted in forms such as ‘omówiący’, ‘opiszący’, ‘zrobiący.’ That is why, a native speaker of Polish will not use such forms despite the fact that some of them may not know what the present participle is.

A further aspect of intercultural competence is provided by Grice (1975: 130), a British linguist, who thinks that a mutual cooperation during the process of exchanging messages is one of the keys to a successful conversation. His co-operative principle states that our participation in a conversation should be adjusted to our main goal and requests. Following this principle, he came up with four maxims called ‘Gricean maxims’:

1. The quantity maxim: say as much as it is required, not more, or less.
2. The quality maxim: say only about facts which are true for you. Do not say something which may be unsure or false.
3. The relation maxim: say only about things which are strictly connected with the main topic of the discussion.
4. The manner maxim: speak clearly, briefly, and orderly.

As observed by Brown and Levinson (1987: 231) there are some more maxims which need to be taken into consideration when talking about intercultural competence:

1. The tact maxim: decrease information which may be unpleasant for the speaker, increase only pleasant ones.
2. The generosity maxim: decrease things which are pleasant for you, increase more unpleasant things.
3. The approbation maxim: decrease negative opinions about other people, increase only positive ones.
4. The modesty maxim: decrease positive opinions about yourself from other people, increase critical ones.
5. The **agreement** maxim: decrease disputes, increase good relations.
6. The **sympathy** maxim: decrease your disapproval towards other people, increase your approval.

Bogdanowska-Jakubowska (2010: 214) maintains that these maxims help us to save our hearer’s ‘face’. Not only is this feature important during a face-to-face conversation, but also when talking on Skype and using a web camera. It is advisable to show our interest in talking to our interlocutor and under no circumstances should we show our dissatisfaction or discomfort which could stem from the conversation. We need to remember that all mistakes contribute to ‘face-threatening act’ which makes that during the conversation, our interlocutor may feel embarrassed, confused, lost, and as a result our conversation may turn out to be a total failure.

### 3.7.3 Media competence

Skowronek (2014: 20) presents another type of competence which is called ‘media competence’. It is a relatively new kind of competence which has gained its popularity during the last few years when new media started to develop on a broad scale. He is trying to create an image of a potential media receiver who can be characterized by the following features:

* a potential receiver needs to know that each type of media (newspapers, magazines, TV, the Internet) represent someone’s interests.

* one needs to be aware of the fact that the importance of new media depends on the importance of the owner and the audience.

* one must be able to differentiate between public media (based on subscriptions fees) and commercial ones (based on advertisements)

* a potential receiver has to know that each media represents different ideology, beliefs, viewpoints, standards, and one needs to be aware what is good or bad for him or her.
* it is crucial for us to be able to read an interesting article on the Internet and decide whether it is valuable for us or not. If yes, we need to find certain reasons for it, if not, we have to justify our opinion.

* we need to know when we read true facts which are based on strong viewpoints and when we are somehow manipulated and brainwashed by new media.

* one knows most of the most important websites on the Internet as well as names and surnames of people who publish their articles or post comments.

* a potential receiver needs to remember about certain norms and rules which must be obeyed on social websites such as being nice and polite, not insulting anyone and showing respect to other users’ views and comments.

* we must take into consideration the fact that media competence is strictly connected with linguistic and intercultural competence (Markham, 2008: 460).

### 3.8 Recapitulation

The following conclusions can be drawn from this chapter:

1. CMC, despite a few negative features such as limiting us to sticking to electronic devices, or discouraging us from real meetings, can find its practical implication in situations where colleagues in a team are supposed to accomplish tasks only by using various computers which are linked by means of the network.

2. Despite significant differences between Netspeak and face-to-face conversations, we cannot state that those two forms of communications exist on their own without any mutual features. In fact, the same features are attributed to both of them, yet the realization of them differs. For instance, lag problems and frustration are noticeable in both cases; however, it is easier to overcome them and solve in the case of face-to-face
conversations. Nevertheless, problems with losing ‘face’ or face-threatening acts are not so noticeable in online writing.

3. Emoticons, which are used on a large scale nowadays, also have their own rules which need to be obeyed and their implication should also be considered carefully. Not everyone is aware that not using emoticons has its hidden meaning. Very often a particular emoticon really reflects what we feel in the present moment; still sometimes they are used to show sarcasm or irony. It also happens that specific emoticons are connected with totally different connotations and they may be perceived as rude or offensive.

4. No matter whether we have in mind face-to-face conversations or online chit-chats, we have to remember about different forms of politeness and techniques which we can implement in order to save our user’s face. Since it is online writing and very often we do not see our interlocutor, we need to remember about specific phrases and expressions which should be adjusted to the type of politeness our second user is characterized by.

5. A typical user of the Internet and a member of social networks should be able to combine all three types of competence: linguistics, intercultural and media. Talking to someone online or writing a message or a post without proper grammar, some standardized norms or knowledge about media may result in us being perceived as incompetent or unreliable.
CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY AND THE CORPUS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to focus on methodology and empirical part used in this dissertation. Section 4.2. and 4.3. are devoted to a very general description of two research tools used in this dissertation – a questionnaire study and a corpus analysis. Some famous scholars’ views are presented here together with practical implications concerning the way of preparing these tools. In the sections 4.4. and 4.5. we present the main aims of the study together with very detailed research questions which had been stated before conducting the research. Sections 4.6. and 4.7. put the emphasis on the description of two research tools designed and used in this thesis: the questionnaire study and the qualitative and the quantitative corpus analysis. In this section one can become familiar with the procedure of conducting this research taking into consideration conditions in which the study was carried out, obstacles which had been encountered, and some additional comments and implications. Before we proceed to present our aims, research questions, and the description of the research tools, let us turn briefly to some methodological considerations suggested by various authors.

4.2 An outlook on the questionnaire study

It is important to present how the research tools used in this dissertation are perceived by various scholars. According to Wilczyńska (2010: 279), a survey or a questionnaire study is one of the techniques of obtaining information by means of using written forms with both open-ended and close-ended questions. It is useful in research in which a great number of people are asked to answer questions concerning their attitudes, views, perspectives, and comments. In her opinion, the anonymity of the questionnaire studies makes that the respondents are more willing and eager to give sincere and more reliable answers. In most cases, the respondents have more time to
consider the answers and elaborate on them more than in the case of face-to-face interviews which require immediate responses (Nachmias, 2001: 121).

For Soloma (2002: 150), the questionnaire study might be defined as a standardized technique of obtaining information in the communicative process in which gathering needed information is conducted in the written form, however, without a personal contact with the respondent. She claims that sincere and reliable information can be gathered only during face-to-face conversations when we can observe people’s reactions, mimics and gestures. She contends that even if the respondents are pressed for time, they will give more natural and sincere answers than in the case of thinking over them for a longer period of time.

That is why Ruane (2005: 124) states that the questionnaire study provides us with honest data unless it is constructed in a clear way and the respondents are able to give us answers back in a short period of time. She emphasizes that the layout of the questionnaire study should be clear and filling in it should not take more than twenty or thirty minutes. At the very beginning of the survey there should be a short introduction (1-2 sentences) which ought to inform potential respondents about the main aim of the survey.

As stated by Ruane (2005: 125) the key to success is to construct well-thought and well-balanced questions. There should not be too many open-ended questions and their kinds should vary from dichotomous ones to rank ordering and rating scales. The more accurate and precise questions we create, the more relevant answers we receive. Our decision was to construct the questionnaire study, which combined various kinds of questions and which was intended to shed more light on the topic and contribute to a better understanding of it (Markham, 2009: 192, Markham 2011: 101, Markham & Buchanan, 2012, Żmijewska, 2004: 256).

4.3 An outlook on the corpus analysis

It is interesting to notice what various researchers think about the second research tool used in this thesis – the corpus analysis. Meyer (2004: 3) elaborates on the idea of the corpus analysis in the following way:

The complexity of structure, however, is precisely what the corpus linguist is interested in studying. Unlike generative grammarians, corpus linguists see complexity and
variation as inherent in language, and in their discussions of language, they place a very high priority on descriptive adequacy, not explanatory adequacy. Consequently, corpus linguists are very skeptical of the highly abstract and decontextualized discussions of language promoted by generative grammarians, largely because such discussions are too far removed from actual language usage.

McEnery and Wilson (2001: 29) go straight to the heart of the matter when they contend that the corpus is understood as a collection of more than one text which is used in linguistic analysis later on. Various genres such as poems, conversations, posts, comments or even TV talk shows can be analyzed from different perspectives. Crystal (2008: 117) claims that either written texts or a transcription of recorded speeches can be used as the main object of linguistic description or as a mean of verifying various hypotheses about a language and its nature.

Using the corpus analysis is crucial in this dissertation due to the fact that both grammatical and lexical studies have been analyzed on the basis of corpora which was used during research. So far, all studies which have been conducted relied mostly on the qualitative studies which provided us with a very extended description of grammar and its rules, however, it was much more difficult to present frequency or rarity of particular grammatical structures (McEnery & Wilson, 2001: 110; Weis & Wodak, 2003: 57). Thanks to the corpus linguistics, carrying out the quantitative studies are easier nowadays and they should be conducted more often owing to their importance. Not only can we then understand grammar itself, but also pay attention to those types of grammatical structures which appear more often and to what degree they differ in particular languages. There are some researchers who made an attempt to carry out the quantitative analysis by means of using the corpora. Schmied’s (1993) study concerned the analysis of relative clauses which occurred in the LOB and Kolhapur corpora, and Oostdijk & de Han (1994) focused on the frequency of various English clause types in Nijmegen corpus.

The corpus analysis finds its practical implication in lexical studies. Currently, a great number of various texts gives us opportunities to collect as many words as possible and analyze them taking into considerations different factors. Thanks to this, more and more dictionaries can be produced and they can be revised more often due to the fact that we are provided with more up-to-date information concerning changes in languages and their constant development.
Since the main aim of this study and research questions revolve around media and social networks, it is important to state that the corpus linguistics has much in common with Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA gives us a chance to have an insight into relationships between language, power, and ideology. In the case of CDA, the emphasis should be put on the last element owing to the fact that ideology enables us to observe some phenomena and correlations between social relations and problems, and how language use contributes to these aspects (O’Keeffe & McCarthy, 2010: 564, Markham, 2013: 78, Teun, 2001: 26).

Widdowson (2004) accuses CDA of being too subjective in analyses. It may be stated that CDA is a form of a social critique due to the fact that we, as analysts, are supposed to take a position on the topic we are investigating. Our point of view will depend mostly on our beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions. It is obvious that we will choose those texts which seem to be interesting or thought-provoking in the interpretation for us, however, they do not need to be necessarily extraordinary for the target audience who created them. Thus, very often our interpretation of those texts may differ from the interpretation of the audience. Going beyond single texts gives us a chance to explore the quantitative and the qualitative patterns either synchronically (e.g. analyzing texts collected within one day) or diachronically (e.g. observing linguistic patterns over a period of time). (O’Halloran (2007); Baker (2006); Hidalgo Tenorio (2009); Batorski & Olcoń (2006)).

It is also essential to provide a list of some of the most common types of the corpora:

1. General corpora (e.g. the British National Corpus) contains a great number of both written and spoken language provided by speakers of different ages, from different countries, and various social classes.

2. Synchronic corpora (e.g. Frown) aims at collecting texts which come from the same period of time, for instance British newspapers from the 1980s.
3. Historical corpora (e.g. the Helsinki corpus) collects texts from many, various periods of time and studies changes in those languages, for instance literature from the 1980s and the 1990s.

4. Learner corpora (e.g. the Cambridge Learner Corpus) consists of texts written by foreign language learners (exams, tests, essays).

5. Parallel corpora (e.g. OPUS) contains the same texts in two or more languages.

6. Multimedia corpora (e.g. Sacodeyl) contains texts which are enhanced with audio or visual materials.

**4.4 The aim of the study**

The main aim of the study is to examine the language which is used by the Polish and the American Facebook users. To be more specific, the main goal of this comparative study is to examine first of all, the frequency of using certain grammatical and lexical structures, and features of language both in the Polish and the English language, second of all, similarities and differences in using those structures and features by both groups of the respondents, and third of all, some other unique phenomena which will be observed during the process of conducting the study. Those structures and features of language which are intended to be analyzed are as follows:

1. the frequency of using active and passive voice,
2. the frequency of using phrasal verbs and idioms,
3. formal style vs informal style,
4. the frequency of using impersonal constructions,
5. emotive language (swearwords, emoticons, emojis),
6. abbreviations,
7. clauses:
   - simple - made up of a subject and a verb,
compound – made up of two independent clauses connected to one another with a coordinating conjunction,

complex – made up of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses

compound-complex – understood as the clause that has two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause (Aarts, 2014)).

(8) types of sentences (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative).

The conversations which have been chosen for the analysis are divided into two groups. The first one includes very informal and casual conversations with the posts and the comments concerning everyday topics (holidays, events), and the second one is connected with more formal and controversial matters (breaking news, politics). We have decided for such a division in order to point out and describe the most noticeable differences and possible similarities between them. It is generally believed that particular conversations and topics require specific form of the language; however, the question is whether the Internet users obey these rules and implement them in their writings. The following is the division into above mentioned categories:

I. social chit-chats:
(1) holidays (places of destinations, different forms of holidays, spending free time, summer and winter holidays),
(2) family (family ceremonies, family gathering, customs, traditions),

II. Political and cultural news:
(1) elections (voting, debates),
(2) breaking news (catastrophes, accidents, terrorist attacks).

Those topics together with more detailed research questions which are presented in the following section are intended to be verified by means of using the corpus analysis. Other aims of this study are formulated on the basis of the
questionnaire study used in this research. We will try to investigate how the Polish and the Americans perceive social networks. During our research we expect to get to know people’s definition of social media, their favorite social networks, the frequency of using them, and reasons. We also want to pay attention to phenomena concerning written and spoken language. It is commonly accepted that the language which is used on the Internet combines features typical of both forms and our aim will be to check people’s attitude towards this phenomenon. Finally, we will find out whether people focus on grammaticality and overall correctness when they take part in discussions on social networks or they just want to be perceived as communicative interlocutors. In order to achieve the aims of the study, certain research questions have been formulated.

4.5 Research questions

The following is a presentation of the research questions employed in the study.

1. Does passive voice occur more often in political and cultural news than in social chit-chats?
2. Do the Americans use idioms more often than the Polish people?
3. Do phrasal verbs occur more often in casual conversations than in formal ones in the American posts and comments?
4. Is formal style used only in these more serious topics (accidents, catastrophes) both by the Poles and the Americans?
5. Are impersonal constructions used more often by the Poles or the Americans?
6. Do the Polish people use swearwords more often than the Americans?
7. Do swearwords occur only in thought-provoking and stressful situations?
8. Is emotive language present in all mentioned casual conversations or are there any situations where the level of using emoticons and emojis will be almost unnoticeable?
9. Are abbreviations used in all mentioned conversations by both groups of the respondents?
10. Do the Poles and the Americans use more complex sentences in political and cultural topics than in casual, social chit-chats?
11. Are interrogative sentences used more in casual conversations than political and cultural ones by both groups of the respondents?
12. Do the Poles and the Americans use social networks mostly for communicative purposes?
13. Do the Polish people pay less attention to grammaticality and overall correctness than the Americans?

4.6 Research tools

The following is a description of the two data collection tools used in the present research.

4.6.1 The questionnaire

The main aim of the questionnaire (Appendix A) was to collect a range of data concerning the respondents’ opinions about using social networks and the language which is used there. The questions which were designed and implemented in this questionnaire focused on the following groups of topics:

1. social networks and their users;
2. social networks and the language which is used there;
3. emoticons and their role.

The questionnaire is divided into four parts. The first part of the questionnaire gathers some demographic questions created to collect information about the respondents who took part in the research: their sex, age, and nationality.

The second part of the questionnaire aims at gathering information concerning the idea of social networks from the users’ perspective. In this part of the questionnaire one can find out some reasons for using them together with most commonly used social websites and the frequency of using them. There is also one question devoted to Eric Chester’s idea of the hierarchy of communication needs where the respondents are supposed to state what is the most and the least preferred form of communication in their opinion. The third part of this research
tool includes questions concerning the language of these social networks, more specifically, similarities and differences between the language of the Internet and the language which is used in everyday conversations, the influence of a spoken language on the language which is created and implemented on social websites, and finally the respondents’ perception of grammatical correctness. When talking about grammatical correctness, the emphasis is put on proper tenses, punctuation, and spelling. In the following questions, the respondents are supposed to state in which situations they pay attention to grammatical correctness, what is the most important for them when they see a post, a comment or an advertisement, and what kind of mistakes they usually notice in the above mentioned written forms. The last two questions in this part of the questionnaire are about the sources of potential mistakes which are visible in comments, posts, and messages and some external factors which determine the way we write posts and comments. Finally, the fourth part of this research instrument deals with emoticons and their role in writing online messages. The respondents are supposed to state what kind of emoticons they use, how often they do it, and express their opinions about the role of emoticons in their messages.

The questionnaire consists of both quantitative and qualitative questions. Of the total 19 questions, 17 are quantitative questions, 2 are qualitative. The quantitative questions include multiple choice and rank ordering questions in which the respondents are supposed to rank the given options in order of importance from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least important and 5 is the most important. The quantitative data are presented in the form of graphs, charts, and tables, whereas the qualitative data were analyzed through careful reading and presented in the form of descriptions. It must be stated that even if most of the questions required the respondents to choose the most suitable answers, yet there were examples where the respondents were allowed to suggest their own answers or even explain and justify their opinions.
4.6.2 Course of the questionnaire study

The questionnaire study was conducted from June to September 2017 on social network Facebook among the sampled population of 100 users of the Internet. 50 Americans and 50 Poles took part in this research. In order to avoid discrepancies in answers given by the respondents, the average age was restricted to 20-26. In most cases, people who took part in this research were the inhabitants of big Polish (Kraków, Katowice, Warsaw, Poznań) and American (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco) cities. Most of the respondents were white-collar workers. The questionnaires in English and Polish were sent to the American and the Polish respondents on line, via the e-mails, chat groups and Facebook messenger. Before the questionnaires were distributed, the respondents were briefly informed about the topic of the questionnaire, its structure and the anonymity. The respondents were also informed that their sincere and reliable answers would contribute to a well conducted research, significant data analysis, and final results. The respondents were encouraged to ask questions if anything was unclear for them. The questionnaires were sent systematically to the Poles and the Americans and they were supposed to fill in them and send back within 2-3 days. Most of the respondents stuck to this deadline, some others needed more time to complete them.

Unfortunately, one of the disadvantages of distributing questionnaires via the Internet is that sometimes the respondents procrastinate and very often it is necessary to remind them about filling in the surveys. In most cases, the respondents were eager to take part in the research and completing questionnaires was not a big problem for them; however, there were some users who rejected completing the questionnaires because of laziness, lack of time, forgetfulness, and their own opinions about surveys in general. It is worth mentioning that the Polish were more eager to take part in the research and they sent the surveys back faster than the Americans who sometimes had problems to complete them on time.
All in all, it must be stated that these 100 answers which were received from the respondents were fully completed and they contributed to data analysis and final results which are presented in the further sections of this dissertation.

4.7 Corpus analysis

Since the main idea of distributing the questionnaires was to find out the respondents’ answers concerning social networks, their language, and preferences, the main aim of the corpus analysis was to show a detailed analysis of grammatical and lexical structures and features of language which appeared in posts, comments, and messages on Facebook. To be more specific, our main aim was to check and verify the frequency of using previously mentioned grammatical and lexical structures by both groups of the respondents and point out the most noticeable similarities and differences between the Polish and the American posts and comments.

4.7.1 Course of the corpus analysis

The process of collecting the corpora took place from May 2017 to June 2018. All the posts and the comments were regularly collected and analyzed. As mentioned before, Facebook was this social network which functioned as the main source of all necessary corpora used in this dissertation. The corpora was divided into two categories: the first one included posts and comments which dealt with very casual and simple conversations (holidays, family gathering, sport, public holidays, etc), whereas the second category was connected with more serious topics, very often quite controversial (breaking news, natural disasters, politics). During the whole year, 40 various websites on Facebook were chosen (20 American and 20 Polish). Those websites were either Facebook pages devoted to these particular topics or some forums and groups where both groups of the respondents left their comments and messages. Those websites are included in the chapter devoted to the analysis. 460 posts were collected in total (230 American posts and 230 Polish posts). When it comes to the Americans we gathered 1360 comments and in the case of the Poles – 1263 comments. In
comparison to the process of obtaining the surveys, collecting the corpora was
much easier due to the fact that there was not the pressure of time. It must be
stated that all the posts and the comments were very up to date owing to the fact
that for instance during Christmas time every day newer corpora appeared and
users exchanged their ideas, thoughts, and suggestions several times per day.
CHAPTER V

THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter discusses the results of the questionnaire study. We have decided to include the analysis of the answers given both by the Americans and the Poles in this chapter in order to show a comparison of the most significant similarities and differences and to notice to what degree they differed from each other. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis are included here together with observations and the most outstanding remarks.

5.2 Data analysis of the respondents’ answers

The analysis starts with the number of the Polish and the American respondents who took part in this research and their age. This information is included in Figures 14 and 15.

![Figure 14: The number of the Polish respondents who took part in the research](image-url)
The number of the respondents who took part in this research does not differ significantly. There is only 15% of difference between the Polish and the American men and woman. Tables 16 and 17 present the age of the respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 years old</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years old</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 years old</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 years old</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years old</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 years old</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: The age of the Polish respondents

---

**Figure 15: The number of the American respondents who took part in the research**

[Chart showing sex distribution with 75% male and 25% female]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 years old</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years old</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 years old</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 years old</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years old</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 years old</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: The age of the American respondents

As one can notice, in the case of the Poles, the mode equals 23 years old and the arithmetic mean is 23.34. In the case of the Americans, the mode is 22 years old and the arithmetic mean equals 22.83. Taking into account the fact that the results are quite similar, we will verify whether other answers received from the respondents are similar as well.

Being familiar with the age and the sex of our respondents, let us focus on the comparison of the most commonly used social networks. Figure 16 presents the results:

![Figure 16](image)

Figure 16: The most commonly used social networks by the Poles

As one can observe, all the respondents who took part in our research use Facebook on a regular basis (the mode equals 100% in this case). Two other
social networks used by the Poles are: YouTube (95%) and Instagram (85%). These results indicate that both Facebook and YouTube are still the most commonly used social networks among the Polish people; however, Instagram is gaining its popularity as well. In the latter section more emphasis will be put on reasons for using various social networks. The least commonly used social networks are: Interpals (15%), Twitter (30%), and Skype (30%). According to the respondents’ opinions, those social networks are perceived as old fashioned and inconvenient. 75% of the users chose Linkedin as their commonly used social network on the grounds that it is a business and employment-oriented service aiming at looking for a job, posting job offers, CVs, and creating profiles which may represent professional contacts and relations. There are also some other social networks suggested by the respondents:

- Tumblr (10%)
- VK (1%)
- Pinterest (2%)
- Snapchat (7%)

Figure 17 shows the results obtained from the answers given by the Americans:

![Bar chart showing the most commonly used social networks by the Americans](image)

**Figure 17: The most commonly used social networks by the Americans**
Three social networks are the most commonly used by the Americans. Those are: Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (the mode equals 100%). We can observe that Instagram gained bigger popularity in America and all the respondents who took part in our research claim that they use it on a regular basis. In their answers, some of them state that Instagram is even better than Facebook since attention is focused just on the photos, without any other unnecessary posts or facts from people’s lives. In comparison to the answers given by the Poles, 50% of the respondents use Interpals, which may be connected with the fact that the official language of this website is English so logging in there should not be as problematic for them as for the Poles. For most of the respondents, Skype (80%) and Twitter (50%) are still top-rated. A considerable growth in using Instagram and Skype indicates that the Americans are keen on sharing their photos and images with others as well as talking to friends by means of using video and voice. Some other options suggested by them are as follows:

- Google+ (5%)
- Snapchat (2%)
- Flickr (2%)
- Pinterest (1%)

Getting familiar with the commonly used social networks, we should look closer at what makes them so special and useful in the respondents’ opinions. For this reason, a further question required the respondents to state how often they use them and provide some reasons. In table 18 we present the frequency of using social networks by the Polish people together with some data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than 3 hours per day</th>
<th>4-5 hours per day</th>
<th>6-7 hours per day</th>
<th>More than 8 hours per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode is 80% (6-7 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpals</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode is 95% (Less than 3 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As one can observe, 100% of the respondents who took part in our research spend from 4 to more than 8 hours per day on Facebook. These results may be alarming since more and more people devote most of their time to using social networks instead of focusing on some other aspects of everyday life. Around 90% of the users spend most of their time on YouTube (from 4 to 7 hours per day) and it can be caused by the fact that thanks to all modern devices which provide us with many opportunities for entertainment nowadays (smartphones, smartwatches, MP3 players) they can listen to music nearly everywhere, without access to the PC.

Around 70% of the respondents devote from 4 to 7 hours per day to using Instagram; however, taking into consideration a rapid growth of the popularity of this social network we may assume that soon this number will increase. It is wise to notice that 80% of the respondents use Skype less than 3 hours per day, which may indicate that they are not keen on video conversations or they do not have too much time for doing it. Surprisingly enough, it must be stated that the results show that not too many respondents spend their time on social networks more than 8 hours per day, apart from Facebook (10%) and Instagram (20%).

Despite the fact that Facebook is so popular among the users, some people prefer to use these social networks which are less commercialized. Some other users express their annoyance and irritation connected with the fact how often they are exposed to various news from the country, unnecessary advertisements,
or political slogans, so that they prefer choosing more neutral social networks for chatting such as Skype or Instagram.

Nevertheless, from all these social networks which have been mentioned here, most users are keen on using Facebook owing to the fact that they can find everything there: the latest updates made by their friends, some important news from the country, and even job offers.

Table 19 illustrates the answers given by the Americans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Network</th>
<th>Less than 3 hours per day</th>
<th>4-5 hours per day</th>
<th>6-7 hours per day</th>
<th>More than 8 hours per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 75% (6-7 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpals</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 85% (4-5 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 50% (4-5 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 45% (6-7 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 55% (Less than 3 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 40% (4-5 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkedin</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode equals 40% (4-5 hours per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: The frequency of using social networks by the Americans

When we compare the answers given by the Poles and the ones suggested by the Americans, we will easily observe that the Americans spend more time on using social networks than the Poles. Judging from their answers, we see that 100% of the respondents spend from 4 to more than 8 hours per day on using Facebook. Even if this number may strike some of us, it must be explained that using Facebook is nothing out of the ordinary nowadays since most of us have access to it in our smartphones or even smartwatches. It is enough to have the Internet
and as in the case of YouTube, which was mentioned previously, we do not have to have connection with our PC to be available on Facebook.

Surprisingly enough, 85% of the respondents spend from 4 to 5 hours per day on using Interpals, which is in a total opposition to the answers given by the Poles (5%). This discrepancy is caused mainly by the fact that the InterPals web is hosted in the USA and it is known mostly to the Americans. Half of the respondents spend only from 4 to 5 hours per day on YouTube, but more than half of them use Instagram more than 6 hours per day.

As mentioned in the previous conclusions, since Instagram is gaining its popularity in the USA, more and more people use it on a regular basis there. Skype, which was mentioned as one of the most commonly used social network, is used by 40% of the respondents from 4 to 5 hours per day and by 35% of them from 6 to 7 hours per day. We cannot forget that video and audio conferences are also possible on Facebook Messengers, which may be the reason why our respondents are using Skype less frequently.

The following question required the respondents to state the main reasons for using social networks. Their answers are collected in Figure 18.
As clearly seen, fun and entertainment are the most desirable reasons for using social networks by the Poles (The mode is 90%). Many of them chose option ‘meeting new people’ as the reason (79%) and communication purposes (75%). The respondents were also given an opportunity to provide their own reasons and explanations for using social networks. Some of their answers are provided:

Respondent 1 (male): From all these social networks, Facebook is my favorite one. I like using it mostly for communicative purposes. I have Facebook and Messenger on my phone and I have very good access to it. Whenever someone sends me a message, it appears on my screen and I see it. Thanks to Facebook, I am in touch with everyone and everywhere.

Respondent 2 (Female): I love taking photographs and for me Instagram is the best one. At the very beginning, I didn’t like it but since it has improved, it is getting better and better. Now I can share photos not only with my friends but also with new people who I can meet them. When I see that someone likes my picture, I can message him or her. Recently I have liked it more than Facebook because I am not bombarded with all these issued from the country and around the world.

Respondent 3 (Female): Definitely Instagram. I like to see who likes and follows my photos. Thanks to that I can automatically message this person and get to know him or her better. Some people claim that Instagram is boring because we can put only photos here, but if someone likes photography, it is really useful then.

Respondent 4 (Male): I am not into contact with other people. For this reason, YouTube is my favorite social network. I have my account there only to listen to some music and comment them. YouTube is not as commercialized as Facebook so that I like it more.

Respondent 5 (Female): Actually I like some social networks. It all depends on my purposes. When I want to talk to friends, I use Facebook, when I want to listen to some music, I choose YouTube and when I want to show people my photos, I focus on Instagram. It is hard for me to define which of them is my special one.

Respondent 6 (Male): I like Linkedin. I am a man of success and I need to be in contact with some new job offers, advertisements and announcements. I have created my account there because very often I change jobs and I look for new ones. This social network is perfect for me because I can also message people who have similar experience or interests.
Respondent 7 (Female): Honestly speaking, Facebook is my favorite one. Even if now it looks like a big mess where you can find everything, I still like it due to the fact that I don’t have to search for some news on the Internet. I open Facebook and I can read all about everything and everyone. I think it is even a better source of knowledge than Wikipedia, ha ha.

Respondent 8 (Male): I like Skype. In silence I can open my camera and microphone and talk to someone. I know that Facebook gives us the same opportunity but I get distracted easily there. All the time I see new comments, new posts and on Skype I do not have such a problem. The only disadvantage of using Skype is that sometimes I lose connection. But it happens perhaps because of the Internet.

It seems that all the mentioned social networks have both advantages and disadvantages and depending on the respondents’ preferences, they are used for various purposes. Facebook, despite being overloaded with advertisements, announcements, unnecessary information, still is perceived as a useful social network which satisfies our needs. The answers gathered from our respondents illustrate that all social networks are useful and profitable when they are used wisely.

Figure 19 presents results obtained from the American respondents.

Figure 19: Reasons for using social networks by the Americans
Undoubtedly, meeting new people is the main reason why so many Americans (90%) use social networks. 88% of them state that communication purposes are also of a great importance for them. Similar to the answers given by the Poles, the least chosen option among the Americans was looking for a job (65%). There are still some respondents who state that educational purposes are important and it is much easier and cheaper to learn online than attending a language course. 69% of the respondents are in favor of learning online. Some of their comments concerning reasons for using social networks are presented below:

Respondent 1 (Male): Maybe it sounds funny but I still like snapchat. I know that not many people use it but I like the simplicity of it. I do not see thousands of photos with people who are tagged on them, I just see for few seconds one or two pictures put by my friends and that’s all. What for more?

Respondent 2 (Female): I am afraid I am addicted to Facebook. I check it even at work because I need to be in touch with my friends and I need to know what is going on.

Respondent 3 (Male): I use Facebook the most but I have some strong reasons for it. I am a member of some groups there and I need it both for my studies and my work. Besides, I created myself few groups and I am responsible for their functioning so I need to verify all posts and comments which appear there. Some of them need accepting but there are some which need to be rejected and deleted.

Respondent 4 (Female): I like Facebook but I use it for specific purposes. I have my own company and very often I promote my company on Facebook. I attach there many links, I add photos, advertisements and I need to take control over it.

Respondent 5 (Male): Since I am a big fan of music, YouTube is my favorite social network. Even if I cannot talk to people there, I have my account, my playlists, my soundtracks, my favorite music and successfully I am collecting them step by step.

Respondent 6 (Male): I am very fond of interpals. I know that it is not so popular and only few people know about its existence but it is very useful. I created my account there when I was at high school and I met great people there. With few of them I met in real and I established good relationships. The main idea of this social network is to improve language skills and meet new people. I combined these two features and I am very content with it. I can recommend it to everyone.
Respondent 7 (Female): I am fed up with Facebook. I have it, I open it, I use it but I treat it as a part of my daily routine. I just got used to the fact that I need to open it to see what is going on around me. But if I were to choose the best social network, I would opt for YouTube. Nothing irritates me there, yet! Ha ha. I have my own profile there and I have an easy access to my music. Instagram is also annoying. All these photos and followers are pissing me off. I am modest person and I do not need to show off everytime.

Respondent 8 (Male): I like Facebook but only when I use it for specific purposes. I do not give any likes and I do not comment anything. I just read the news, search for nice advertisements and follow certain groups which seem to be interesting for me. Very often I switch off the chat so that other people cannot see whether I am online or not.

Respondent 9 (Female): I guess that YouTube seems to be the most convenient for me. Despite the fact that really many people use it, it is not so noticeable. It differs a lot from all these other social networks where people share their ideas, thoughts, and views. What for? Social networks should be used for communicative purposes and that is all. Without showing off and giving false impressions of themselves.

Comparing the answers received from the Poles and the Americans, we can observe that the Americans are more concrete in their answers. They point out precise reasons for using social networks such as promoting their business on Facebook, being in charge of monitoring some Facebook groups or improving language skills on Interpals.

What strikes us the most in the answers given by the Americans is that some of the answers show that Facebook has many functions which are neglected by other Poles or Americans. Most people associate Facebook with fun, entertainment, and communicative purposes, whereas some other functions can be used in a very profitable way.

When justifying their opinions, there are respondents who claim that they do not crave for fame and popularity, but for being different than other people who spend most of their time on adding and sharing photos. Those respondents prefer simplicity and ordinariness, which are typical of YouTube, for instance. Many users point out that YouTube is one of the social networks which does not expose them to looking at photos shared by other people or following what people are doing during a day.
The next question referred to Eric Chester and his hierarchy of communication needs, which was described in the theoretical part. This question required the respondents to rank some communication channels in order of importance from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least preferred one and 5 the most. Our results are gathered and presented in Table 20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal meetings</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 4 &amp; 5 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 3 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mails</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode =1 &amp; 2 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook / other social media</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 2 &amp; 5 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text messaging</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode =1 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 20: The hierarchy of communication needs suggested by the Poles**

As much as 60% of the subjects admit that personal meetings are still important when it comes to the hierarchy of communication needs. Only 10% of them state that this way of communication is the least preferred for them on the grounds that everything can be arranged either by phones or smartphones. Phone calls are
still crucial for people (50%). Unfortunately, the respondents do not consider e-mails useful any longer. For more than half of them this way of communication is the least preferred one. However, it must be mentioned that the respondents who have taken part in this research are from 20 to 26 years old, which may mean that they are not used to sending e-mails unless they really need to do that, for instance when they are required to send their CVs or some other attachments. When it comes to Facebook, half of the respondents state that it is their favorite way of communication, whereas more than half of the users (70%) believe that sending text messages is the least preferred form of communication.

Table 21 illustrates results obtained from the answers given by the Americans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 3 &amp; 5 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 5 (50%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mails</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode = 1 (50%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode =3 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>messaging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode= 2 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: The hierarchy of communication needs suggested by the Americans
Nearly half of the respondents state that personal meetings are still important for them. Only 20% of them declare that it is the least preferred form of communication because of other modern devices, which enable us to communicate much easier and much more effectively. The option of maintaining phone calls was chosen by 80% of the respondents. Similar to the answers given by the Poles, the Americans are not keen on using e-mails. 50% of them claim that this form of communication is the least important. Using Facebook (50%) is still very popular among the Americans; however, sending text messages is gradually disappearing since only 20% of the users consider it important whilst 70% of them not anymore. The results illustrate that the respondents would like to have everything within reach and not to make too much effort in the process of communication.

Since we are familiar with answers concerning types of social networks, and the frequency of using them, we can give some thought to similarities and differences between the language of the Internet and everyday spoken language. At first, our respondents were asked about most observable similarities and differences between these two forms of the language, and then to provide reasonable justifications. Figure 20 presents answers received from the Polish respondents:

Figure 20: Polish respondents’ answers concerning differences between the language used on social networks and the language used in everyday communication
The respondents, in a large part, believe that there are differences between the language of the Internet and everyday spoken language. This question was preceded by another one which required the users to state whether the way we use our spoken language in everyday communications has influence on our style of writing on social networks. Figure 21 presents the results.

![Figure 21: Polish respondents’ answers concerning the influence of spoken language on the language which is used on social networks](image)

It is interesting to notice that despite the fact that the respondents claim that there are differences between our spoken language and the language of Internet, more than 80% of the users contend that our spoken language influences the language used on social networks. To resolve all doubts, some attention should be paid to explanations given by the respondents:

Respondent 1 (Male): The biggest difference between our spoken language and the language used on the Internet is the fact that when we talk to someone face-to-face, we try to avoid using long and sophisticated sentences. We do not have much time for it. Such long and advanced sentences should rather appear in written messages because we can take as much time as needed to read it.

Respondent 2 (Female): Sometimes I have the feeling that I am chaotic when I am talking to someone. It is much more difficult to express your thoughts when you talk to someone face-to-face than when you type with someone and you have much more time to think before you click the button “send”.
Respondent 3 (Female): Writing allows me to express my feelings and emotions. When I see so many emoticons which are available nowadays, I can express my mood by choosing the proper one. During face-to-face conversation I do not have time for it. If I wanted to think about my mimics and gestures, I would get crazy.

Respondent 4 (Male): I agree that our spoken language influences the way we write due to the fact that we try to include elements which appear in face-to-face conversation in a written form. For this reasons, we have emoticons which express our emotions, we have some onomatopoeic phrases such as “haha!” or “oh no!”.

Respondent 5 (Female): I am able to notice many differences. First of all, our spoken language is more spontaneous. Rarely are we able to have a ready schemata in our mind what to speak and how to speak. Sometimes a new idea appears in our mind and then everything changes. Secondly, when we are engaged into face-to-face conversation we can use gestures, mimics and body movements which are not possible in writing.

Respondent 6 (Male): I think that it is mainly spoken language which influences the way we write messages on social networks. Most of the conversations which we have are informal and very often we use lots of informal expressions (the same which we use in spoken language). Besides, even words such as “ha ha” indicate that we are laughing.

Respondent 7 (Female): Honestly speaking, I do not agree. Spoken language has its own features and written language its own. Talking face-to-face is much better because we can be dynamic and we can make our conversation more vivid which is totally impossible when we write a message. No matter how many emoticons I use and how many times I will use phrase “ha ha”, the tone of this message will never be comparable with the tone of the same message conveyed orally face-to-face.

Respondent 8 (Male): Those are two totally different types of languages. For me, written language sounds more artificial. When I want to tell a joke, it will not be perceived as if it was perceived during face-to-face conversation. People will see just empty words, without any expressions, irony or sarcasm.

Respondent 9 (Female): Definitely I can say that spoken language influences the way I am writing on social networks. When I am talking to someone face-to-face I speak very quickly and when I am writing, I am doing it quickly too. During few minutes of typing a message, I am trying to convey as much information as I would like to convey during face-to-face conversation. So that I am sending short, but informative messages.
From the above it can be concluded that in the respondents’ opinions, our everyday spoken language is more spontaneous, dynamic, flexible, vivid, and more real. Even if it is possible to show our emotions and feelings when talking to someone online by using some equivalents such as emoticons or emojis, yet it differs significantly from doing it in face-to-face conversations. Some of the respondents state that the language of the Internet is more strict, artificial, and restricted by some rules. Several users explained that using too many swearwords on chosen social networks may result in banning or deleting the account. Also, their answers suggest that the message which they want to convey on social networks will never be perceived exactly in the same way as if it was said in face-to-face conversations (i.e. telling a joke).

Figure 22 presents answers given by the American respondents:

![Figure 22: American respondents’ answers concerning differences between the language used on social networks and the language used in everyday communication](image)

As shown in Figure 22, around three quarters of the respondents who took part in this research agree that the language which we use on social networks differs from our spoken language used in everyday communication. There is only 10% of difference when it comes to the answer “yes” between the Poles and the Americans.
It can be seen in Figure 23 that only 35% of the respondents disagree with the statement that our spoken language has influence on the language used on social networks, whereas 65% of the Americans believe that it definitely has. To understand it better, let us compare some of the answers provided by the Americans:

Respondent 1 (Female): I think it does. I see it when I look at myself. When I use abbreviations during face-to-face conversation, I also use them in writing. It is the same with long or short forms.

Respondent 2 (Male): I am not sure if it really has influence but I am able to notice some differences between using spoken and written language. Sometimes some mistakes are not visible in speaking. I have one friend who speaks quite good but when it comes to his punctuation in writing..it is horror! He does not know when commas or colons should be used. His messages are mega chaotic!

Respondent 3 (Female): Definitely it does. Very often we imitate our spoken utterances in writing. I mean here onomatopoeic phrases or our inner feelings and emotions.

Respondent 4 (Male): I am definitely better in talking, that is why for me spoken language does not have too much in common with writing. I am more accurate and precise in talking and I think that it is much better to convey information orally than by means of using letters and symbols.
Respondent 5 (Female): Sometimes I think that there are so many differences. Talking is more ‘alive’ and writing is so monotonous. Talking is more reliable and writing seems to be artificial. How should I compare the way I comfort someone in writing and in face-to-face conversation? Maybe there are some common elements but still I think that writing is writing and speaking is speaking.

Respondent 6 (Male): I laugh a lot during face-to-face conversation so in writing I am requested to overuse emoticon “:D”. How else can I show my laugh? Or maybe by writing ‘hahaha’. Besides, I always have the feeling that in writing I can include more than in speaking. Sometimes speaking time is limited and when it comes to messages they can be as long as I want. It is all up to me.

Respondent 7 (Male): In my opinion, our spoken language does not influence writing. Speaking has intonation and pitch and in writing, even if we include it, it still looks artificial. In speaking I will laugh and everyone will see it and hear it and how can emoticon “:D” express my laugh? It is just a sign. Another artificial element created by writing.

Respondent 8 (Female): For me, it works both ways. There is acronym “LOL” which is quite often visible in writing. Furthermore, I noticed that there are some people who use it even in speaking in order to introduce some funny elements.

The Americans seem to be consistent with their answers which are also similar to the ones suggested by the Poles. For some of the Americans, there is no difference in expressing feelings on social networks and in everyday conversations; yet, there are some of them who state that neither emoticons, nor emojis can replace our current state of being. Judging from their answers, it is easy to notice that some people feel more secure in speaking on the grounds that not too many mistakes can be visible then. Obviously, grammatical mistakes will be observable; however, not the ones concerning punctuation or coherence. These findings further support the idea that even if the language of the Internet is constantly changing, still there are some respondents who miss some features of everyday spoken language which cannot be found in online writing.

The following question required our respondents to answer whether they pay attention to grammatical correctness when giving posts on social networks or
not. Figure 24 presents answers given by the Poles and Figure 25 answers provided by the Americans.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 24: Paying attention to grammatical correctness when writing posts on social networks by the Poles**

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 25: Paying attention to grammatical correctness when writing posts on social networks by the Americans**

It can be observed that more than three quarters of both the Polish and the American respondents pay attention to grammatical correctness; however, the Americans seem to be much more precise (82%).
The following question required the respondents to rank some answers concerning paying attention to grammaticality and overall correctness on social networks where 1 was the least important to them and 5 the most. The answers gathered from the Poles are presented in table 22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking on Facebook chat</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode = 1 (50%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenting on other users’ posts</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode = 2 (60%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenting on photos</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode = 1 &amp; 2 (30%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing longer posts or adverts</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode = 2 &amp; 5 (30%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in a public discussion</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode = 4 (50%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Table 22: Situations when the Polish people pay attention to grammaticality and overall correctness**

For a vast majority of the respondents (option 1 – 50%; option 2 – 10%) grammaticality and overall correctness are not so important when talking on Facebook chats. One of their justification is that conversations held on Facebook
chats are between two interlocutors who rather know each other, so that the style of writing does not have to be as formal and correct as in some public forums where everyone can see our post or comment. 60% of the respondents answer that commenting on other users’ posts does not require grammatical correctness, whereas, nearly half of them opt for overall correctness when it comes to commenting on photos. For several respondents (50%) writing longer posts or adverts requires proper grammar. A possible explanation for this might be that such a post or an advertisement is going to be read by a great number of friends and other users. Some of the respondents claim that they are afraid to be perceived as not well-educated or less intelligent. The remaining 10% of the sample support the view that grammatical correctness is not so important. Surprisingly enough, nearly everyone who have taken part in this research maintain that taking part in a public discussion should be grammatically correct. Options 1 & 2 were not chosen at all. The result of this comparison might be as follows: the more public the conversations becomes, the more attention is paid to grammatical and lexical correctness.

Let us focus on the answers gathered from the Americans in table 23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking on Facebook chat</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode</strong> = 1 (50%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenting on other users’ posts</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode</strong> = 2 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenting on photos</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The mode</strong> = 3 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing longer posts or adverts</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode =3 &amp; 4 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taking part in a public discussion</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mode =2 &amp; 5 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23: Situations when the American people pay attention to grammaticality and overall correctness

The results reveal that only for 10% of the Americans talking on Facebook chats requires paying attention to grammaticality and overall correctness, whereas 70% of them find it useless (option 1- 50%; option 2 – 20%). Contrary to the Poles (20%), 30% of the American respondents state that grammatical correctness is necessary when writing comments under other users’ posts. For the remaining 50% of the sample, it is not of a big importance. Commenting on photos and videos requires grammatical correctness for 40% of the users. There is no doubt that for a majority of the respondents (80%) writing longer posts and adverts should be fully correct. The Americans seem to be very accurate and precise in what they show to the public. For 50% of them taking part in a public discussion should also be grammatically correct.

Thanks to the contrast obtained from the answers provided by the Poles and the Americans we can notice that their attitude towards grammatical correctness is alike. Being grammatically correct when writing posts and comments in public seems to be the top priority for both groups of the respondents.

The next question required the respondents to express their opinions concerning these features of written messages which seem to be most essential for them when writing.
Figure 26: Features of written messages which are the most essential for the Poles when they see a message / a comment / an advertisement on social networks

Figure 26 presents that three quarters of the respondents feel that usefulness and practical implication are the most important for them when they encounter various written forms on social networks. 50% of them claim that the content is the most important owing to the fact that it helps them to understand the context of the message precisely. A strong relationship between the usefulness and practical implication of the message and its content has been discussed in the theoretical part (Sakr, 2012: 121). 40% of the users believe that a message or an advertisement cannot be fully successful if it contains some mistakes which can disturb the process of reading the message. For 30% of the respondents length matters. In some of their answers, they state that too long messages are tiring, monotonous and being exposed to potential mistakes is more probable than in the case of shorter messages. Only 20% of those respondents feel that a general framework of the message (a type of font, spacing) is important. Yet, 15% of the Internet users agree that style is crucial. In some of their answers they explain that more formal style of a message or an advertisement evokes more positive attitude towards the content of the post. It seems from the findings that usefulness of the message together with its content are the most important features of written messages for the Poles.
Figure 27 illustrates results obtained from the Americans.

![Bar chart showing the elements of written messages which are the most essential for the Americans when they see a message / a comment / an advertisement on social networks.](chart)

Figure 27: Elements of written messages which are the most essential for the Americans when they see a message / a comment / an advertisement on social networks

There are a number of similarities between the answers received from the Poles and the Americans. The American respondents also opt for usefulness and practical implication of the message (85%) encountered on social networks. The vast majority of them also state that the content of the message is crucial (80%). The relationship between those two features of written messages in both groups of the respondents may indicate a strong interdependency between the content of the message and its potential usefulness and practicality. 30% of the American respondents claim that the length of the message is important. Equally, 20% of them contend that style and potential mistakes, which can appear matter as well. Several respondents admit that some written forms which are incoherent are much more difficult in decoding on the grounds that much more time is needed in order to understand the general idea of the text, not to mentioned details. Only 17% of the Americans pay attention to the general framework of written messages. In some of their answers, we can notice several features which might cause that the process of decoding messages will be much more problematic, for example: too big or too small font, too bright or too dark font, bigger or smaller
spacing. Contrary to expectations, it can be observed that the Americans pay less attention to mistakes which can disturb the process of decoding the message.

In the further part, the respondents were asked to choose the most recognizable kinds of mistakes found in posts and comments on social networks. Figure 28 presents the results.

![Figure 28: The Polish people’s opinion about kinds of mistakes which usually appear in posts and comments available on social networks](image)

As clearly seen, half of the respondents claim that stylistic and coherence mistakes are the most common ones which appear on social networks. Those respondents admit that sometimes posts and comments are chaotic and mixed up:

**Respondent 1 (Male):** Very often when I see a message, I have no idea what it is about. Sometimes I need to read it few times to understand the content.

**Respondent 2 (Female):** Sometimes I don’t see a connection between parts of the message. Sometimes I have a feeling as if there were three or four messages in one post or comment.

A possible explanation for this might be connected with rush. Judging from the previous findings, we can observe that for some respondents only the content of
the message matters, regardless of the correctness or coherence. 45% of the respondents state that spelling mistakes are the most common ones. Those mistakes can be found mostly in very informal posts and comments which appear in some groups or forums. Another half of the respondents claim that grammar and lexical mistakes are the most noticeable ones. In their opinions, they disturb the process of decoding messages the most.

Respondent 1 (Male): Sometimes when I see a post and the number of mistakes in one line, I just skip it and go to another one.

Respondent 2 (Male): It is strange that people do not check their grammar before posting a message. Later on we see how poor is our level of education.

Respondent 3 (Female): For most of the people, it does not matter whether they will write “odkupię” or “odkópię”. When I see such mistakes, I feel like breaking my screen.

Only for 6% of the respondents punctuation mistakes are visible in posts and comments. It might seem that the Poles do not pay attention to these mistakes owing to the fact that they do not disrupt the process of decoding messages as much as grammar or lexical mistakes. However, some of the respondents state that a total lack of punctuation marks, primary ones (commas, full stops), might contribute to a total misunderstanding of the message.

Results presented in figure 29 show the answers obtained from the Americans.
Figure 29: The American people’s opinion about kinds of mistakes which usually appear in posts and comments available on social networks

Figure 29 illustrates that the Americans are more precise and perceptive since they notice four categories of potential mistakes which often appear in posts and comments, and which disturb the process of decoding messages. Those are grammar (50%), lexical (48%), stylistic (45%), and spelling mistakes (60%). Thanks to their explanations, we can find out more about these mistakes:

Respondent 1 (Male): Being a member of American society, I cannot understand how it is possible that most Americans still mix up tenses. It is very noticeable in some sale offers when someone writes that Person X lived in this house for few months, and later on it turns out that Person X actually HAS LIVED in this house for few months. It makes a big difference though.

Respondent 2 (Female): Mistakes such as ‘we need advise’, ‘how many shits (instead of sheets) do you need?’ are on a regular basis. I know it looks and sounds funny, but still..such mistakes or misspelling should be checked and immediately corrected.

Respondent 3 (Male): Spelling, spelling, and one more time spelling! It strikes me the most. I would not be so niggle over such mistakes in some informal conversation, but when I see a post or a comment about selling / buying / offering something, then it does not look too good.
Respondent 4 (Female): Definitely collocations and phrasal verbs! For some people, it does not matter whether they will say that they will make me a favour or do a favour. The same with doing their best or making their best. Of course I know what they mean, but if they want to sound grammatically okay, they should prepare themselves somehow.

The mistakes mentioned above are quite reasonable and show us that misusing some words may result in misunderstandings the content of most posts or advertisements. It is especially important in some advertisements or more specialized texts. About 22% of the American respondents pay attention to mistakes connected with coherence. The problem is almost the same as with the Poles: they do not sometimes see a logical coherence between some parts of the messages. They claim that very often one post or comment looks like a combination of three or four totally different messages with various styles which makes misunderstanding of the message. In contrast to the Poles, 12% of the Americans pay attention to punctuation mistakes. In their answers they prove that punctuation really matters in decoding messages, especially in defining and non-defining relative clauses where lack of comma might change the meaning of the whole sentence.

The following question required the respondents to state the main sources of mistakes in posts and comments on social networks. The results are collected and shown in Figure 30.
The results obtained from the answers suggested by the Polish people illustrate that 80% of them agree that mistakes appear mostly because of laziness. They claim that people are too lazy to pay attention to grammaticality and overall correctness due to the fact that content is the most important there (78% of the respondents chose this option) and lack of time to pay attention to overall correctness (75%). Half of the respondents admit that sometimes the main source of potential mistakes is either lack of education or very poor education. Only 5% of the Poles state that problems with using technology and consequently with writing online posts can be a source of mistakes. They explain that they do not have any problems with it; however, this problem is typical of older generation. Figure 31 shows results obtained from the Americans. Surprisingly, another potential source of mistakes which appeared in the answers given by the Poles was rush. There are some respondents who agree that when they are in rush because of some certain reasons (oversleeping, traffic jams, too short breaks) they do not control their grammar and vocabulary. Also, it contributes to some spelling mistakes and literal errors, especially when typing on smartphones or tablets.
It can be seen in the figure 31 that a great number of the Americans advocate three main sources of potential mistakes: people’s laziness (90%), lack of time to pay attention to grammaticality and overall correctness (80%), and focusing on content of the message (82%). Some respondents contend in their answers that because of laziness they are less precise, which results in paying less attention to details concerning the form of the message. Some of them claim that because of laziness they prefer writing short, simple, very often verbless sentences to compound ones. This feature is especially visible in Facebook Messengers chats since coming messages appear one after another on smartphones screens. Only 4% of the respondents maintain that mistakes are due to problems with technology and writing online posts. In comparison to the Poles, fewer Americans (40%) express their opinions that lack of knowledge might be a potential source of mistakes.

In the latter part, the respondents were asked to state what kind of factors have influence on the way we write online posts and comments. Figure 32 presents answers received from the Polish people’s responses:
Undoubtedly, in the respondents’ opinions, more than three quarters depends mainly on sex. Some of their answers prove their choices:

Respondent 1 (Female): Well, it is obvious that girls are more sensitive and precise. We usually pay attention to details, not like men.

Respondent 2 (Female): I think that men are more chaotic and they cannot organize their thoughts. Maybe it is one of the reasons why some messages, posts, and comments contain mistakes.

Respondent 3 (Male): As a man, I write shorter and more concrete messages. I don’t like writing too long and later on reading it for some time. Message does not have to be long because even the shortest messages can convey very fruitful information.

Respondent 4 (Female): I agree that women are more precise and they will think twice before posting something on social network. But it does not mean that men neglect it. It all depends on personality, I guess.

Respondent 5 (Female): I do not want to be a feminist but I think that girls pay more attention to details. We just want to be perceived good.
Judging from their answers, it might be noticed that there is a correlation between the sex and the style of writing. We assume that further analysis including these two correlations could show even more precise and detailed findings. 75% of the respondents claim that age matters:

Respondent 1 (Female): I think it is true and very visible in many posts and comments. It is very easy to notice which posts are published by teenagers, which by adults and which by children.

Respondent 2 (Male): Definitely, age determines the way we write. The more mature we become, the more precise and reliable our writing becomes.

Respondent 3 (Female): Age is a prominent factor. Immature posts and comments are very visible. Then, we can deduce that they were written by someone who is not mature enough yet.

Respondent 4 (Male): Length and content of the messages say a lot about age. Age, in this case, influences many aspects of posts and comment visible on social networks.

Their answers illustrate that age also contributes to our style of writing. It is even mentioned that age can be another potential source of mistakes. A great majority of the respondents (65 % and 67%) support the view that education and nationality contribute to the way we post comments and messages. Their explanations are as follows:

Respondent 1 (Male): It is obvious that someone who has higher education will not make as many (if any) mistakes as someone who has only primary education or does not have it all. Of course, it is not a rule, but in most cases it works like that.

Respondent 2 (Female): I agree. It is very noticeable whether a particular post or comments are added by someone who is well-educated or not. It can be visible in the style and the way he or she organizes his or her post.

Respondent 3 (Male): Nationality matters definitely! Some nations are more talkative, others less. Some nations prefer longer messages, others shorter. Some nations do not care at all about grammar and vocabulary, other check every possible details.
Respondent 4 (Female): Honestly, I think that sometimes people who are not so well-educated try to show themselves from the best perspective and they check everything many times before posting a comment. We cannot generalize that all uneducated people make mistakes because of their education.

Taking into account their answers, we might conclude that education also plays a very important role in writing online messages. Their explanations might function as a motivation for further research concerning the correlation between the style of writing and education. Comparing posts and comments from people who have secondary educations and those with primary education would reveal the most significant similarities and differences concerning the style of writing. Our respondents claim that more advanced grammatical structures in sentences (passive voice, impersonal constructions) may indicate that the author of a particular post or comment has satisfying education. About 50% of the respondents believe that social backgrounds contribute to our style of writing as well. Partially, it can be associated with education, but sometimes family, environment, and friends also have influence on the way we write messages. There are many people who seem to be well-educated or have proper skills but for some reasons they do not have a chance to develop them on the grounds that they are limited either by their parents or friends, and the final result is that they change their attitude towards some matters. Lack of money or potential problems at home are also the reasons why people cannot start or continue their education. 30% of the respondents state that technological skills are also the factors which determine the way we write and 5% of the respondents provided their own answers:

- The topic of the conversation / posts / comments,
- The amount of free time,
- Current mood.

Respondent 1 (Female): I think that a lot of depends on the topic of the conversation. Sometimes when I see that topic is not of my interest then I do not answer or I answer very shortly.
Respondent 2 (Male): When it comes to me, it all depends on the amount of free time I possess. Sometimes I am in a hurry or I am busy doing some other stuff, then if I am supposed to write a comment or post, it is obvious that it will be shorter and less attention will be paid to it.

Respondent 3 (Male): I think that very often it depends on our mood. Sometimes we are more willing to write, sometimes less. It is stronger than us and this factor may also have influence on our style of writing.

The answers suggested by the Poles are quite interesting in the interpretation. The more interesting the topic of the conversation, the more willing we are to take part in it. The amount of time contributes to the length of the messages. Surprisingly enough, there are some respondents who believe that mood also influences our style of writing. In some of their answers, we can observe that not being in a mood may result in writing very short, simple sentences sometimes containing even irony or some swearwords.

Figure 33 illustrates findings obtained from the Americans’ answers:

![Bar Chart]

Figure 33: The Americans’ opinions about factors which determine the way we write online posts and comments

When it comes to the Americans’ answers, it seems that there are four, most important factors which shape their way of writing on social networks:
• Age (82%)
• Sex (78%)
• Education (75%)
• Nationality (70%)

Respondent 1 (Female): In my opinion, age is sometimes linked with sex. Sometimes it is very noticeable whether a post is published by women or by men and at the same time we can deduce their age.

Respondent 2 (Male): People who finished technical colleges may be more willing to bring up topics connected with some technical stuff. They will be good at it because it is their profession. It does not mean that their topics will be more boring or less informative.

Respondent 3 (Male): I have lots of Italian and Spanish friends and I see how chaotic are their answers. Most of the time they put some emoticons and they laugh a lot.

Respondent 4 (Female): German people are very reserved. I have some of them in my contacts and they are very strict in their messages. It is hard to joke with them. They are very precise in answers and they write very concrete information.

Respondent 5 (Male): Women are more funny in writing and they are sensitive. They always write a looooot even if it could be said in few words.

Respondent 6 (Female): The moment I see mistakes, but I mean really serious mistakes in posts and comments, I have a feeling that a person is not so well-educated.

Respondent 7 (Male): I think that age determines topics which we bring up on social networks. It is obvious that teenagers will not talk about the same topics like adults or some professional workers.

Respondent 8 (Female): I do not know if it is a rule. I know some women who are very precise and strict in answers. They do not write too long.

The justifications presented above find clear support for the correlation between nationality and the style of writing. It is interesting that the American notice cultural differences which might contribute to the way we write. In the case of
the Germans, short, simple and strict messages are the result of them being reserved and not too open-minded. In contrast to them, the Spanish people might have a tendency to write longer sentences, which are chaotic and badly-organized. Our respondents claim that some people choose only these topics which are connected with their profession so that they could take part in the discussion and elaborate more on the main topic. 65% of the respondents are convinced that social background contributes to the style of writing:

Respondent 1 (Female): Sometimes people may have potential but they are limited by family or society.

Respondent 2 (Female): Unfortunately, there are countries where people do not have proper conditions for development. Even if they would like, they cannot do it. Later on they need to go abroad and many other factors influence them then.

Respondent 3 (Male): I think that government should do something with it. To give people more opportunities and chances to develop. And not to limit them.

A further novel finding is that political and financial situation in a particular country also influence the system of education. It is typical of the countries where the level of unemployment is really high and a great part of society is without jobs. Only 15% of the respondents feel that technological skills may contribute to the way we write on social networks. 7% of the respondents suggested their own answers:

- Current location
- A good Internet connection
- Access to technological devices

Respondent 1 (Female): Sometimes it happens that I am supposed to answer for the post or comment when I am among friends or at work. I am stressed then, I cannot fully concentrate and I know that I must answer right now. Then, I know that my answer will not be fully satisfying because I do not have proper conditions for it.
Respondent 2 (Female): I often get mad when my Internet connection sucks. Every moment I need to log in and look for wi fi connection. Then I do not have time for long and fully correct messages. I just want to send it and have a saint peace.

Respondent 3 (Male): When it comes to me, it depends on technological device. I am not keen on writing on phones or tablets. It is very tiring for me. I can use those devices to browse some websites, but not to type and type. In this situation, when I am supposed to use phone or tablet to send a post, I do it very shortly and quickly. If I am on the computer, I can type and type.

From these findings, it is clear that a current location also needs to be taken into account when thinking about potential factors, which influence our writing on social networks. There are situations which do not allow us to use our phones and type messages for a longer period of time. Then, we either answer for a message using very short sentences (often verbless ones) or we just read the message and leave the answer for later. Internet connection may also disturb the process of sending messages. Naturally, the slower Internet connection, the more delayed answers we receive from our interlocutor. Finally, access to technological devices also matters since some respondents state that they prefer using traditional PC keyboards to smartphones keyboards. There are respondents who claim that they need much more time in order to type a message and very often using smartphones keyboards is more problematic for them.

The next question required the respondents to state the frequency of using various emoticons. Figure 34 illustrates the answers.
Figure 34: The frequency of using emoticons by the Poles

The results provide evidence to the fact that 63% of the respondents always use emoticons in writing. It might be connected with a very rapid development of various types of emoticons on social networks. Nowadays not only can we use traditional ones (i.e.: :-), :-), :-P), but also emojis, which are presented in the form of pictograms, and some other stickers. 15% of the respondents chose the option ‘usually’ since they claim that using emoticons is not the most important part of the message and that they function only as some additional elements. 5% of the respondents opt for options such as ‘often’, ‘occasionally’ and ‘never’.

The Americans’ answers are presented in Figure 35.
As in the case of the Polish respondents, the Americans also state that they always use emoticons in online writing (75%). 10% of them choose an option ‘usually’, whereas 3% of them feel that they never use emoticons. 12% of them opt for options such as ‘often’, ‘sometimes’, and ‘occasionally’. It can be summarized that emoticons are a very consistent part of messages, posts, and comments found on social networks.

In the later question, the respondents were asked to choose types of emoticons they usually use in online writing. The answers obtained from the Polish respondents are presented in Table 24.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>The frequency of using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>😊</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😊</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:/</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:D</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😋</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:P</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Judging from the respondents’ answers, it can be concluded that the most popular emoticons are: “:D” (85%) and “:P” (75%). The Poles explain that they are aware of the fact that sometimes these emoticons are overused due to their popularity and universality. In the respondents’ opinions, they are used mostly in informal messages and chit-chats, and very often they can be found in posts and comments. It is wise to notice that half of the respondents prefer choosing emoticon “ظل” to “☺”.

The explanation of this phenomenon is strictly connected with semantics. Even if the denotation of the emoticon “☺” literally presents the face which shows content, satisfaction, and happiness, yet the connotation of this emoticon might be associated with irony, sarcasm, uncertainty, and distance, especially when they are put at the end of the sentence or when they stand on their own in a message. Many respondents state that they do not like using this emoticon due to the fact that it can have a hidden meaning. Neither do they like receiving a message with this type of the emoticon on the grounds that they can never predict the intention of the second user. Naturally, we cannot make a generalization since for the rest of the respondents do not have any negative associations connected with using it. The rest of the emoticons are used depending on the situation. There are respondents who suggest some other emoticons which they also use in online writing. Table 25 presents them together with possible interpretations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>The frequency of using</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>:&gt;</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>- expressing uncertainty, - looking for a hidden truth - checking the real intentions of another user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’(</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>- crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xd</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>- laughing (used interchangeably with “:D”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 25: Additional emoticons used in online writing by the Poles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoticon</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☺</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>;-)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:/</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:D</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:P</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-)</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26 illustrates answers suggested by the Americans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>The frequency of using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☺</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>;-)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:/</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:D</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:P</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-)</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26: Types of emoticons which are usually used by the Americans in online writing

Almost everyone (95%) states that emoticon “:D” is the most popular one. The Americans admit that they use it almost every time in both private messages and some posts and comments. A great majority of the respondents also chose “:P” as the most commonly used emoticon. In comparison to the Poles, the Americans do not have a problem with using “☺” (30%) and “☺” (60%). In their answers, they state that they do not have any negative connotations with the emoticon “☺”. They use it when they express their content, satisfaction, and happiness. It was mentioned that this emoticon is specific and its interpretation can be ambiguous; however, the Americans do not pay too much attention to it. Nevertheless, some of the respondents believe that the emoticon “:P” can be used as the one which is ironic and sarcastic. Several respondents explain that whenever they notice this emoticon in messages or posts, they feel confused and embarrassed. For the Americans, the emoticon “:)” is also perceived as sarcastic one and ambiguous. Such a wink is neither happiness, nor content, and in fact it does not add anything to the content of the function of the message. For this reason, only 10 % of the respondents chose this emoticon as commonly used in
online writing. A vast number of the users also chose emoticon “:O” (66%). They explain that it is quite universal and they can use it to express surprise, shock, amusement, disappointment etc. Some other emoticons suggested by them are presented in table 27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>The frequency of using</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xp</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>- showing irony and sarcasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^^^</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>- laughing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xd</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>- being happy and content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:)&lt;</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>- showing anger and dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:[</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>- disagreeing with someone else’s opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- self-confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27: Additional emoticons used in online writing by the Americans

In the last question the respondents were asked to suggest reasons for using emoticons in online writing. The answers presented below come from the Polish respondents:

Respondent 1 (Male): I use emoticons because they make my writing more vivid and colorful. A message without them looks so..’naked’.

Respondent 2 (Female): I use them because sometimes I want to show my current mood. I don’t mean that I use them all the time, but I use them when I see a purpose.

Respondent 3 (Female): Honestly speaking, I use them because I am used to this. Maybe sometimes I do it without reasons, but I still like it.

Respondent 4 (Male): too show my mood, my current thoughts, my attitude, my behavior..

Respondent 5 (Female): To be like others. If my friends use them (very often without purposes) why can’t I?
Our results demonstrate that emoticons are important in online writing. It can be observed that their functions also differ. For some of the respondents emoticons make our messages more vivid and colorful, for others they substitute our inner feelings, emotions and current mood. Yet, there are some answers in which the respondents explain that the range of emoticons is so wide that sometimes they are overused in posts, comments, and messages. Let us verify the answers received from the Americans:

Respondent 1 (Female): I use emoticons to put emphasis on some elements in my writing forms. For instance, if I write “I bought a new dress”, it is a normal sentence without any emphatic meaning. However, when I write “I bought a new dress :D :D”, then everyone knows that it is something special and extraordinary for me.

Respondent 2 (Male): I don’t use emoticons too often. When I use them, maybe just 2-3 in the whole message, for sure not more.

Respondent 3 (Male): To have fun and excitement!

Respondent 4 (Female): Mostly to show current mood and attitude. But I use them depending on the situation. It is obvious that I won’t use: xd and ^^ in formal writing to someone who is more important than me.

Respondent 5 (Female): I don’t overuse them. I use them because sometimes I want to be emphatic with my friends. When I see them sad, I want to somehow comfort them. When they are happy, I want to be happy together with them.

Respondent 6 (Male): I think that social networks require us to use these emoticons. Nowadays, there are all possible emoticons, emojis, stickers and some other animated gifs which are created for almost every type of occasion. Some of them are really stupid and without sense, but people do use them.

Respondent 7 (Female): More than emoticons I use stickers. Some of them are quite informative and instead of writing something, I can use this sticker and everyone knows what I mean. It is easy and simple for me.

It is noticeable that for some of the respondents using emoticons influences the way we perceive and read messages. Some of them contend that a message without any emoticons will be perceived less favourably than the message with some emoticons.
Some respondents answer that the range of emoticons is so tempting nowadays that they cannot resist using at least some of them in their posts and comments. However, the Americans make a distinction between formal messages which should not be overloaded with the emoticons, and more informal ones which might contain some stickers or even emojis. Finally, there are some explanations in favour of using emoticons on the grounds that they are typical of social networks and they are created to express fun, joy, and entertainment.

5.3 Recapitulation

The following conclusions and observations can be drawn from the present chapter:

1. Among all the social networks suggested in the survey, both the Polish and the American respondents choose Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube as their favorite ones. The main reasons for using them are: communicative purposes, meeting new friends, having fun and entertainment. However, it is interesting to notice that the Americans consider YouTube as a social network which helps them to escape from thousands of photos, comments, and posts which they see in excess on Facebook.

2. Both groups of the respondents prefer either personal meetings or phone calls to sending e-mails or text messaging. It seems that writing e-mails is getting less and less popular and people choose faster ways of communicating. It is worth mentioning that users start to make a division between Facebook as a social network which is linked with music, photos, comments, posts, stories and Facebook messenger which functions as the place for writing and exchanging messages. It also seems that Facebook messenger itself is getting more useful and needed than Facebook as a website itself.

3. In the respondents’ opinions writing longer posts or adverts requires more grammatical correctness in comparison to any other situations like for instance chatting on Facebook messengers or commenting on someone’s photos. Users are usually afraid that their posts will be regarded as grammatically incorrect or incoherent.

4. The usefulness of the post or the comment and their content are crucial factors for the Poles and the Americans when they see these forms on Facebook. They explain that
they are more interested in some information or the main aim of the message than the framework or length. The style of these posts and comments was the least preferred option.

5. It is important to notice the difference between various kinds of mistakes which appear in the mentioned posts and comments. The Polish claim that stylistic, spelling, and coherence mistakes appear the most often whereas for the Americans typical mistakes are grammar, lexical, and coherence.

6. In general, it may be stated that people’s laziness, paying attention only to content and lack of time are the main sources of mistakes which are noticeable in these posts and comments. In the respondents’ opinions it is easy to notice that they point out that information itself is the most crucial in the message.

7. Both the Poles and the Americans overuse emoticons. The most preferred ones are: “D” and “:P”. Both groups of the respondents explain that they can use them on a regular basis. Nevertheless, it must be noticed that the least preferred emoticon for the Poles is: “☺” on the ground that it evokes different connotations, very often misleading and unpleasant. For many Polish people it is a sign of irony, sarcasm and arrogance. This phenomenon; however, is not visible in the Americans’ opinions. In contrast, their bad connotations are connected with emoticon commonly known as a wink “;;)”.

CHAPTER VI

THE RESULTS OF THE CORPUS ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

The present chapter discusses the results of the corpus analysis based on the posts and the comments found on Facebook. As was stated in the previous chapter, the main objective of this research was to check and verify which grammatical and lexical forms and structures appear more often in particular posts and comments and how they differ from each other. We have decided to do it on the same principle as with the analysis of the surveys – the comparison of the posts and the comments written both by the Poles and the Americans. To obtain more reliable results, the topics which were chosen for the analysis were the same for both groups of the respondents – informal ones (social chit-chats) and more formal ones (breaking news).

The main purpose of choosing such topics was to check and verify whether typical features which are hypothetically attributed to these topics (e.g.: mostly formal style in more official posts, swearwords in informal social chit-chats, overusing emoticons in informal conversations) really appear in the posts, comments, and messages on Facebook or whether those features are mixed up and there are no rules, which could impose one, particular schema for these chosen topics. It is also important to observe whether these two categories have some features which could be attributed to both of them, if yes, what kind of features they are and in which situations they are noticeable the most often. Such an analysis allows us to have an insight into more advanced grammatical structures such as the number of personal / impersonal constructions or the number of simple, compounds, or complex sentences, which can be encountered when analyzing particular posts and comments. Finally, this analysis will enable us to notice some significant differences and similarities in using particular grammatical and lexical structures both by the Poles and the Americans.

It is crucial to mention that depending on the category, the number of the comments, together with the number of the running words and the sentences differ from each other. There are some comments which do not include too many running words,
but in some others one can find a great number of sentences with many running words. There are also comments which include several sentences, and still there are some comments which consist of single words. The total number of the posts, the comments, the sentences, and the running words within a particular category is always provided. Thanks to that, we can be aware of the fact whether the number of passive constructions or swearwords is relatively big or small in comparison to the total number of running words.

We have also decided to check whether the American users of the Internet understand a passage of the text on the first reading. Understanding and being aware of grammatical and lexical correctness may also depend on respondents’ ability to decode messages and comments in a proper way. To achieve our aim we have decided to use the Gunning Fog Index which is also called a readability test for English writing. The index estimates the years of formal education a person needs to understand the text on the first reading. To calculate the Gunning Fog Index, we need to take a passage of a text which consists of at least 100 words and count the number of exact words and syllables. Then, we need to divide the total number of words in the sample by the total number of sentences. This will give us the Average Sentence Length (ASL). Next, we need to count the number of words that contain three or more syllables that are not proper nouns, or two-syllable verbs made into three by adding -es and -ed endings. After that, we need to divide that number by the total number of words in the sample passage. This will give us the Percent Hard Words (PHW). Finally, we need to add the ASL and PHW and multiply the result by 0.4. The principle behind the Gunning Fog Index formula is that short sentences written in plain English receive a better score than longer sentences written in complex language. Having the final result, we may use Fog Index to check the reading level (Seretny, 2006: 91).

6.2 Contrastive analysis of Polish and English social chit-chats

This part of the dissertation contains the posts and the comments which are connected with social life and events of both groups of the respondents. The topics, which appear here, are divided into two categories:
1. Family
2. Holidays

These two categories split into smaller topics which are more detailed and precise ranging from spending free time, customs, traditions, national matches to summer and winter holidays. This analysis starts with the posts and the comments coming from the first category – family.

6.2.1 Christmas theme - background

The first topic which was chosen both for the Poles and the Americans comes from the category “holidays” and focuses on Christmas, preparations, and family gathering during this time. This period of time is important in our life and much-anticipated. The reason why such a topic was chosen by us concerned checking people’s involvement in writing posts and comments within this topic and at the same time investigating their willingness to share such topics with others. These posts and comments are gathered from some groups present on Facebook where people usually exchange their views and take part in some discussions. When it comes to the American websites, the following were chosen:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/AmericanHolidays/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/christmasinny/
(3) https://www.facebook.com/MyChristmasinNewYork/
(4) https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasNYC/
(5) https://www.facebook.com/events/408767362896406/
(6) https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChristmasShopping2015/about/
(7) https://www.facebook.com/groups/323439634744680/about/

and in the case of the Polish websites:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/Bo%C5%BCe-Narodzenie-129172097104518/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/Bo%C5%BCe-Narodzenie-1412040275732405/
The number of the posts gathered from the Polish websites: 60
The number of the posts gathered from the American websites: 60

The number of the comments included in the Polish posts: 185
The number of the comments included in the American posts: 121

The number of the sentences included in the Polish posts: 540
The number of the sentences included in the American posts: 325

The number of the running words included in the Polish comments: 5550
The number of the running words included in the American comments: 4235

As one can notice, the number of the investigated posts are the same in the case of both groups of the respondents; however, the number of the comments and the running words differ significantly. It is caused by the fact that some posts include more comments, others fewer. The quantitative analysis is presented in the form of tables. Each line contains the frequency of particular grammatical and lexical structures which were visible in the posts and the comments. The qualitative analysis contains most remarkable conclusions together with some extracts including examples of chosen grammatical and lexical structures which had been investigated. All of them come from Facebook.

### 6.2.2 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the Polish posts and comments concerning Christmas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of sentences with formal style</th>
<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
<th>The number of personal construction</th>
<th>The number of impersonal construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Table 28: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the Polish posts and comments concerning Christmas theme

The analysis of the comments which appear in posts concerning Christmas shows many interesting results. The sentences with active voice and personal constructions occur more often than passive voice and impersonal constructions. The Poles hardly ever use such constructions in comments concerning Christmas:

It is quite natural that the Poles prefer using more active constructions in informal topics to formal ones. The more familiar they are with a particular topic, the more personal constructions appear there. Since Christmas is perceived as a very important
celebration, which is also much anticipated, people are more eager to show how much effort they put in preparations. In their answers they are trying to show that most of the dishes and decorations are prepared on their own and that their Christmas wishes are real and sincere.

No idioms are visible in these comments either. Definitely, formal style is visible more often than informal one; however, there are some examples of informal style:

No swearwords and abbreviations are noticeable in these comments. For most of the Poles, this time of the year is perceived as the time of recollection and rest. Besides, for those people who are concerned about religious matters this topic is seen as highly sacred. Nevertheless, a great number of the Poles have a tendency to overuse various kinds of emoticons. These findings of the current study are consistent with information concerning emoticons discusses in the theoretical part of this dissertation. Emoticons which look like pictograms are used both in formal and informal categories. It happens that more than five emoticons might appear in a simple sentence. Emojis also appear, yet they are not as popular as emoticons:
As one can notice, the number of the emoticons is overwhelming in the comments concerning Christmas theme (5 emoticons present in the first extract, 9 in the second one, and 19 in the last one). A possible explanation of this phenomenon might be that the Polish people are quite emotional and during this period of time they aim at expressing joy and excitement in many various ways. It was mentioned in the theoretical part that emotions, which are a part of the language of emotions, may be interpreted differently depending on the situational context. It cannot be forgotten that in the language of the Internet, emoticons function as a substitution of expressing real emotions, feelings, and current mood. Furthermore, it has to be noticed that the emoticons used in these extracts symbolize Christmas time (Santa Claus, fireworks, presents, Christmas Trees, snowmen). As was stated before, emojis also appear; however, their number is not so significant:

When analyzing these extracts, we may notice one more feature typical of the comments under the posts connected with Christmas. Several Internet users implement verbless sentences:
In this case, verbless sentences are used either in the form of affirmative sentences or interrogative ones. Without doubt, it must be stated that most of the sentences which appear in these comments and posts are simple, without any advanced grammatical or lexical constructions:

Declarative sentences are the most popular types of sentences which appear in these posts, yet there are many exclamative sentences which express mainly people’s joy, excitement, and happiness connected with forthcoming Christmas, and occasionally interrogative sentences used to ask about someone else’s opinions concerning spending Christmas time and preparations for this event:
It may be concluded that the messages which appear in the posts connected with Christmas seem to be pleasurable in reading and analyzing. Lack of swearwords and orders make that those comments and posts are full of joy, excitement, warm feelings. Having gathered the posts and comments from the Polish respondents, we may assume that they pay much attention to Christmas and all preparations connected with this celebration. Even if those posts and comments are rather short and not very informative, still it is nice to observe how people share their feelings and emotions with others.

6.2.3 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the American posts and comments concerning Christmas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>The number of sentences with formal style</td>
<td>The number of sentences with informal style</td>
<td>The number of personal construction</td>
<td>The number of impersonal construction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of swearwords</td>
<td>The number of emoticons</td>
<td>The number of emojis</td>
<td>The number of abbreviations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>The number of simple sentences</td>
<td>The number of compounds sentences</td>
<td>The number of complex sentences</td>
<td>The number of compound-complex sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of declarative</td>
<td>The number of imperative</td>
<td>The number of exclamative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the analysis of the American posts and comments some typical features are observed as well. It may seem that the Americans use both active and passive voice sentences in their comments:

The analysis of extracts also show that the Americans sometimes want to pay attention to the activity that has already been finished and the performer of the action does not necessarily have to be known. Definitely, the Americans who took part in this research use fewer number of the emoticons in their comments and posts. In comparison to the Poles (100 emoticons and 32 emojis), the Americans used only 40 emoticons and 3 emojis. The Americans seem to be more reserved and for them spending Christmas may not be too special. For some of them, it is connected with sitting in pubs and drinking, for others it is another period of time, which comes every year in the middle of December. The extract below illustrates a scant number of emoticons in their comments:

Table 29: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the American posts and comments concerning Christmas themes
As one can notice, among 11 comments and 13 sentences, only 6 emoticons were used, whereas when it comes to the Polish posts: in three sentences 33 emoticons were used. It might seem that the topic concerning Christmas issues does not encourage them to use too many emoticons. However, in comparison to the Polish people, the Americans have a tendency for using abbreviations in their comments. Those abbreviations together with their meanings are gathered and explained in table 30. Some extracts below illustrate examples of using abbreviations:
Table 30 illustrates various abbreviations used by the Americans in their posts and comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ads</td>
<td>advertisement</td>
<td>reklama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xmas</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>Święta Bożego Narodzenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Wielka Brytania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lol</td>
<td>Laughing Out Loud</td>
<td>śmieję się głośno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>drugi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>styczeń</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tho</td>
<td>though</td>
<td>jednak, mimo że</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomoz</td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>jutro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Grudzień</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St</td>
<td>Saint</td>
<td>Święty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30: Christmas theme abbreviations

Using abbreviations is typical of the Americans. Not only is it noticeable in the posts connected with Christmas, but in other posts and comments as well. Saving time might be one of the reasons why the Americans use so many abbreviations in their messages.
They might save more time by writing ‘Xmas ads’ instead of ‘Christmas advertisements’.

Another feature which is typical of the American posts and comments concerning Christmas is using onomatopoeic expressions which are not used by the Polish people. Not only do the Americans express their joy and satisfaction by means of using exclamation marks, but also by using such expressions:

![Example of onomatopoeic expressions in American Christmas posts.]

It may be connected with the fact that the Americans have more specific type of humour in comparison to the Poles. Their attitude towards some matters is different than in the case of the Poles. They seem to be more direct and open-minded. Using various onomatopoeic expressions contributes to the way the particular message or the post will be perceived by other Internet users. It must be mentioned that various onomatopoeic expressions also express feelings and emotions so when seeing such a message, our attitude to read it is more positive and it puts our mind at rest. In most cases, simple and compound sentences are observable during the analysis:
Rarely does it happen that complex or compound-complex sentences are used. It might be due to the limitations of topics within a particular category. If more than fifty Internet users send Christmas wishes, later on it is becoming monotonous and the respondents prefer giving ‘likes’ to writing new Christmas wishes. There are also many verbless sentences:

Generally speaking, it can be concluded that the Americans make their life easier by using abbreviations. Not only can it be noticed in Christmas category, but also in some others. As was stated in the questionnaire results, the form of the message is not as important as conveying information. In the case of Christmas posts and comments, sentences are rather simple, but quite informative. Most of them are declarative and convey messages in a very direct way, only some of them are interrogative or exclamative. Interrogative sentences are aimed only at asking about Christmas preparations, whereas exclamations are used to express joy, satisfaction, and enjoyment connected with coming Christmas. Surprisingly enough, neither idioms, nor phrasal verbs are observable in these posts and comments. It might be connected with the fact that the respondents did not have in mind any idioms or phrasal verbs, which could be suitable in particular situational contexts.
6.3 Summer holidays theme - background

The second topic, which was chosen for the analysis, comes from the category entitled ‘family’ and is connected with spending summer holidays. It is commonly known that it is another anticipated period of time, which is important both for the Poles and the Americans. In the opinion of both groups, spending time with family and relatives improves relations. The results obtained from the analysis of Christmas topics show that the Polish people are more involved in preparations for Christmas and exchanging comments and opinions, yet it is crucial to investigate how it is when it comes to the topics connected with summer holidays. The following websites were used in the case of the Poles:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/groups/851676151642871/about/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/search/str/wakacyjny+urlopu/keywords_search
(3) https://www.facebook.com/WakacjeJastrz%C4%99bie-Zdr%C3%B3j-
310932512432878/
(4) https://www.facebook.com/groups/349080901850502/
(5) https://www.facebook.com/groups/wakacjenadmorzem/about/
(6) https://www.facebook.com/pg/WczasyWycieczkiWakacje/posts/?ref=page_internal

And those in the case of the Americans:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/AmericanHolidays
(2) https://www.facebook.com/AmericanHolidaysIreland
(3) https://www.facebook.com/groups/431667193836882/about/

The number of the posts gathered from the Polish websites: 50
The number of the posts gathered from the American websites: 50

The number of the comments included in the Polish posts: 178
The number of the comments included in the American posts: 169
The number of the sentences included in the Polish posts: 535
The number of the sentences included in the American posts: 845

The number of the running words included in the Polish comments: 3382
The number of the running words included in the American comments: 7943

6.3.1 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the Polish posts and comments concerning summer holidays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
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<th>The number of compounds sentences</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The number of declarative sentences</th>
<th>The number of interrogative sentences</th>
<th>The number of imperative sentences</th>
<th>The number of exclamative sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the Polish people’s posts and comments concerning spending summer holidays

It is worth starting this analysis with the statement that a great number of the Poles use verbless constructions and short, simple sentences in their comments concerning the topic of holidays. It might be owing to the fact that sometimes such topics are considered as boring and monotonous by the Poles:
As one can notice, the comments shown above aim only at expressing recommendations connected with visiting a particular place. It most cases these messages are not too informative. It is also interesting to notice that the Polish people have a tendency to describe everything by means of using one or maximum two words, and in most cases, they do it by implementing either nouns or adjectives:

In this case, the Poles explain that it is enough to use adjectives and adverbs since those parts of the speech describe events, or places in the most effective way and there is no
need to write long, compound or complex sentences to describe a perfect holiday destination. Occasionally, some emoticons can be observable in some of these extracts. As one can notice, in these posts and comments, some features typical of Netspeak can be noticeable as well:

(1) capitalization:

Using capitalization in these extracts show people’s joy, enjoyment and excitement connected with holidays destination. As one can notice, sometimes only one word can be written in capital letters, and sometimes the whole sentences are written in such a way.

(2) repeated letters:

Repeating letters aims at showing prosodic features of our everyday spoken language. Those features may correspond to some major variables, for instance: the pitch of the voice, the length of sounds (as noticed in the extract), loudness, or prominence, and even timbre.

(3) using punctuation marks:
Among a great diversity of punctuation marks, exclamations included in these extracts aim at expressing our content and satisfaction. The function of exclamation also differs. In the first extract: ‘Tam chcę!!!!!!!’ the main role is to express our willingness and desire to visit a place; however, in the second extract: ‘Najdrożej jest chyba na Majorce!!!!!!!’ the main function of the exclamations is to warn other holidaymakers about the prices in Majorca. On the basis of these two extracts, we may conclude that the second one is more informative thanks to exclamations.

There are also some extracts which contain various kinds of mistakes:

(1) lack of diacritical marks:

Lack of diacritical marks is typical only of the posts and the comments written by the Poles. During the analysis, we have gathered a great number of sentences without diacritical marks. There are some possible explanations of this kind of mistakes. One of them is that the respondents admit that they are too lazy to implement these marks in their sentences. They claim that too much time is needed in order to choose the combination of two keys in order to create a diacritical mark (e.g. in order to type ‘ą’ we need to press at the same time two keys: ‘a’ + ‘alt’). There are also some respondents who explain that they do not pay too much attention to these marks since the content of the message is more important for them. On the basis of their opinions, we may distinguish two situations: formal ones in which most of them claim that they try to use diacritical marks, and informal ones which are without these marks.

(2) spelling mistakes:
Spelling mistakes in the posts and the comments written by the Poles may be caused by literal mistakes, for instance: ‘Garoco’ instead of ‘gorąco’ or ‘iddech’ instead of ‘oddech.’ However, there are also several messages which contain typical spelling mistakes:

(3) lack of punctuation marks:

Lack of punctuation marks is visible more and more often in various posts and comments. The Internet users often forget about dots at the end of the sentences, or commas in the middle of the sentences. It also happens that the sentence which should be read as interrogative is perceived as a declarative one on the grounds that there is no question mark at the end of the sentence. Some respondents explain that either they forget about punctuation marks or they do not pay too much attention to them. Even if
most of the respondents stated in the questionnaire that such mistakes should not appear since they disturb the process of decoding messages, they are still present in most posts and comments.

Even if those are typical features of Netspeak, the Poles do not pay too much attention to those mistakes. It can be concluded that the Poles are aware of the fact that very often they make mistakes; however, because of their laziness, lack of time, and rush they do not pay too much attention to them.

Rarely does it happen that swearwords appear in these comments. If they do, they are not perceived as offensive ones since their function is to make the message more vivid, funny, or colorful:

It seems that the Polish people like to spend holidays together and what is more interesting, their sentences are becoming longer and more verified when they start to tag each other and make some plans concerning their trips. It differs a lot from the comments in which they just express their opinions and feelings:
As shown in these extracts, more feelings and emotions are included in the comments where people engage their friends to a mutual conversation. The more people involved in the conversation, the more information might be gathered and analyzed. The number of the emoticons also increase in these extracts from occasional ones, which appeared in the previous comments, to even 15 emoticons in one line. As it was in the case of the topics concerning Christmas, neither idioms, nor phrasal verbs are observable in these extracts. The number of personal constructions (42) definitely outranks the number of impersonal constructions (4) since these topics very often revolve around the respondents’ personal matters and issues.

6.3.2 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the American posts and comments concerning summer holidays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active sentences</th>
<th>Passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of sentences with formal style</th>
<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
<th>The number of personal construction</th>
<th>The number of impersonal construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of swearwords</th>
<th>The number of emoticons</th>
<th>The number of emojis</th>
<th>The number of abbreviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple Sentences</td>
<td>Compound Sentences</td>
<td>Complex Sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 32: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the Americans’ posts and comments concerning spending summer holidays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In many comments which appear under the posts connected with spending summer holidays together, it is very noticeable that in most cases the Americans prefer using active sentences (55) to passive ones (0). Passive sentences are not used at all in these comments; however, one phenomenon is worth mentioning: a great number of the American users implement sentences without subjects:

Rarely are we aware of the fact that the Americans sometimes omit subjects in their posts and comments. It might seem that for them it is obvious that whenever they write
a comment, it is natural that personal pronouns are unnecessary since the performer of the action is known. To some degree, their sentences are similar to ours since the Polish language does not require us to use subjects in the sentences on the grounds that sometimes it could seem unnatural, for instance: ‘Jemy obiad’ vs ‘My jemy obiad.’

In contrast to Christmas themes, phrasal verbs, idioms, and slang finally can be found in the posts coming from summer holidays category. It might seem that the style which is attributed to summer holidays topics is more informal for the Americans:

(1) Phrasal verbs:

Finally, phrasal verbs are noticed in the extracts gathered from the Americans. When asked about using phrasal verbs, the Americans claim that they need a concrete situational context to use them in their sentences. It could explain the lack of phrasal verbs in the comments and posts coming from Christmas themes.

(2) Idioms:
The number of idioms used in these extracts is not too bewildering since in the opinion of the Americans they are sometimes difficult in understanding. Idioms themselves are expressions that in most cases have a figurative meaning. Very often an idiom’s figurative meaning is different from the literal meaning so the interpretations of idioms might be misleading. Hence, the meanings of the idioms used in these extracts are as follows (Hornby, 2010):

(1) ‘have a ball’ = to enjoy oneself very much,
(2) ‘not a chance in hell’ = to be completely impossible or incredibly unlikely,
(3) ‘make the cut’ = come up to a required standard.

Abbreviations appear on a regular basis in these comments as well:
As one can notice, some abbreviations are very general ones, and some of them are connected mostly with discussed topics and matters. The list of abbreviations is shown in table 33.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>luty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>grudzień</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>drugi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pics</td>
<td>pictures</td>
<td>obrazki, zdjęcia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defo</td>
<td>definitely</td>
<td>zdecydowanie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wks</td>
<td>weeks</td>
<td>tygodnie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lol</td>
<td>laughing out loud</td>
<td>śmieję się głośno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wk</td>
<td>week</td>
<td>tydzień</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pls</td>
<td>please</td>
<td>proszę</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMG</td>
<td>Oh My God</td>
<td>O mój Boże</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fab</td>
<td>fabulous</td>
<td>bajeczny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mins</td>
<td>minutes</td>
<td>minuty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oct</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>październik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBT</td>
<td>Throwback</td>
<td>Wspomnienie czegoś co już minęło</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33: Summer holidays theme abbreviations

In general, formal style is dominating; nevertheless, there are some examples of slang and urban expressions as well:
It might seem that the posts and the comments which include some slang and urban expressions could have been written by teenagers who are more familiar with this type of language than older generations. Seldom does it happen that adults or elderly people know such expressions. The interpretation of urban and slang expressions is as difficult as in the case of idioms since it functions as an informal register. The meaning of urban and slang expressions used in these extracts is as follows (Hornby, 2010):

(1) ‘defo’ = definitely, for sure,
(2) ‘to be a wuss’ = a weak, cowardly, or ineffectual person,
(3) ‘to be a dork’ = someone who has odd interests, and is often silly at times,
(4) ‘on the box’ = on TV
(5) ‘to do some bits’ = a collection of small things.

Occasional examples of swearwords and emojis are noticeable in the comments under these posts. When it comes to the types of sentences which appear in these comments, it must be stated that declarative sentences appear the most often (65), exclamative sentences which are used by the Americans mostly to express joy and excitement (20), and a few interrogative sentences which are used to gather some practical information concerning holidays or asking for someone else’s opinions (21). There are also three imperative sentences found in these extracts:
It must also be stated that the Americans use longer sentences and they try to avoid answering using only two words like the Poles:

The findings illustrate that the number of simple sentences (75) outranks the number of other types of sentences.

The posts are gathered from the websites where different places of destinations are mentioned and described. For this reason, it is important to point out that different purposes are attributed to different places. From the observation, we might notice that the Americans choose Las Vegas as the place where they can go on their honeymoon or wedding anniversary:
However, when they want to relax in a more peaceful place, they choose some cruises and they usually go there with some friends. It is typical of the Americans to tag some of their friends and mates in the posts and encourage them to take part in a mutual conversation:
As was noticed before, the more people in the conversation, the more informative these conversations become and more information can be gathered. From the analyzed posts it can be concluded that the Americans prefer spending their summer holidays in the company of their families and friends to spending them on their own. Several extracts illustrate that the language changes in comparison to the posts coming from Christmas category. In these extracts from summer holidays themes, they use both simple sentences:

and compound sentences:

The emoticons appear, but only occasionally in some posts (20). As in the case of the Polish people, the Americans also make some mistakes connected with punctuation marks:
The extracts present that lack of punctuation marks is also typical of the posts and the comments gathered from the Americans. As one can notice none of these sentences finish with question marks which might indicate that lack of punctuation mark is becoming slowly more and more common among the American respondents. In some of their explanations they state that sometimes they are even not aware of the fact that they do not put dots or question marks at the end of the sentence. Some of them claim that they focus more on the content of the message than punctuation marks.

Having analyzed the results from the questionnaire and the extracts coming from the corpus analysis, we can draw one conclusion. Even if both groups of the respondents stated in the questionnaire that they do pay attention to grammatical and lexical mistakes, in fact it turns out that they themselves also make mistakes and they are fully aware of them. Naturally, we cannot generalize that all the posts and the comments contain mistakes, yet some of them do and sometimes the process of decoding such a message is much harder. Various abbreviations and idioms also contribute to the fact that we have to read a message twice in order to understand it correctly or check the real meaning of unknown words.
6.4 Contrastive analysis of Polish and American political and cultural news

This part of the dissertation contains the posts and the comments which are connected with political and cultural issues of both countries. The topics, which can be found here, are divided into two categories:

1. Elections
2. Breaking news

These two categories split into some other, smaller and more detailed topics ranging from the descriptions of political parties, voting, to some natural disasters, cataclysms, and terrorists attacks. This part of the dissertation starts with the posts and the comments coming from the first category – elections.

6.4.1 Elections theme - background

Having analyzed the topics connected with holidays, important events or spending free time, let us focus on more challenging and controversial topics for both groups of the respondents. The first one concerns elections which are held every few years depending on the country and preparations for them. This topic is usually controversial due to some essential factors. First of all, some discrepancies can appear the moment we choose our favorite political parties and the candidates who represent them. There are always supporters who defend their interests and claim that their party and programs are the most successful and there are also groups of people who do all to beat their opponents. The elections are also associated with doing campaigns, organizing manifestations, strikes, exchanging strong opinions, and gathering as many supporters as possible. Those are the reasons why we have decided to choose this topic for the analysis. The main aim is focused on similarities and differences in the comments, the views and the opinions presented both by the Americans and the Polish people.

The analysis which is presented in this section is based on the comments and the opinions taken from the posts which appeared on some Facebook groups during the election which took place in 2015 in Poland. Many political parties took part in this
election; however, most comments are connected with two of them: Law and Justice and Civic Platform.

The following websites were used in the case of the Polish elections:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/G%C5%82osuj%C4%99-na-PIS-w-wyborach-parlamentarnych-2015-785428648240125/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/Polska.Wybory/
(3) https://www.facebook.com/glosujteraz/
(4) https://www.facebook.com/wyboropolakow/
(5) https://www.facebook.com/Wybory-113851015363562/
(6) https://www.facebook.com/PartieWyboryPolityka/

And those ones in the case of the American elections:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/democrats/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/Officialrepublicanparty/
(4) https://www.facebook.com/usaelections/
(5) https://www.facebook.com/ElectionJusticeUSA/
(6) https://www.facebook.com/Presidentialelectionsusa/

The number of the posts gathered from the Polish websites: 70
The number of the posts gathered from the American websites: 70

The number of the comments included in the Polish posts: 250
The number of the comments included in the American posts: 245

The number of the sentences included in the Polish posts: 850
The number of the sentences included in the American posts: 900

The number of the running words included in the Polish comments: 7500
The number of the running words included in the American comments: 5880
6.4.2 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the Polish posts and comments concerning elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
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<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
<th>The number of personal construction</th>
<th>The number of impersonal construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>90</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>9</td>
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<th>The number of emojis</th>
<th>The number of abbreviations</th>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>The number of simple sentences</th>
<th>The number of compounds sentences</th>
<th>The number of complex sentences</th>
<th>The number of compound-complex sentences</th>
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<td>50</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of declarative sentences</th>
<th>The number of interrogative sentences</th>
<th>The number of imperative sentences</th>
<th>The number of exclamative sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the Polish posts and comments concerning elections

It must be stated that the comments which appear in the posts concerning the elections and preparation for this event are much longer and much more informative than the posts which come from the themes which have already been analyzed in the previous sections. Definitely, the number of active sentences (145) outranks the number of passive sentences (10). People, in their comments, use a great number of personal constructions (130) and try to avoid impersonal ones (9). It is strictly connected with the fact that people express their feelings and opinions in a very straightforward way, putting at the same time the emphasis on their own interests and needs. Nonetheless, it must be mentioned that sometimes the respondents do not want to associate with politicians or other authorities and then they use mostly impersonal constructions. Some examples of active and personal constructions are shown in these extracts:
It must be also noticed that informal style (90) appears approximately with the same frequency as formal style (109) and many swearwords (30) are included as well. Some users do not pay too much attention to grammatical correctness or vocabulary in their messages (‘puzniej’ instead of ‘później’). That is why, the number of the sentences with informal style and the number of swearwords is bigger than in the case of the previous topics, which have already been analyzed. Some examples are presented below:
Undoubtedly, it can be noticed that the perception of these messages is totally different in comparison to those coming from Christmas or summer holidays themes. The question in the sentence: ‘Głupia czy jak?’ functions as the rhetorical question. It must be mentioned that rhetorical question were not seen in the previous categories. Most of the questions had informative functions. In the sentence: ‘NALEZY MU SIE!’ We can observe three features typical of Netspeak: capitalization aiming at intensifying emotions, exclamation used to express inner frustration, and lack of diacritical marks. Rude comments are made either by means of certain phrases and expressions: ‘stuknij się w czoło’, ‘intelektu nie starcza?’, ‘przy legislacyjnej biegunce łatwo się poślizgnąć’ or by means of stronger swearwords: ‘dupowlaz bezwazelinowy’, ‘trzeba było ich napierdzielać.’

The abbreviations which appear in these posts and comments are connected mostly with some political parties and organizations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PiS</td>
<td>Law and Justice</td>
<td>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zł</td>
<td>Polish zloty</td>
<td>złoty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Civic Platform</td>
<td>Platforma Obywatelska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tzw</td>
<td>so called</td>
<td>tak zwany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only ten emoticons and two emojis are noticeable in the comments taken from this category. It might seem that people are more focused on conveying their messages and expressing their opinions than using the emoticons. Rarely do simple sentences appear in the comments connected with politics and elections (10). In comparison to holidays or free time themes where simple sentences occurred, here people write longer, more advanced sentences (compound sentences -50, complex sentences – 125, compound-complex sentences – 8), which are more informative and more discursive. It is crucial to notice that people in their comments use a great number of interrogative sentences which have a totally different function than in the case of previous themes. In the comments taken from Christmas themes or spending free time, interrogative sentences aimed at receiving the answers from other respondents. People asked about various information, for example: the best holiday destinations or different ways of spending Christmas and they usually received the answers. Here, the situation changes due to the fact that these interrogative sentences are more like rhetorical questions – they are asked, but there is no answer. The extracts presented below illustrate even more features:

1) 

The first extract contains three rhetorical questions which are used in order to show dissatisfaction caused by poor earnings. It is also the first extract in which we can observe the ellipsis which might be interpreted as giving us some thoughts to think over
and draw some conclusions: ‘… a nie zastanawiać się czy zapłacić za prąd...’ The ellipsis is also used in the situation when someone is not sure what to say more or how to end the sentence. In general, it is observable that the author of this post use diacritical marks and only occasionally he or she forgets about them: ‘Zeby’.

2) The second extract refers to the situation of the Polish women. In one sentence we observe using rhetorical question and the word ‘mordercy’ (murders) which might be perceived as an offence or even an insult. Among all the extracts, which have already been analyzed, the first time in this extract we can see pronoun ‘Was’ written in a capital letter. Addressing someone in such a way may indicate formal style of this message.

3) Here, using two rhetorical questions, the author of this post aims at insulting another user by making reference to intellectual abilities.

4)
The fourth extract aims at pointing out weaknesses of the political party and some politicians who govern there. The swearword ‘pokałować w dupe’ (kiss an ass), which is noticeable in this post, is used to show irony and to make fun of someone from the authority. Moreover, the emoticon which is put at the end of the sentence highlight the ridiculousness of this context.

The posts and the comments which come from the election themes also include features typical of Netspeak:

A. capitalization:

Capitalization used in this extract focuses on emphasizing features which in the opinion of the author of this post are shameful.

Here, as one can notice, only chosen parts of the sentence are capitalized. It may indicate that the author of this post wanted to emphasize only these parts which are considered to be most powerful ones and influential.

B. multiplying punctuation marks
Capitalization together with a great number of exclamations intensify negative attitude towards the political situation. Lack of punctuation marks is very observable in this extract (e.g. no capital letter in the word ‘beata’, no full stop at the end of the sentence). The author of this extract used comparison in order to distinguish negative features: ‘beata jest tak samo beszczelna jak pazerna.’ We may also notice a literal or a spelling mistake: ‘beszczelna’ instead of ‘bezczelna’.

The author of this post caught the interest of the readers very distinctly by starting the discussion with the word ‘uwaga’ written in capital letters and then putting big and red exclamation at the end of the sentence.

In this example, we observe using a word ‘Achtung’, which comes from the German language. Using this word may indicate the reference to the situation in Germany since the name and the surname of the Chancellor of Germany are mentioned here. Furthermore, this extract supports the idea of using asterisks (or in this case- dots) in order to replace a part of the swearword.

In fact, it may be noticeable that the comments presented above include most features which are typical of these types of conversations. The language of these messages is quite emotive and full of important information. The posts and the comments are much longer, since the number of the running words and the sentences is bigger as well. People express their opinions in a very straightforward way and they seem to be very decisive and sure in what they are writing. In most cases, only negative emotions and feelings are evoked in the respondents who took part in this research. For this reason, the number of the exclamations and swearwords might increase as well. The number of emoticons and emojis is on the decrease on the grounds that the respondents focus on the content, not on the pictograms. Finally, it must be mentioned that the posts and the
comments coming from this category include a great deal of complex sentences (125) and compound-complex (8). It might be a sign that the more provocative topics, the more talkative people become.

6.4.3 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the American posts and comments concerning

The posts and the comments which are analyzed in this section come from the United States presidential elections held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016. Among a great deal of political parties, two of them: the Republican Party and the Democratic Party turned out to be the most powerful ones. The analysis presented below concerns the Americans’ answers devoted to voting between these two major parties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>10</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
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</thead>
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<td>10</td>
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<th>The number of emojis</th>
<th>The number of abbreviations</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of simple sentences</th>
<th>The number of compounds sentences</th>
<th>The number of complex sentences</th>
<th>The number of compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
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<th>The number of interrogative sentences</th>
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<th>The number of exclamative sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 36: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the American posts and comments concerning elections

As in the case of the Poles, the Americans prefer using more personal sentences which include active voice to passive voice sentences. Using active or passive voice sentences
is determined by the same factors as it was in the case of the Poles – whether political matters concern the whole society or each of them individually. It is noticeable that only 5 phrasal verbs appear in these comments (Hornby, 2010):

(1) ‘get over with it’ – to finish something which is unpleasant.
(2) ‘put up with’ – to accept or continue to accept an unpleasant situation or experience, or some who behaves unpleasantly,
(3) ‘get out’ – to leave,
(4) ‘pay off’ – if something you have done pays off, it is successful,
(5) ‘come over’ – to seem to be a particular type of a person.

Even if the Americans are trying to write as formal sentences as possible, there are still several informal utterances which include some idioms, slangs, and urban expressions, which need to be explained in order to understand the whole idea of these messages (Hornby, 2010):

1) ‘how on earth’ – used when you are extremely surprised, confused, or angry about something,
2) ‘snake oil salesman’ – fake products, or someone who deceives people in order to get money from them,
3) ‘low-hanging fruit’ – targets or goals which are easily achievable and which do not require a lot of effort,
4) ‘drain the swamp’ – to exterminate something that is harmful, or anything that most of the people hate such as corruption or government waste.

It is interesting to analyze how various attitudes are expressed in the following extracts:

1)

Instead of using swearwords, an idiom has been used to show the general annoyance caused by this situation.
2) Crooked, corrupted, snake oil salesman, that’s all that out there with the house and senate

In this extract, enumerating various features or adjectives replaces using swearwords. Thanks to that, this message might be perceived in a less offensive way than if it contained swearwords.

3)

I came here to troll your page the way I do the Dems, but you guys really are just low-hanging fruit. It’s like you’re trolling yourselves and you’re too dense to know it..

Here, some bad features are pointed out by means of using comparison: ‘it’s like you’re trolling yourselves.’

4)

How about the RNC take some action and support the Trump agenda on Obamacare, the wall and draining the swamp?

As one can notice, referring to some other organizations also seem to be a solution to solve some problems connected with political matters. It might seem that the Americans are eager to look for some help in order to improve some relations.

Go eat your tide pods. You bore us.

The last extract contains an unpleasant message; however, the form of formulating it is not as rude as it could be by means of using swearwords.

The Americans use more idioms and urban expression than the Polish people in their messages, yet there are also some strong swearwords which can be found in their posts:
Such topics usually evoke more provocative emotions and very often people want to express them in a very direct way. There is one significant difference in expressing opinions between the Poles and the Americans: The Polish people overuse punctuation marks, whereas the Americans overuse capitalizations. The Poles also use capitalization technique; however, it usually refers to one or two words. In the case of the Americans, it sometimes refers to the whole sentences:

1) 

Apart from the capitalization used in this extract, we can also notice an example of the process of blending: a word ‘Trumplican’ (someone who supports Donald Trump) which is a combination of two other words: ‘Trump’ and ‘Republican’.

2)
Various forms of capitalization which aims at: showing understanding towards the Lord and describing the procedure of voting in America.

Using capitalization may indicate that the Americans are deeply engaged in political matters in their country. Most of them want to express that they crave for changes and they are very frustrated by some decisions made by other politicians. Occasionally emoticons appear in their posts and the comments; however, there are more abbreviations which stand mainly for political issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOP</td>
<td>Grand Old Party</td>
<td>Partia Republikańska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Dyrektor Generalny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
<td>Produkt Krajowy Brutto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNC</td>
<td>Republican National Committee</td>
<td>Krajowy Komitet Partii Republikańskiej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMAO</td>
<td>Laughing My Ass Off</td>
<td>Śmiać się do rozpuku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNC</td>
<td>Democratic National Committee</td>
<td>Krajowy Komitet Partii Demokratycznej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender</td>
<td>Społeczność lesbijek, gejów, osób biseksualnych oraz transgenderycznych</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>Cable News Network</td>
<td>Amerykańska telewizja informacyjna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKK</td>
<td>Ku Klux Klan</td>
<td>Organizacja rasistowska</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 37: Elections theme abbreviations provided by the Americans

The Americans’ posts and comments are so vast and informative that we can enumerate various types of sentences:
A) compound sentences (62 in total):

(1) ‘The pussy just left the White House and went away’,
(2) ‘Have you no courage, or no love for our country?’,
(3) ‘Go eat your tide pods or fuck yourself!’,
(4) ‘All GOP candidates should get out and work hard for re-election’,
(5) ‘We voted and our votes for sure will contribute to the final results’.

B) complex sentences (89 in total):

(1) ‘People should support a pipeline that Canasa has blocked before it failed totally’,
(2) ‘As long as Trump is going down, it’s only a matter of time’,
(3) ‘As soon as the elections end, we are going to celebrate our victory!’,
(4) ‘Before going to vote, please think twice!’,
(5) ‘How on earth do you plan to appeal to women after everything you’ve done to hurt them?’. 

C) compound-complex sentences (10 in total):

(1) ‘Although I am not very keen on voting, I had no choice, and I have decided to take part in elections’,
(2) ‘Many people decided to choose the Democratic party, but many of them, who didn’t know their program, thought that they will rule well’,
(3) ‘Its democrats, who are causing this war, not POTUS they are the ones using Russians as an excuse for losing an election’,
(4) ‘Now, since they are preparing, all you asshats better be front and center ready to fight’.

It is easy to notice that more serious topics require the respondents to use more advanced and longer sentences. Mostly declarative sentences are noticeable in their answers; however, there are also many rhetorical questions, exclamative sentences (35), and imperative sentences (10).
The role of these sentences vary depending on the situational context:

1) 

In this extract, imperative sentences are used mainly to express anger and insult other people who took part in the elections. We can also notice two strong swearwords which intensify the power of the message: ‘asshats’ and ‘pussy’.

2) 

As one can notice, in two of these extracts we might notice references to religious matters. Exclamations together with the word ‘Amen’ may indicate that nothing more can be said or done within this particular topic.

3) 

The last three extracts contain some rhetorical questions. In the first extract, the author of this post encourages other members of the society to take some steps in order to improve the situation for better. The role of the rhetorical questions is to motivate
people and support their rights. In the next two extracts we can notice surprise connected with asking about lack of consequences of breaking the law.

One important contradiction may be noticeable in the posts and the comments which have appeared so far. On the one hand, both groups claim that they use mostly passive voice sentences in the situation when they do not want to be associated with the performer of the action or when the performer is unknown. On the other hand, very often they are so engaged into political matters and they consider themselves as the victims of this system that they use active voice sentences to express their anger, fear, doubts or rights.

6.5 Breaking news theme - background

Another topic which is analyzed in this part of the dissertation is connected with breaking news themes. Natural disasters, catastrophes, murderers, thefts are common in most of the countries and they influence people and their lives. They are inevitable; yet, some actions can be taken in order to prevent them. This part of the analysis is supposed to provide us with an insight into people’s comments, reactions, opinions, and reflections concerning these phenomena both in their native countries and some other parts of the world which were affected by those cataclysms. The posts which are analyzed cover various topics connected with recent catastrophes such as hurricanes, floods, droughts or tornadoes which hit two countries: Poland and the USA.

The following Polish websites were used in order to conduct the analysis:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/KataklizmyPLWR/
(2)https://www.facebook.com/Kl%C4%99ski-%C5%Bbywio%C5%82owe-484281615268982/
(3) https://www.facebook.com/kleskizywiolowe/
And the American ones:

(1) https://www.facebook.com/Charity-for-Victims-of-USA-Natural-Disasters-213094158722084/
(2) https://www.facebook.com/Natural-Disasters-USA-404929246628449/
(3) https://www.facebook.com/Diary-of-a-Dying-Nation
(4) https://www.facebook.com/thedailyrealitycheck
(5) https://www.facebook.com/Tornadoes-USA-1706115012992745/

The number of the posts gathered from the Polish websites: 50
The number of the posts gathered from the American websites: 50

The number of the comments included in the Polish posts: 650
The number of the comments included in the American posts: 825

The number of the sentences included in the Polish posts: 3250
The number of the sentences included in the American posts: 4950

The number of the running words included in the Polish comments: 29 250
The number of the running words included in the American comments: 33 000

### 6.5.1 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the Polish posts and comments concerning breaking news

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of sentences with formal style</th>
<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
<th>The number of personal construction</th>
<th>The number of impersonal construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of swearwords</th>
<th>The number of emoticons</th>
<th>The number of emojis</th>
<th>The number of abbreviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When analyzing all these posts and comments which come from the above mentioned websites, it must be stated that there are two groups of people who take two totally different positions: the first group which includes the users who are very concerned about natural disasters which hit both countries:

Those users are really into such matters and they do their best to show sympathy and understanding towards natural disasters in their country and in some other parts of the world (in this case in the USA). The questions which are used in these extracts aim at obtaining more information about the current state in these areas which are in danger. The users implement words which intensify our emotions and feelings: ‘powyrywanych’, ‘dramat’, ‘wygląda strasznie’.

However, there is also the second group of those who are quite ironic, sarcastic, and do not treat natural disasters as something dangerous:
In this extract, one can notice the reference towards the stereotypical Polish man who often wears sandals and socks. Moreover, the emoticons used in this post also depict this stereotype.

This extract includes a phrase which presumably may come from the urban language and its meaning is understood as something very annoying, or a bad luck. A possible English equivalent could be: ‘Damn it!’.

Another example of the extract which includes a very colloquial expression used to show irony and sarcasm. The English equivalent of this phrase can be: ‘make shit’.

The irony and sarcasm in the last extract are shown by using capitalization which puts emphasis on chosen words and exclamations used mostly at the end of the sentences. Reading this post we may assume that it is connected with the first snow which may be troublesome for drivers.

One can assume that these posts and comments were written by people who are not fully mature and aware of the content of such a message. Sometimes people write such messages to show off and show lack of respect for other people who might be in need in a particular moment. In such posts, mostly active sentences written in informal style can be noticeable:
Having read this part of the conversation, we may notice another irony connected with fire. The author of the first post states that the heroic act of saving a rabbit was caused by consumption reasons. The next two posts are in the opposition which is expressed by an ironic phrase: ‘bardzo śmieszne’ (very funny), or a comparison to the person who is very narrow-minded and rude (In Polish: ‘burak’, whereas in English: ‘yahoo’). The expression used at the end of the sentence: ‘Nie pozdrawiam’ (No greetings) does not usually appear in the posts and the comments.

The last extract which comes from this part of the conversation again makes a reference to a stereotypical Polish man called ‘Janusz’ who is considered as a peasant and someone who does not know how to behave in particular situations.

No idioms are observable in the Polish posts and comments; however, one can encounter several swearwords:

Swearwords which appear in the posts and the comments connected with breaking news may be caused by the fact that people are frustrated when they observe that either their
natural environment is neglected or destroyed. Very often money is spent on some other, unnecessary things instead of on environmental issues. Some respondents believe that more actions should be taken in order to improve floodbanks, plant more trees, reduce using of disposable plastics or conserve energy. Quite often people blame the government and the local authorities for cataclysms which hit Poland and other countries. Several respondents believe that most of these natural disasters could be avoided if necessary actions were taken.

Rarely does it happen that the Poles use emojis in these posts and comments; however, some emoticons and abbreviations are used in their messages:

As one can notice, attention is paid mostly to the content of these messages, not to the emoticons or emojis. The first extract blames mass media (in this case: newspaper) for spreading inconsistent information about the conditions connected with a strong wind, whereas the second extracts warns other respondents about potential damages caused by tornado. The last three extracts are quite ironic about the situation on roads or potential dangers. The irony in the fourth extract is presented by contrasting two paradoxical information: ‘high snow and extremely low temperatures (5cm and -8 degrees)’.
Table 39 presents a list of abbreviations gathered during the analysis of the posts and the comments coming from breaking news themes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>woj</td>
<td>województwo</td>
<td>voivodeship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF</td>
<td>Skala Fujity</td>
<td>Enhanced Fujita scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLX</td>
<td>Serwis ogłoszeniowy</td>
<td>A global online market place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>itp</td>
<td>I tym podobne</td>
<td>etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cm</td>
<td>centymetr</td>
<td>centimeter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>max</td>
<td>maksimum</td>
<td>maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tzn</td>
<td>to znaczy</td>
<td>that is to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMGW</td>
<td>Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej</td>
<td>no literal translation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 39: Breaking news theme abbreviations provided by the Poles

A great number of interrogative sentences are used in order to ask for information concerning more details about natural disasters:

or look for some explanations and additional sources concerning these cataclysms:
There are also many sentences with no subject in which either adjectives or adverbs are used to describe fear and worry:

The extracts gathered from the analysis contain the following types of sentences:

A. Simple sentences

B. Compound sentences

C. Compound-complex sentences:
There are also many verbless clauses:

As one can notice, the number of verbless clauses is on the increase. According to Aarts (1992: 63), verbless clauses are considered as features of everyday spoken language,
and using them in writing reflects the real use of language in authentic situations. It is also important to mention that verbless clauses can be used in various types of sentences and their role may vary as well, for example:

1) A verbless clause in the form of declarative sentences:
- ‘Piękne zdjęcie z orbity’,
- ‘Tu opady i powodzie, a tam szalejące pożary…’.

2) A verbless clause providing an answer:
- ‘U mnie 17, ale wiatr silny. Pozdrawiam’,
- ‘W UK na razie bardzo spokojnie, ale za to ciepło’.

3) A verbless clause in the form of the interrogative sentence:
- ‘Czy to już “początek końca świata?”.

4) A verbless clause used to express irony and sarcasm:
- ‘Trochę późno z tą ewakucją ;)’,
- ‘Wielka Brytania też w kryzysie, wysokie sniegi i ekstremalnie niskie temperatury. (5cm, -8 max)’.

It can be noticed that verbless sentences have many various functions. Depending on the situational context they can be used to express sarcasm, irony, warnings, questions or to convey important information. The findings presented in this section illustrate that the attitude towards natural disasters can be either positive or negative.

6.5.2 Grammatical and lexical analysis of the American posts and comments concerning breaking news

The analysis presented below concerns the answers received from the American posts and comments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of active sentences</th>
<th>The number of passive sentences</th>
<th>The number of phrasal verbs in sentences</th>
<th>The number of idioms in sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 40: The frequency of grammatical and lexical structures visible in the American posts and comments concerning breaking news themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of sentences with formal style</th>
<th>The number of sentences with informal style</th>
<th>The number of personal construction</th>
<th>The number of impersonal construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of swearwords</th>
<th>The number of emoticons</th>
<th>The number of emojis</th>
<th>The number of abbreviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of simple sentences</th>
<th>The number of compounds sentences</th>
<th>The number of complex sentences</th>
<th>The number of compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of declarative sentences</th>
<th>The number of interrogative sentences</th>
<th>The number of imperative sentences</th>
<th>The number of exclamative sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the following posts and comments shows that there are three groups of the users:

The first group contains these users who express their sympathy towards other people who suffer because of various natural disasters and show their concern about consequences and potential damages:

![Post 1]

![Post 2]
Not only do people describe very precisely the situation and the conditions connected with natural disasters but also express their sympathy and understanding towards people who are in need. Many comforting words are used in this context: ‘poor people’, ‘Prayers for residents!’. Exclamative sentences are used to express their feelings and emotions.

Both extracts show that sentences are much longer and full of various information. The Americans use mostly adjectives to describe both their feelings and the situation: hammered, incredible, sad, gorgeous.

The second group contains people who make ironic and sarcastic comments with references to the political parties and politics, at the same time, blaming them for what is happening in different parts of the world:
Most of these extracts make references to Donald Trump, who is the President of the USA. The respondents blame him for being responsible for climate changes and natural disasters which hit the USA. However, it must be noticed that the Americans are quite reserved and do not use any swearwords in comparison to the Poles.

The last group contains people who make references to the Bible and God:

It is interesting to notice various attitudes. Some respondents claim that such things are inevitable since they are prophesied: ‘These things are prophesied. Yet no one will believe it!’. Some other people claim that it is connected with the end of the world:
‘Must be the end of the world?’, ‘Arrival s God is so near’. In one of these extracts we may notice disbelief in religious matters: ‘If that God guy existed, these poor countries would not be suffering like this’. Both rhetorical questions and exclamative sentences are observable in these posts and comments.

This phenomenon was not noticeable in the posts received from the Poles. On the one hand, it seems to be surprising owing to the fact that in general the Polish people are believed to be quite religious and they pay attention to such matters. On the other hand, some of them may not want to manifest their religious attitudes and beliefs to avoid being criticized by other people. It is also possible that among those people who took part in this research most of them might not be into religious matters or those matters are simply unnecessary for them.

Despite the fact that such topics are controversial and the Americans very often refer to politics, they do not use too many swearwords. Instead, they use sarcasm, irony, or they write their messages in more informal style:

In this extract we may notice that the Americans blame the Russians for cataclysms which hit the USA.

The second extract, however, shows that the Americans partially support other countries since their own country has its disasters.
In these two extracts one can notice blaming others for not knowing much about the history of their own country and a critical reference to ex wife.

The last extract expresses anger and frustration connected with unfair politics of political parties. The author of this post appeals that something should be done to prevent the politicians from doing some unfair matters. Rhetorical questions used in this extract express helplessness.

Some abbreviations are noticeable in these posts and comments as well. Most of them are strictly connected with the analyzed topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Polish meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
<td>Federalna Agencja Zarządzania Kryzysowego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Nowy York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Relacje publiczne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPLS</td>
<td>Multiprotocol Label Switching</td>
<td>Trasowanie pakietów przez przełączanie etykiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
<td>Agencja Ochrony Środowiska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLM</td>
<td>Black Lives Matter</td>
<td>Ruch aktywistów afroamerykańskich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USFS</td>
<td>United States Forest Service</td>
<td>Służba Leśna Stanów Zjednoczonych</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>govt</td>
<td>government</td>
<td>rząd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tryna</td>
<td>trying</td>
<td>Starać się</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 41: Breaking news theme abbreviations provided by the Americans
In comparison to the results obtained from the Polish posts and comments, the Americans use more exclamative sentences which have different functions:

a) to show negative emotions (in this case: outrage):

b) to warn:

c) to make references to political situation:

d) to express sympathy:

e) to express reference to the Bible:

Surprisingly enough, the number of phrasal verbs and idioms appearing in these posts and comments is infinitesimal. Out of all these messages, only a few of them are noticeable (Hornby, 2010):
(1) ‘get through’ – to manage to deal with a difficult situation,
(2) ‘to give a crap’ – to care at all about someone or something.

One more difference between the Polish and the Americans posts and comments must be highlighted. Both groups use quite complex sentences; however, the content of them differ significantly. The Poles used them mostly to blame each other and exchange swearwords and rude comments. Yet, in the case of the Americans, these longer messages are used to inform and warn:
To conclude, the analysis of the above mentioned comments and posts illustrates that depending on the topic and category, different features of language are noticeable. More casual topics such as holidays or Christmas include less swearwords, yet they contain emoticons and emojis which make that the posts and the comments are more vivid and real. Questions are exchanged among the users and answers are usually sent back in a short period of time. In such conversations people share their ideas, thoughts, positive feelings and emotions, and they rather do not blame each other.

It may be concluded that more informative and controversial topics are the ones connected with political matters and breaking news. It is easy to notice that people are more engaged in such topics, and very often they tag other friends to invite them to take part in a discussion. The more controversial topics, the longer messages are observable. It also might be stated that all the features of Netspeak or the language of the Internet which were mentioned in the theoretical part, can be noticeable in those posts and comments. The analysis shows that the respondents make various references to politics, religion, fate, the Bible, or the punishments sent by God which are the consequences of bad decisions made by the government and other authorities. Such a diversity of topics and categories illustrates that people have different attitudes towards various topics and their points of view change depending on the topic of the discussion.

Our findings also reveal that in Facebook posts and comments concerning informal themes (holidays, events, celebrations) with simple vocabulary and not advanced grammar, the Fog index equals between 7 and 8, which means that the content of these posts and messages is clear and it is not too difficult to read and understand. Nevertheless, the index in more formal and serious topics (politics, elections, breaking news, debates, natural disasters) with sophisticated vocabulary and advanced grammar equals between 12 and 13, which indicates that it is pitched to an audience of college graduates who comprehend the content of these posts and comments successfully. The higher fog index of posts and comments, the more advanced structures appear in them (passive voice sentences, complex and compound sentences, impersonal constructions, a wide range of collocations, sophisticated vocabulary) and the more time is needed to understand the context of the message fully.
CHAPTER VII

RECAPITULATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research questions which have been formulated in Chapter IV are answered on the basis of the quantitative and the qualitative analysis as well as the collected data. The analysis was carried out by means of the questionnaire and the corpus analysis. Additionally, the interpretation of the research questions is supported by the data obtained from Chapter V and VI.

7.2 Contrasting analysis of study findings

(1) Does passive voice occur more often in political and cultural news than in social chit-chats?

This question is based on a hypothesis that more formal topics such as politics, elections, breaking news should include more passive voice sentences than informal themes such as planning holidays, spending free time together or celebrating Christmas. Moreover, it is important to cite Wierzbicka (2014) who points out some important roles of using passive voice in messages. She claims that passive voice is used either when we do not know the performer of the action or when we do not want to be associated with this action so that we implicate impersonal constructions. These implications find their confirmation in the examples concerning passive voice used by the Poles in the topics connected with politics. In this category the Polish people are trying to use impersonal constructions which indicate that we do not know the performer of the action. Table 42 shows the comparison of the frequency of using passive voice sentences in both formal and informal themes:
It is important to introduce the limitations of the study in order to observe how big those numbers are in comparison to the sample.

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 363
The total number of the comments in the Polish political matters: 900

The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070

The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the Polish political matters: 36750

The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>25 (2,8%)</td>
<td>2 (0,6%)</td>
<td>27 (3,4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>18 (1,68%)</td>
<td>10 (3,4%)</td>
<td>28 (5,08%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The total number</td>
<td>43 (4,48%)</td>
<td>12 (4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 42: The frequency of using passive voice sentences in formal and informal topics

As one can notice, it is typical of the Poles and the Americans to use passive voice constructions in more formal topics such as politics and elections. When it comes to social chit-chats the frequency of using passive voice sentences by the Poles equals 0.6%, whereas in the case of the Americans it is 3.4%. That is why, in order to answer this first research question, one has to make a distinction between these two groups: the Americans who are more direct and open minded, and the Poles who are more reserved. It is worth noticing that there is quite a big discrepancy between using passive voice in political and cultural events by the Poles (25) and social chit-chats (2); nevertheless, this discrepancy is not so noticeable in the American answers when it comes to more formal themes (18) and informal ones (10).
In fact, the use of passive voice sentences also depends on the context of the particular situation. The Americans overuse passive voice sentences in Christmas themes, for example:

(1) ‘The house must be decorated before Christmas’,
(2) ‘Everything must be prepared on time’,
(3) ‘You will be appreciated during this special time, my dear’,
(4) ‘Presents will be prepared on time, don’t worry’.

whereas, the Poles in this context use mostly active voice sentences, for instance:

(1) ‘Udekorujemy dom’,
(2) ‘Przyrządzimy wiele potraw’,
(3) ‘Damy sobie prezenty’.
(4) ‘Będziemy wspólnie świętować ten czas’.

The Poles prefer using passive voice sentences in the posts which are strictly connected with politics:

(1) ‘Coś powinno być zrobione’,
(2) ‘Akcje muszą zostać podjęte’,
(3) ‘Nie powinien być wybrany’.

(2) Do the Americans use idioms more often than the Polish people?

This research question is based on a hypothesis that the English language contains much more idioms than the Polish language and the Americans have a tendency to use them in many, various situations depending on the context. The limitations of the study are as follows:

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 363
The total number of the comments in the Polish political matters: 900
The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070

The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the Polish political matters: 36750

The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

Table 43 presents gathered data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>9 (0,8%)</td>
<td>6 (2,06%)</td>
<td>15 (2,86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The total number</td>
<td>9 (0,8%)</td>
<td>6 (2,06%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 43: The frequency of using idioms by the Americans and the Poles

It can be stated that the quantitative analysis of the data confirms this hypothesis. The Americans use idioms more often in their messages; however, the number of these idioms is not too bewildering (2,86%). It could seem that informal themes such as talking about holidays or preparing for Christmas may include several idioms, for instance:

(1) ‘Have a ball’ (baw się dobrze),
(2) ‘Not a chance in hell’ (nie ma szans),
(3) ‘Make the cut’ (sprostać jakiemuś wyzwaniu),

nonetheless, the findings show that the Americans use them more often than the Poles, but not in every situation. No idioms are noticeable in the Polish posts and comments. Despite the fact that the Polish language is also full of various idioms, the Poles do not have a tendency to implement them in messages.
(3) Do phrasal verbs occur more often in casual conversations than in formal ones in the American posts and comments?

This research question is based on the assumption that phrasal verbs usually are present in very informal conversations and their number should be limited in very formal compositions such as essays or letters. Despite this fact, they are very often used in Facebook conversations or exchanging some messages on public forums. The analysis of this research question will help us to find the answer whether phrasal verbs are only typical of casual chit-chats, or formal ones as well. Table 44 presents the number of phrasal verbs which are noticeable in the American posts and comments since the Polish language does not include them.

The limitations of the study:

The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070

The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Americans</th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (0,7%)</td>
<td>5 (1,72%)</td>
<td>12 (2,42%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 44: The number of phrasal verbs in the American posts and comments

Surprisingly enough, it has to be stated that phrasal verbs are not overused by the Americans in the posts and the comments concerning both casual conversations and more serious topics. Though, it is even more interesting to notice that the number of phrasal verbs in formal topics (0,7%) outranks the number of phrasal verbs used in social chit-chats (1,72%). It leads us to the conclusion that we, as the Poles, are taught that English phrasal verbs should occur mostly in informal conversations and in fact the Americans do not pay too much attention in which situations they use them.
(4) Is formal style used only in these more formal topics (accidents, catastrophes) both by the Poles and the Americans?

This research question is based on a premise that more formal and serious topics such as elections, breaking news, or national events require the users to implement more formal and official style of writing in comparison to these more ordinary topics such as chit chats about holidays. The main assumption is that this more formal style includes more advanced grammatical structures and the range of vocabulary is more sophisticated as well. Similarly to previous categories, it is important to introduce the limitations of the study to observe the relationship between the number of the comments connected with a particular grammatical or lexical category and the total number of the comments gathered within a certain type of a conversation.

The limitations of the study are as follows:

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 363
The total number of the comments in the Polish political matters: 900
The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070
The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the Polish political matters: 36750
The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>221 (24,6%)</td>
<td>115 (31,7%)</td>
<td>336 (56,3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>182 (17%)</td>
<td>120 (41,2%)</td>
<td>302 (58,2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The total number</td>
<td>403 (41,6%)</td>
<td>235 (72,9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 45: The comparison of using formal style in formal and informal conversations by the Poles and the Americans
The findings which are presented in the table partially confirm the hypothesis that more formal style appears only in serious themes. As one can notice, these more serious topics contain more sentences with formal style (403); however, it cannot be denied that social chit-chats also include formal style of writing (235). Meaning formal style, one has in mind aspects such as lack of swearwords, lack of colloquialisms, using more sophisticated vocabulary, appropriate phrases and expressions. There are some examples which confirm that social chit-chats may also contain formal style:

(1) ‘Chciałabym życzyć wszystkim tutaj obecnym Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i spełnienia wszystkich marzeń’ (Christmas theme)
(2) ‘Merry Christmas everyone and my dear Family! Thank you for giving us special time’ (Christmas theme)
(4) ‘Polecam Wyspy Kanaryjskie. W razie jakichkolwiek pytań, słuţę pomocą’. (summer holidays theme)
(5) ‘Hello! Would you be so kind as to recommend me a good accommodation? I will be traveling with my husband and daughter. Thank you for your help in advance’ (summer holidays theme)
(6) ‘I would love to go on a cruise ship. I would be extremely grateful for additional posts, comments, and photos’ (summer holidays theme)

There is a great number of the users who are able to behave adequately to the situation, yet some of them are still not aware of the fact that despite the fact that Facebook is just a social network, there are still some rules concerning formal writing which should be obeyed there, for instance during writing a public advertisement or an official announcement.

(5) Are impersonal constructions used more often by the Poles or the Americans?

In this research question we are interested in examining the hypothesis that it is more common to see English impersonal constructions such as ‘It is believed

The limitations of the study are as follows:

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 363
The total number of the comments in the Polish political matters: 900

The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070

The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the Polish political matters: 36750

The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>18 (2%)</td>
<td>5 (1.4%)</td>
<td>23 (3.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>24 (2.2%)</td>
<td>25 (8.6%)</td>
<td>49 (10.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td><strong>42 (4.2%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>30 (10%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 46: The frequency of using impersonal constructions by the Poles and the Americans

As we assumed, impersonal constructions are used more often by the Americans than by the Poles. It seems that the Americans like using such constructions both in political themes and social chit-chats. Some of the impersonal constructions noticeable in their posts and messages are as follows:

(1) ‘It was announced last night’,
(2) ‘It was shown that these people suffer a lot’,
(3) ‘It was published very late at night’,
(4) ‘It is claimed that these photos were posted on Facebook as soon as it happened’,

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(5) ‘It was predicted from the beginning that it will hit from the East’,
(6) ‘It is stated by most of the people that these elections were bullshit’,
(7) ‘It was noticed by my friends when they were in this place’.

When it comes to the answers received from the Poles, some examples of impersonal constructions are as follows:

(1) ‘Pewnie sądzono, że te wybory będą lepsze’,
(2) ‘Mówiono o tym we wiadomościach’,
(3) ‘Słyszano, ale nic nie zostało zrobione w tym kierunku’,
(4) ‘Dużo się o tym mówi, ale mało robi’,
(5) ‘Słyszy się, że nie zrobiono tego na czas’,
(6) ‘Wierzono, że tak się to skończy. To było do przewidzenia’,
(7) ‘Mówi się o tym i w radiu i w telewizji, ale kto chce wierzyć?.’

As one can notice, most impersonal constructions are typical of these topics which are connected with breaking news, politics, and elections. This feature is common both for the Poles and the Americans. However, in order to verify this research question, it must be stated that the Americans do use impersonal construction more often (49 in total) in comparison to the Poles (23 in total).

(6) Do the Polish people use swearwords more often than the Americans?

In the present research question we are interested in finding out whether the Poles are naturally more prone to using swearwords in most situations than the Americans. Judging from the obtained results, it seems that the Americans tend to be more reserved and calm.

The limitations of the study are as follows:

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 363
The total number of the comments in the Polish political matters: 900
The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290
The total number of the comments in the American political matters: 1070

The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the Polish political matters: 36750

The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
The total number of the running words in the American political matters: 38880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
<th>The total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>60 (6,7%)</td>
<td>8 (2,2%)</td>
<td>68 (8,9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>15 (1,4%)</td>
<td>5 (1,7%)</td>
<td>20 (3,1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The total number</td>
<td>75 (8,1%)</td>
<td>13 (3,9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 47: The comparison of using swearwords by the Poles and the Americans

The findings which are presented in the table confirm this hypothesis; however, some remarks must be made. One of our assumptions was that swearwords would be noticeable in both categories equally:

- in political and cultural events, which are controversial, provoking, and very often disputable, such topics are usually believed to evoke some negative emotions, feelings and proclivity for using swearwords.

- social chit-chats which are less controversial and provoking, yet enabling us to use less formal style with occasional putting in some swearwords to make our messages more genuine.

The findings transparently show that the Poles overuse swearwords in the topics which have much in common with politics and elections, and they seem to be more calm and reserved when it comes to social chit-chats. It also must be stated that swearwords which are used in formal themes are perceived in a totally different way than the ones
used in more informal conversations and discussions. Table 48 shows some differences in perception:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political and cultural events</th>
<th>Social chit-chats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Poles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social chit-chats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- pieprzone dupowlazy,</td>
<td>- zajebiste wakacje,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- bezwazelinowy dupek,</td>
<td>- mocne w chuj,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- trzeba było ich napierdalać</td>
<td>- trzeba się bedzie najebać,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jak był na to czas,</td>
<td>- pojebana ta pogoda,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- niech się zesrają,</td>
<td>- ale my jesteśmy zajebiści,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- kurwa więcej prób atomowych</td>
<td>- wyjebane w kosmos te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nie robia,</td>
<td>wakacje,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- nie pierdolcie, że auta</td>
<td>- byliśmy najebawszy cały</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>szkodzą środowisku,</td>
<td>czas,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- pierdolone, rządowskie</td>
<td>- kurewsko drogo nas to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pasożyty.</td>
<td>kosztowało,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- chujnia i grzybia była z tą</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pogodą.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- było choojowo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 48: The perception of swearing in formal and informal topics by the Poles and the Americans**

It is very easy to notice that swearwords which are used by the Poles in political themes are much stronger than those used in social chit-chats, and we, as the Polish native speakers, do not see this power of swearwords which are implemented by the
Americans both in formal and informal topics. It is important to notice that the Polish language contains various swearwords and each of them might be perceived differently depending on the situational context. When it comes to the Americans, the word ‘fuck’ sounds similarly in most cases. It happens that Polish swearwords partially look like English ones and only chosen vowels or consonants are read according to the rules of English pronunciation: ‘było choojowo’ (read as: chujowo, not czudżowo) or ‘koorwa, jedziemy tam jeszcze raz!’ (read as kurwa).

(7) Do swearwords occur only in thought-provoking and stressful situations?

To some degree, this research question is connected with the previous one, and on the basis of the findings presented in table 48, it can be stated that swearwords do not occur only in thought-provoking and stressful situations since they are noticeable in all kinds of situations, yet they dominate in the contexts which evoke more negative emotions and disputable reactions.

(8) Is emotive language present in all mentioned casual conversations or are there any situations where the level of using emoticons and emojis will be almost unnoticeable?

This research question was based on the hypothesis that all casual conversations, in comparison to more formal ones, include emotive language. This emotive language can be understood in various ways: one can use more emoticons, someone else is more keen on using emojis which have become very popular lately, and still there will be a group of people who will be fond of using onomatopoeic expressions. It can be stated that emotive language is noticeable both in ordinary conversations and more formal ones. The degree to which it is used depends on factors such as age, gender, and the main topic of the conversation.

During the analysis, it was also noticed that the number of emojis is definitely smaller than the number of emoticons. Despite the fact that emojis are becoming more and more popular, they are not used too often in public posts and comments. Perhaps the frequency of using them is higher in private chats, to be
more specific – messengers. However, one has to remember that many elements contribute to emotive language. Among them, emoticons and emojis can be listed. The most important findings concerning the frequency of using them are collected in table 49.

The limitations of the study are as follows:

The total number of the comments in the Polish Christmas themes: 185
The total number of the comments in the Polish summer holidays themes: 178

The total number of the comments in the American Christmas themes: 121
The total number of the comments in the American summer holidays themes: 169

The total number of the running words in the Polish Christmas themes: 5550
The total number of the running words in the Polish summer holidays themes: 3382

The total number of the running words in the American Christmas themes: 4235
The total number of the running words in the American summer holidays themes: 7943

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Christmas</th>
<th>Summer holidays</th>
<th>Christmas</th>
<th>Summer holidays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The number of emoticons</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>100 (54%)</td>
<td>31 (17,4%)</td>
<td>32 (17,2%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>40 (33%)</td>
<td>20 (11,8%)</td>
<td>3 (2,48%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td><strong>140 (87%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>51 (29,2%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>35 (19,68%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>0 (0%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 49: The comparison of the number of emoticons and emojis in casual conversations
It is very noticeable that emoticons are much more popular than emojis. Both groups use them on a regular basis during Christmas themes – The Poles (100) and the Americans (40). It also must be stated that quite many emojis have been used by the Poles in Christmas themes (32). When it comes to the Americans, just 3 emojis were used by them in this theme. Emoticons also appear in summer holidays topics; nevertheless, their number is smaller than in the case of Christmas posts and comments. No emojis were used both by the Poles and the Americans in summer holidays themes. Despite the fact that this topic is quite informal and people can exchange various kinds of messages there, none of them was willing to use emojis.

Apart from emoticons, emojis and swearwords, which have been mentioned in the previous research question analysis, it also must be stated that imperative and exclamative sentences contribute to emotional language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Christmas holiday</th>
<th>Summer holidays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The number of imperative sentences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>3 (2.48%)</td>
<td>20 (10.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td>3 (2.48%)</td>
<td>20 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The number of exclamative sentences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>20 (10.8%)</td>
<td>37 (20.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>40 (33%)</td>
<td>20 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td>60 (43.8%)</td>
<td>57 *32.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 50: The comparison of the number of imperative and exclamative sentences in casual conversations

The findings illustrate that the Poles do not use imperative sentences in their posts and messages concerning social chit-chats, in comparison to the Americans who used imperative mood three times in Christmas themes and twenty times in summer holidays.
topics. In most cases, when it comes to Christmas and summer holidays, these imperative sentences are connected with encouraging someone to do some activities and to support:

(1) ‘Put up Christmas Tree finally!’
(2) ‘Buy these presents and drop in to us!’
(3) ‘Book holidays now !!’
(4) ‘Book for us too!’
(5) ‘Pack your suitcase, mate!’
(6) ‘Come in to us to recall some memories, haha!’

When it comes to exclamative sentences, they are used both by the Poles and the Americans. Sometimes they even overuse them, especially when they want to express their inner feelings or very strong opinions, which very often are quite strict, controversial and ambiguous:

(1) ‘Święta !!!!!!’
(2) ‘Jak nie, jak tak – idą święta !!!!!’
(3) ‘Kevin!!!!!’
(4) ‘Merry Xmas, everyone!!!’
(5) ‘Malediwy! Chcę tam !!!!!’
(6) ‘Noooo SUUUUPER!!!!!’
(7) ‘Najlepiej nie głosować! To są złodzieje i wyzyskiwacze !!!!!’
(8) ‘Należy mu się !!!’
(9) ‘I call IT a bullshit !!!!’
(10) ‘Trump is going down sweetie, its only a matter of time !!!! Hahaha !!!!!!’
(11) POWAŻNY ALERT !! PILNE !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
(12) ‘Niczym z filmu pojutrze !!!!!!!!’
(13) ‘That’s global warming is because of Trump!!!!!’
(14) ‘Must be the end of the world!!!’
(15) ‘Climate change !!!!’
(16) ‘Those poor people have been through so much !!’
(9) Are abbreviations used in all mentioned conversations by both groups of the respondents?

The total number of the comments in the Polish Christmas themes: 185
The total number of the comments in the Polish summer holidays themes: 178
The total number of the comments in the American Christmas themes: 121
The total number of the comments in the American summer holidays themes: 169

The total number of the comments in the Polish Election themes: 250
The total number of the comments in the Polish breaking news themes: 650
The total number of the comments in the American Election themes: 245
The total number of the comments in the American breaking news themes: 825

The total number of the running words in the Polish Christmas themes: 5550
The total number of the running words in the Polish summer holidays themes: 3382
The total number of the running words in the American Christmas themes: 4235
The total number of the running words in the American summer holidays themes: 7943

The total number of the running words in the Polish Election themes: 7500
The total number of the running words in the Polish breaking news themes: 29250
The total number of the running words in the American Election themes: 5880
The total number of the running words in the American breaking news themes: 33000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Christmas</th>
<th>Summer holidays</th>
<th>elections</th>
<th>Breaking news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The number of abbreviations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (1,12%)</td>
<td>30 (12%)</td>
<td>35 (5,38%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Answering the ninth research question, our main aim is to verify the hypothesis that the main function of using abbreviations helps people to make their messages shorter. Moreover, using them saves more time due to the fact that typing on keyboard words such as ‘brb’, ‘idk’, or ‘btw’ takes less time than typing: ‘be right back’, ‘I don’t know’, or ‘by the way’. Another aim of this research question is to check and compare whether social chit-chats include more abbreviations than some political and cultural news.

The findings which are collected in table 51 illustrate that both the Poles and the Americans use more abbreviations in political and cultural news (65 abbreviations in posts and comments given by the Poles and 50 given by the Americans). When it comes to social chit chats, no abbreviations appear in the Polish posts and comments connected with Christmas and only two in the case of summer holidays themes. That is why, the findings which are presented in the table partially confirm the hypothesis that abbreviations are used in all mentioned types of conversation by both nations.

(10) Do the Poles and the Americans use more complex sentences in political and cultural topics than in casual, social chit-chats?

This research question aspires to examine the hypothesis that there are certain types of conversations which require either simple sentences or more complex ones. In this dissertation, we have assumed that more serious topics such as debates, elections, political news, breaking news would be filled with complex and advanced sentences due to the fact that more controversial topics provoke people to elaborate more on them.

The total number of the comments in the Polish political and cultural news: 900
The total number of the comments in the American political and cultural news: 1070

The total number of the running words in the Polish political and cultural news: 36750
The total number of the running words in the American political and cultural news: 38880

A. Political and cultural news

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The number of compound sentences</th>
<th>The number of complex sentences</th>
<th>The number of compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>113 (12,56%)</td>
<td>236 (26,23%)</td>
<td>19 (2,11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>142 (13,27%)</td>
<td>203 (18,97%)</td>
<td>26 (2,43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td><strong>255 (25,83%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>439 (45,2%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>45 (4,54%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 52: The number of complex sentences in more formal topics used by the Poles and the Americans

The total number of the comments in the Polish social chit-chats: 353
The total number of the comments in the American social chit-chats: 290

The total number of the running words in the Polish social chit-chats: 8932
The total number of the running words in the American social chit-chats: 12178
B. Social chit-chats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The number of compound sentences</th>
<th>The number of complex sentences</th>
<th>The number of compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>5 (1,42%)</td>
<td>3 (0,85%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>50 (17,24%)</td>
<td>9 (3,10%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The total number</td>
<td>55 (18,66%)</td>
<td>12 (3,95%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 53: The number of complex sentences in casual topics used by the Poles and the Americans

The findings which are presented in the table confirm the hypothesis that more complex sentences are used more often both by the Poles and the Americans in political and cultural topics. The total number of complex sentences is 368 in the case of the Polish people and 371 in the case of the Americans:

(1) ‘All GOP candidates should get out and work hard for re-election’
(2) ‘People should support a pipeline that Canasa has blocked before it failed totally’
(3) ‘As long as Trump is going down, it’s only a matter of time’
(4) ‘Although I am not very keen on voting, I had no choice, and I have decided to take part in election’
(5) ‘We are the people of this country and if we do not go there, nobody else will do it for us’
(6) ‘Elections have always been a part of our life so that everyone has to be motivated and go there to make a right choice’
(7) ‘Even if politics is hard for me, I believe that it is my own duty to choose this one person who is going to represent our country’
(8) ‘Oni dostaną dopłatę do pensji jeśli będą zarabiać mniej niż jakby byli ministrami, a co ze zwykłym pracownikiem, który zarabia 1334zł miesięcznie?’
(9) ‘Jeszcze pokażemy wam gdzie wasze miejsce i nie będziecie mieć już żadnych szans, żeby niszczyć wszystko dookoła’
(10) ‘Czyli nowelizacja ustawy, która jest autorstwa PIS będzie tą jedyną, która niedługo zostanie wprowadzona w życie?’

whereas when it comes to casual, social chit-chats, there are only 8 such sentences in the Polish posts and comments and 59 in the American ones:

(1) ‘Zrobimy coś innego – napijemy się wódki a potem zatańczymy wesołe dziewczyny’
(2) ‘Decorations are waiting, but sooner I go to sleep before someone asks me for help’
(3) ‘Byłam jesienią razem z mężem i uważam, że warto jest tam pojechać, bo jest cała masa miejsc do zwiedzania’
(4) ‘No musimy myśleć, bo nie mamy mało czasu, a jak chce się mieć dobre miejsce, to trzeba już rezerwować’
(5) ‘Could you recommend a hotel? I am going there the first time and I am afraid that maybe I will not find a good place to stay’
(6) ‘For my parents – can you check for a week maybe? Then I will ask them and after I will give you the answer’
(7) ‘Even if the weather is not so good there, I think that we can go there and try it out. We have nothing to lose’.

The extracts, which have been included in the previous chapter, also show very distinctly that casual conversations consist of very simple, sometimes verbless sentences, or even the sentences which contain just one or two words. The extracts also prove that the sentences are becoming longer and more advanced when more serious topics appear. During the procedure of conducting this research, it can be observed that both groups are more eager to write about topics which are more thought-provoking and trigger some inner emotions and feelings connected with them. Not only do people express their opinions, but also ask questions, demand some certain actions, suggest solutions, engage others to take part in conversation and make various comparisons.
(11) Are interrogative sentences used more in casual conversations than political and cultural ones by both groups of the respondents

This research question is based on the hypothesis that various types of conversations require the respondents to use different forms of sentences. It is assumed that political and cultural topics, which are more serious, contain mostly imperative and exclamative sentences, whereas more common and usual topics such as summer holidays, Christmas and other holidays include more informal chats.

The total number of the comments in the Polish Christmas themes: 185
The total number of the comments in the Polish summer holidays themes: 178
The total number of the comments in the American Christmas themes: 121
The total number of the comments in the American summer holidays themes: 169

The total number of the comments in the Polish Election themes: 250
The total number of the comments in the Polish breaking news themes: 650
The total number of the comments in the American Election themes: 245
The total number of the comments in the American breaking news themes: 825

The total number of the running words in the Polish Christmas themes: 5550
The total number of the running words in the Polish summer holidays themes: 3382
The total number of the running words in the American Christmas themes: 4235
The total number of the running words in the American summer holidays themes: 7943

The total number of the running words in the Polish Election themes: 7500
The total number of the running words in the Polish breaking news themes: 29250
The total number of the running words in the American Election themes: 5880
The total number of the running words in the American breaking news themes: 33000
Table 54: The frequency of using interrogative sentences in formal and informal conversations by both nations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Christmas</th>
<th>Summer holidays</th>
<th>elections</th>
<th>Breaking news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The number of interrogative sentences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>14 (7,57%)</td>
<td>39 (21,91%)</td>
<td>58 (23,2%)</td>
<td>72 (11,08%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>19 (15,70%)</td>
<td>21 (12,43%)</td>
<td>45 (18,37%)</td>
<td>36 (4,36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The total number</strong></td>
<td>33 (23,27%)</td>
<td>60 (34,34%)</td>
<td>103 (41,57%)</td>
<td>108 (15,44%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawing from the obtained results, it can be stated that the hypothesis can be partially confirmed. It is very clearly shown that political and cultural topics include more interrogative sentences – 130 in the case of the Poles and 81 in the case of the Americans, whereas when it comes to social chit chats- only 53 in the case of the Polish people and 40 in the case of the Americans. Some extracts, which have been included in the previous chapter, illustrate that both the Poles and the Americans ask a great number of questions which concern their own interests and matters. Many rhetorical questions are noticeable in the posts and the comments connected with some breaking news such as natural disasters, catastrophes, or cataclysms. The main functions of these interrogative sentences are as follows:

(1) to ask about current situations:
- ‘Czy ktoś orientuje się jak wygląda sytuacja pogodowa w stanie Georgia?’
- ‘Which part of the USA suffers the most now?’
- ‘A jak w małopolsce?’
- ‘I am wondering about the South areas? It should be calm there, but nature is unpredictable :/’

(2) to warn or to ask about warnings:
- ‘Czy mieszkańcy zostali poinformowani o zagrożeniu?’
‘We should warn those people. Who knows when will be another hit.’

(3) to ask about some dangerous areas:
- ‘Które tereny zostały najbardziej zagrożone?’
- ‘Is the North safe or it is unknown yet?’
- ‘A gdzie największe zagrożenie powodziowe????’
- ‘Jestem ciekaw co się dzieje teraz na Śląsku?’

(4) to get more information about the number of casualties:
- ‘Ktoś, coś wie ile ofiar?’
- ‘God Bless All, did many people lose their homes?’
- ‘Gdzie jest jakieś info odnośnie liczby ofiar? Niech ktoś w końcu to poda’
- ‘I am trying to look for more info about people who died that day ☹’

(5) to ask about various ways of helping people in need:
- ‘How can we help people who are in danger now?’
- ‘Czy jakieś pomoce zostały wysłane do tych ludzi?’
- ‘Może stworzymy grupę, której celem będzie pomoc tym mieszkańcom?’
- ‘Any action apart from posting links here?’

(6) to ask about predictions for the following hours and days:
- ‘Czy trąby lądowej nie da się w żaden sposób wykryć?’
- ‘Any predictions for the following hours?’
- ‘What do they say about next hit?’

(7) to engage other people to share food, money and some other stuff:
- ‘Any actions already taken?’
- ‘Ciekawe co na to rząd? W końcu by mógł coś zrobić i pomóc tym biednym ludziom’

(8) to get potential contact to some families.
- ‘Is there any contact to them??’
- ‘Ciekawe czy służby ratownicze się jakoś z nimi skontaktują?’
Naturally, it cannot be denied that no questions appear in social chit-chats, but it can be stated that those questions are quite homogenous and connected mostly with asking about various ways of spending and celebrating Christmas and recommended places to visit during summer holidays:

(1) ‘Czyżby już święta?’
(2) ‘Jedziemy gdzieś?’
(3) ‘Where do we go this year? Any ideas?’
(5) ‘Przekonałeś już żoną do tego pomysłu?’
(6) ‘Who could recommend a good hotel?’
(7) ‘Who else is there?’

(12) Do the Poles and the Americans use social networks mostly for communicative purposes?

This research question is formulated on the basis of the hypothesis that the primary function of social networks is to communicate, meet new people and improve relations with our friends and relatives. However, the findings obtained from the analysis illustrate that this hypothesis can be partially confirmed. When it comes to the answers provided by the Poles, it seems that fun, entertainment and meeting new people are more important and communicative purposes are on the third position. One could argue that meeting new people can be associated with communicative purposes, yet it is not the same. In the respondents’ comments and justifications, meeting new people is connected with getting to know them better, socializing with them, hanging out and even travelling. Communicative purposes are understood as being able to talk fluently and without any barriers with people, being able to communicate despite language problems and conveying the most important information during the conversation. For the Americans meeting new people is also the most crucial and then communicative purposes appear. In the case of the American respondents there is only 2% of difference between these two options; nonetheless, when it comes to the Poles the difference between meeting new people and communicative purposes is 15%. It can be assumed that there is no big discrepancy between improving communication and meeting new people for the American respondents. Apart from the communicative purposes, there are
also some other purposes of using social networks: educational purposes and looking for job offers.

(13) **Do the Polish people pay less attention to grammaticality and overall correctness than the Americans?**

This research question aims at verifying the hypothesis that the content and conveying information will be more important than the general framework of a sent message or a published post. The results show that the Poles pay less attention to grammaticality and overall correctness (70%) than the Americans (82%). Both the Poles and the Americans state that grammaticality and overall correctness are essential when they post comments or advertisements which can be read by their friends, family, relatives or other users on some forums or groups. Both groups admit that they do not pay too much attention to correctness in private and informal chit-chats on private messengers.

The main aim of this chapter was to check and verify research questions based on some hypothesis which had been formulated before. One could state that passive voice constructions are used mostly in political situations when the respondents do not want to be associated with other politicians. Checking those research questions shows that sometimes people indicate that the action has already been completed, for instance: ‘Christmas Tree is already decorated’, ‘Decorations are done’ or ‘Ciastka już zostaly upieczone’. These examples show that the action is more important than the performer of it.

The analysis illustrates that widely known swearwords do not have to be associated with a negative perception. The data show that some swearwords which appear in casual conversations are either put there for fun or just because someone is used to implementing them nearly everywhere.

Depending on the topic of the conversation, types of sentences vary as well. More informal topics are full of simple sentences or sometimes verbless constructions without advanced vocabulary. The more serious and provocative topic, the more complex sentences appear. In the topics connected with holidays or spending free time, the users are more direct and they do not devote their time to describing something which seems to be obvious or can be found in some guidebooks or brochures. The situation changes when the users are involved in matters which concern their viewpoints, perspectives or
beliefs. Then, a great number of complex and compound sentences can be observed, together with swearwords, abbreviations and exclamative sentences. Very often it happens that the users tag others so that the conversation is more complex and more people exchange their views and opinions.

There was also one question in which the respondents were asked about the purposes of using social networks. The answer could seem to be that most of them use them just for fun and entertainment. To some degree it is true; however, some users claim that they try to find out some other features of those social networks which are more unique and extraordinary. For most of them using social networks for fun is boring and no longer exciting. Some of them claim that they find very good sources for learning foreign languages. YouTube and Duolingo give them much better opportunities than Facebook or Instagram where they are exposed to seeing thousands of photos, posts, comments, and personal relations. There are some respondents who contend that it does not make any sense to put a job advert on Facebook owing to the fact that people just scroll down all new posts and comments and they are not able to see some profitable advertisements. It happens because of the fact that Facebook is often full of unnecessary information which limits our eyesight and rational thinking.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The objective of our study has been to compare the analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Polish and English Facebook chats. We aimed at presenting the language of the Internet from different perspectives: linguistic, sociological, and cultural. More specifically: we examined what kind of grammatical structures appeared in certain types of conversations held both by Poles and Americans, the frequency of using these structures and their functions. Depending on the topic and a form of Facebook conversations, we also wanted to present some interesting facts concerning the lexis in those posts and comments (a number and frequency of swearwords, abbreviations, phrasal verbs, colloquialisms, idioms). We were also interested in different attitudes that the sampled population of the users of the Internet exhibit towards the language of the Internet, grammatical and lexical correctness, and similarities and differences between the language of the Internet and everyday spoken language used in face-to-face conversations. We considered several factors which might have an influence on the answers provided by the respondents. Among them one can enumerate: sex, age, education, the topic of the conversation and its form (posts, comments, public discussions, advertisements, announcements).

Before the important findings are provided, it has to be stated that the respondents who took part in this research were young people between 20 and 26 years old. They belong to the so called Generation Z, which means that their perception of the language and its use on social networks will differ from the style of writing represented by other generations. For this reason, we should not overgeneralize and relate these findings to the whole population.

Among all the models of communication provided in the theoretical part, Facebook, which functions as the main source of the language material in this dissertation, belongs to the model in which many chosen or potential senders send messages to a great number of potential or chosen recipients (Pisarek, 2008: 91). Shannon (1948: 381), who describes his model of communication very distinctly, points out that each conversation is exposed to noise source which might disturb the process of communication. In face-
to-face conversations this noise may come from the environment or from other people around us, whereas in the case of Facebook it is semantic noise which occurs when grammar or technical language are incomprehensible to us or when posts and comments contain mistakes which disturb the process of decoding the message.

It is interesting to observe how the features of the language presented by Jakobson (1960: 355) find their implication in the extracts gathered from the corpus analysis: the referential function, which is strictly connected with the main aims of the message sent from one interlocutor to another, the emotive function supported by a great number of emoticons and emojis, the conative function, which can be expressed on Facebook either by means of imperative forms (‘Let’s go to the Bahamas!’, ‘Czas zacząć przygotowania!’) or vocative forms (‘Oh my God!’ ‘Na miłość boską, nie wierzę!’), the phatic function in the form of greetings (‘Hi, what’s up?’), the metalingual function, which focuses on the language itself and its meaning (Netspeak, prosody of the language, computer-mediated communication), and finally the poetic function supported by quotations, jokes, proverbs, slogans (‘You won’t go Hollywood again? Never say never’, ‘Co się odwlecze, to nie uciecze – udekorujemy dom jutro’).

Facebook is this type of social network where people of various race, ethnicity or social background can send their messages and put comments. Jargon, which is understood as special and technical vocabulary associated with specific occupations or areas of work (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2002: 134), can be found in some sentences in the posts and comments gathered from the Poles and the Americans.

Since the whole dissertation is based on Netspeak – the language of the Internet, its most distinctive features discussed in the theoretical part, and included in the questionnaire, and in the corpus analysis should be presented in this part. The lack of simultaneous feedback and slower rhythm of the conversation are among the features discussed by Crystal (2006:34) and Szpunar (2007: 85). They both claim that because of the asynchronous form of the communication the period of time between sending and receiving a message may last from few seconds to many hours. Our extracts show that the frequency of giving answers differs from few minutes to even several days; however, it must be mentioned that nowadays young people have access to the Internet in their mobile phones and very often notifications of receiving a message from another user or an answer for a post appear on their smartphones screens. On the basis of our extracts from the corpus analysis we noticed that more than 30 answers appeared under a particular post within one minute. We may assume that soon this feature of Netspeak
will not be perceived as a feature of this kind of the language, but as something obvious, natural and commonly accepted.

The correlation between lag problems and frustration was noticeable as well. Chasy (2015: 74) claims that 2-3 minutes is enough to evoke some negative feelings and emotions. This phenomenon was observed more distinctly in posts and comments connected with politics and political debates. When such topics appear and concern the respondents’ matters, we can see immediate responses from the users of the Internet in which they ask various questions and urge other users to give their answers. The longer they wait, the more frustrated they become; consequently, the language of emotions, which was described in the theoretical part, appears. As Myers (2004: 120) notices, the language of emotions has physiological background; however, first of all, we need to recognize cognitive function of a particular event. In other words, an idea which is closer to our way of thinking or our personal belief will evoke stronger emotions and reaction than something which is of less importance.

From the linguistic point of view, in this type of the Internet communication we can observe various manners of expressing these features of communication which are marked by prosody and different paralanguage phenomena in everyday spoken language. These two domains concern how we talk and convey information to our interlocutor: in face-to-face conversations we use mimics, gestures, body movements in order to show our emotions and feelings, however, Netspeak uses some other techniques such as repeated letters, multiplying punctuation marks, capitalization, letter spacing, and asterisks. It is interesting to notice the correlation between those features of Netspeak and some grammatical and lexical structures which are attributed to them. Table 55 presents the most outstanding findings of our study. Our main aim is to illustrate how the features of prosody and paralanguage are expressed by means of various grammatical and lexical structures in the Internet communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of prosody and paralanguage</th>
<th>Grammatical and lexical structures attributed to them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated letters</td>
<td>- mostly greetings and polite forms, exclamations: 1) heeeeeej!, 2) sieeeeeeema!!, 3) haaaaaaaaalo!!, 4) hiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!, 5) heeeeeecccceloo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Multiplying punctuation marks | - interrogative sentences and exclamations: 1) leave me alone !!!!!!, 2) Daj mi spokój !!!!!!, 3) Why ????!!!!!!, 4) I co z wakacjami ?????
| Capitalization | - mostly declarative sentences, exclamations, simple sentences, very often nominal sentences: 1) POWIEDZIAŁEM NIE!, 2) OMG BYE, 3) RACZEJ TAK, 4) STOP IT !!!
| Using asterisks | - emphasis concerning particular word or phrases: ‘*Stuck* was the ticket to my windscreen when I left the airport’, ‘*What he is doing* is sunbathing all day long’, ‘Poszukaj w *zakładce*, a nie w *katalogu*’. - replace swearwords: ‘What the f*** are you talking about?’, ‘Poje**** Cię? Przecież już tam byliśmy.’

Table 55 Various ways of expressing paraverbal materials by means of using various grammatical and lexical structures in the Internet communication

The results gained from this dissertation illustrate quite interesting facts concerning swearwords and their functions on social networks – both linguistic and sociocultural. Swearwords are noticeable both in formal and informal conversations; yet, their perception and interpretations vary. In informal and casual conversations the function of swearwords is to maintain this conversation or introduce some fun without conveying a particular message: ‘Co tam kurwa?’, ‘Zjebanie, powiem Ci’, ‘Zajebioza! Polecam ten wyjazd’, ‘No fucking way?! Was it so good?’, ‘Unfuckingbelieveable how much fun we had!’, ‘Bullshit, I don’t recommend it to anyone’. However, in the case of more serious topics, the function of swearwords becomes more informative, directive, aiming at accusations and offending. The function of swearwords triggers changes concerning types of grammatical sentences from simple sentences: ‘What the fuck do you have in your mind?’ through compound sentences: ‘Zarezerwowała bilety na wyjazd, ale kur**
Politeness and contemporary face theory, which have been discussed in the previous chapters, also play a very important role in the Internet communication. Positive and negative face, and face-threatening acts contribute to success or failure of a conversation. Goffman (1967: 2013) defined face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.” Brown and Levinson (1987: 63) state that face has two components: positive face and negative face. People with positive face are quite open-minded, sociable, and their desire is to be in the centre. Those with negative face like to save time and prefer not to be forced to do something.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 65), “face-threatening acts can be toward our positive face and/or negative face, and caused by acts we engaged in ourselves or the acts of others towards us.” For example, if our interlocutor asks us for help, giving at the same time a particular date and an hour, he is threatening our negative face (autonomy) because we will have to give up whatever we might have planned. In online conversations it is much harder to notice whether and to what degree the face of our interlocutor may be affected. This face can be either ‘lost’ if our interlocutor does something unacceptable or against moral norms (commonly known as face-threatening act), or ‘saved’ if we help him or her not to feel guilty, confused, or embarrassed. For instance, talking to people with negative face usually requires respecting their time, using indirect forms by means of questions, not forcing them to talk even if they do not want to. In the case of people with positive face, we ought to agree with their opinions, identify with them, show sensitivity towards their thoughts and statements.

According to Bralczyk (2000), using swearwords is so widespread nowadays that it is noticeable in many, various relations: man-woman, parent-child, student-teacher, husband-wife. As a consequence, more people are using them without a sense of shame. In the past, mostly uneducated members of society overused swearwords; however,
nowadays they are used regardless of people’s age, sex, education, or social background. The last phenomenon that we have observed during the analysis of swearwords concerns lexical borrowings. It happens that Polish swearwords partially look like English ones and only chosen vowels or consonants are read according to the rules of English pronunciation, for example: ‘chooja wiedzą Ci wszyscy politycy’ (read as: chu:ja, not tʃuːdʒa), ‘Jesus Christ’ (read as: dʒiːz krɪst), ‘Poyebało Cię?’ (read as: pojebało Cię?). We are trying to point out the influence of the English language on the Polish language. However, it must be stated that these modifications inside various words are observed in the posts and comments written mostly by the young people from Generation Z who took part in this research study. Judging from the respondents’ answers, we may assume that their contact with foreign languages, access to unlimited films and songs, opportunities for making friends result in changes in their lexicon. Such an approach towards the language of the Internet presented by our respondents in this research may indicate that this linguistic feature of Netspeak soon will be perceived as a norm and such a style of writing will be commonly accepted by the rest of the society.

What also surprised us was the division of abbreviations into universal ones and commonly used, and those more specialized, which are typical of a particular theme. Table 56 presents the division of abbreviations into two smaller sub-groups together with their themes, which we gathered during the analysis of extracts coming from Facebook. We assume that such a comparison will reveal more specialized acronyms, which are not always known.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breaking news themes</th>
<th>Universal (General) abbreviations</th>
<th>Specialized abbreviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOL – Laughing Out Loud</td>
<td>FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U2 – You too</td>
<td>EPA – Environmental Protection Agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tzn – to znaczy defo- definitely</td>
<td>MPLS – Multiprotocol Label Switching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USFS – United States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

266
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer holidays themes</th>
<th>thx – thanks</th>
<th>Forest Service Govt – government BLM – Black Lives matter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pls – please</td>
<td>HB – Half Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pics – pictures</td>
<td>BB – Bed &amp; Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wks – weaks</td>
<td>FB – Full Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA – Los Angeles</td>
<td>SC – Self Catering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fab - fabulous</td>
<td>AI – All Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OV – Overnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PP – Program Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NNW – ubezpieczenie następsz nieszczęśliwych wypadków (Accidental Heath and dismemberment insurance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elections themes</th>
<th>spox – spoxik</th>
<th>TK – Constitutional Tribunal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gr8 – great</td>
<td>CETA – Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wtf – what the fuck</td>
<td>PO – Platforma Obywatelska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nw – nie wiem</td>
<td>GOP – Grand Old Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zł – Polish złoty</td>
<td>KKK – Ku Klux Klan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ads - advertisements</td>
<td>DNC – Democratic National Commitee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 56 The division of abbreviations**

Gathering all the necessary findings, table 57 illustrates that the respondents prefer using universal, more general abbreviations, which they know, to using more specialized ones, which actually seem to be difficult in decoding.
Table 57 The total number of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
<th>The total number of general abbreviations</th>
<th>The total number of specialized abbreviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of these findings, it might seem that the total number of general abbreviations used both by the Poles and the Americans outranks the total number of specialized abbreviations. It can be caused by the fact that young people are more familiar with topics which do not require too much sophisticated vocabulary (e.g. politics, breaking news, elections).

Emoticons, which from the linguistic point of view are perceived just as pictograms, have their hidden meanings as well. Emoticons are used on a regular basis both by the Poles and the Americans; however, it is crucial to mention that from the semantic point of view the interpretation of some of them may differ significantly. To our surprise, the results reveal that some of the Poles are trying to avoid using emoticon “☺”, mostly at the end of the sentence, owing to the fact that one of the connotations of this emoticon is strictly connected with irony, sarcasm and distance. Many respondents contend that whenever they see this emoticon at the end of the sentence, they assume that their interlocutor is not a fully reliable person or that something wrong is going on with the conversation. Surprisingly enough, taking into account the answers received from the Americans in the questionnaire, they do not have any negative connotations with this emoticon, yet there are some others which are ambiguous. A wink “;)” and “:P” are those which are troublesome for the Americans, according to their answers received from the questionnaire. They claim that those emoticons have become so universal that respondents very often forget about their real meaning and use. We find this phenomenon quite interesting and surprising on the grounds that emoticons themselves also contain hidden content which requires interpretation and very often the Internet users use them automatically, without paying attention to their figurative meaning. Needless to say, it would be advisable to conduct similar research in which we could check how various emoticons are perceived and interpreted in different situational contexts, taking into consideration types of sentences and the age of the respondents.
More detailed research could reveal whether more emoticons have ambiguous connotations.

Quantitative and qualitative methods of interpreting data together with the corpus analysis helped us to answer our research questions and observe some more interesting and unexpected phenomena discussed in our dissertation. One of our aims was to check whether there are any other social networks, apart from Facebook, which are used equally with it nowadays. Table 58 presents some important findings which we gathered during our analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 58 The most often used social networks

Facebook together with Instagram and YouTube seem to be the most often used social networks among the respondents. Some of the Polish respondents explain that thanks to Facebook or Instagram everything they want to have is within reach: current news, instant access to messages and a list of friends, various applications which allow them either to make payments or do online shopping.

Most of the respondents spend from 4 to 9 hours on these social networks every day. The potential explanation of this phenomenon may be as follows: constant access to our modern devices (smartphones, iphones, smartwatches) and widespread Internet connection allow us to use social networks nearly all the time. Nonetheless, there are some answers given by the Poles, which help us to understand that there are still some people who prefer networks (e.g. YouTube), which do not expose respondents to a great number of private photos, posts, and comments from other people’s life. Some of the respondents consider Facebook as ‘mass meeting’, ‘wastage’, ‘bottomless pit’, ‘fictional utopia’ and even ‘imprisonment’. It would be advisable to extend the analysis by implementing even more social networks, contrasting them and searching for significant reasons which make some of them successful and others not.

We also decided to check the most preferred ways of communication taking into account communicative approach. Eric Chester’s hierarchy of communication needs depicts which ways of communication are more preferred between people born before
and after 1980. To receive more reasonable and precise data we used the Likert scale, which required the respondents to rank some communication channels in order of importance from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least preferred one and 5 the most. One of our assumptions was that the option of personal meetings would not be chosen as often as the option of text messaging or using Facebook chats. Thankfully, personal meetings are still important for the respondents from both countries (the Poles: option 4 - 30%; option 5 – 30% and the Americans: option 4 – 10%; option 5 - 30%) . Phone calls are more popular among the Americans (option 4 – 30%; option 5 - 50%) than the Poles (option 4- 20%; option 5 – 30%). On the basis of these findings, it might appear that writing e-mails is becoming less and less useful and helpful. 60% of the Polish respondents and 70% of the American ones declare that they need e-mails only in situations when they are requested to send their CVs, motivational letters or some other attachments. However, it must be mentioned that the average age of the respondents who took part in research is from 20 to 26 years old. On the basis of these findings we can assume that it is not typical of them to write e-mails unless they need them for specific purposes. Both the Poles and the Americans state that in this case either phone calls or personal meetings are much more effective.

From the linguistic point of view, it seems that the respondents from both countries agree that paying attention to grammatical correctness is highly important when posting comments on social networks. The results obtained from the questionnaire show some discrepancies. For the respondents from both countries (the Poles – 50%, the Americans – 50%) talking on Facebook chat does not require too much grammatical correctness, yet the situation changes when it comes to commenting on other users’ posts or writing longer messages. The respondents who took part in this research explain that they are afraid that they could be perceived as less educated people if someone else saw their posts and comments containing grammatical and lexical mistakes. This example illustrates very distinctly that communication on social networks is determined by a situational context (Barak and Gluck-Ofri, 2007: 411).

This finding leads us to another conclusion concerning potential mistakes and their sources in posts, comments, and messages found on Facebook. Most of the respondents (the Poles -75%, the Americans – 82%) agree that stylistic, spelling and coherence mistakes are those which appear the most often. One could really agree that all those mistakes are not problematic for the respondents since, according to the answers collected from the questionnaire, the usefulness and contents of the message are the
most crucial. Nonetheless, the corpus analysis of the posts and comments gathered from various theme categories proves that those mistakes do appear and they disturb the process of coding and decoding messages. In Table 59 we have included most noticeable grammatical and lexical mistakes found in the posts, comments and messages obtained from the Poles and the Americans. Such a comparison gives us an insight into more detailed analysis of their grammar and vocabulary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of mistakes</th>
<th>Examples found in the Polish posts, comments and messages</th>
<th>Examples found in the American posts, comments, and messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical and lexical mistakes</td>
<td>- Moje dzieci nie rozumia dlaczego choinkę stroi się w dniu Wigilii Bożego Narodzenia</td>
<td>- Reading this comments I am not sure where to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Po wakacjach przyszedł do nas wujek i jego przyjaciele</td>
<td>- Our daughter doll was lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mój szwagier okazał się humanitarny, ponieważ pomógł nam z wakacjami</td>
<td>- Less people are going to Jamaica more than one time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dziś mamy dwunasty kwiecień więc jeszcze tylko miesiąc i lecimy!</td>
<td>- We don’t know exactly the amount of places worth seeing there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of diacritical marks</td>
<td>- Could anyone make me a favour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Miałam to szczescie być tam w tamtym roku</td>
<td>- We were so exciting about going there!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- wez mnie tam ze sobą jeszcze raz</td>
<td>- The news are good! More injured people were found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- myśle, że wszyscy powinni isc na wybory i</td>
<td>Lack of diacritical marks in the English language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Spelling & mistakes | - Najważniejsze jest jedzenie. Czy może mi ktoś powiedzieć o opcjach wyżywienia w tym hotelu?  
- Piękny hotel, animatorzy zajebiści, polecam **goronco** (instead of gorąco)  
- My **byli** tam w tamte wakacje  
- Pisowskie **hamstwo** bez żadnych argumentów | - I have to look at my **calendar** to set up the date of our trip  
- Do you **belief** in all these comments written by people?  
- We are **disappointed** by these results (instead of disappointed)  
- Do you **recomend** this place for adults with children as well? |
| Lack of punctuation marks / Punctuation mistakes | - Czy przekonałeś już żonę (Lack of question mark)  
- A ile to kosztuje (Lack of question mark)  
- Chciałabym ale nie mogę tam pojechać bo nie mam pieniędzy (Lack of comma after ‘chciałabym)  
- Udekorowaliśmy choinkę więc dzieci są szczęśliwe (Lack of comma after ‘choinkę’) | - Anyone went there last summer holidays (Lack of question mark)  
- Does anybody know the number of victims after the last tornado (Lack of question mark)  
- Having booked our holidays we went to do the shopping (lack of comma after ‘holidays’)  
- They got results didn’t they? (lack of comma after ‘results’) |

**Table 59 Grammatical and lexical mistakes found in the posts, comments and messages**
One possible explanation of this phenomenon is quite simple – most of the Polish and American respondents claim that laziness and rush contribute to potential grammatical and lexical mistakes in posts, comments, and messages - 80% in the case of the Poles and 90% in the case of the Americans. It shows very distinctly that the respondents from both countries are aware of the fact that they do make mistakes, but either they do not want to admit to them or they state that there are more important aspects of the conversation than grammar, for instance: communication and content.

One of the research questions concerned the frequency of using passive voice sentences in formal and informal topics. A detailed corpus analysis enabled us to have an insight into these matters. Our findings prove that the frequency of passive voice sentences depends on the situational context. For instance, political matters which are full of impersonal constructions and passive voice sentences, refer to general views and opinions expressed by people who do not want to be associated with politicians whose decisions are not commonly accepted and approved (‘Powinno się coś zrobić dla dobra tej sytuacji’, ‘It is claimed that elections should help us, but who knows?!’, ‘Some actions have already been taken to improve the situation for better’, ‘Głosy wyborcze pewnie zostały źle policzone’). However, when the actions of politicians influence people’s life directly, they start using active voice sentences to underline that they, as a community, need changes (‘Musimy coś z tym zrobić bo ta polityka całkowicie osłabi pozycje naszego zwiąiku zawodowego’, ‘We have to decide which of those parties will have the best program’). Passive voice sentences are present in both formal and informal conversations when users want to emphasize that the action has already been completed: ‘Christmas Tree is already decorated’, ‘Rooms already booked’, ‘Jedzenie podane do stołu’.

Types of sentences which appear in the above mentioned posts, comments and messages also vary. We have decided to compare and check what types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex), discussed in Chapter IV, p. 116, are noticeable in formal and informal conversations. Having analyzed the corpus, we noticed one correlation: the less serious topics of conversations, the less advanced and complicated sentences. Tables 60 and 61 contain our findings gathered from the analyzed corpus.
A. Informal topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Simple sentences</th>
<th>Compound sentences</th>
<th>Complex sentences</th>
<th>Compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>1,51%</td>
<td>1,42%</td>
<td>0,85%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>1,68%</td>
<td>17,24%</td>
<td>3,10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 60 Types of sentences in informal topics

B. Formal topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Simple sentences</th>
<th>Compound sentences</th>
<th>Complex sentences</th>
<th>Compound-complex sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Poles</td>
<td>2,2%</td>
<td>12,56%</td>
<td>26,23%</td>
<td>2,11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Americans</td>
<td>3,65%</td>
<td>13,27%</td>
<td>18,97%</td>
<td>2,43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 61 Types of sentences in formal topics

It is easy to notice that in informal topics the Poles tend to use simpler sentences, whereas the Americans seem to use compound and complex sentences. Compound-complex sentences are not used at all in more informal topics analyzed in this dissertation. Formal topics require both groups of the respondents to use more compound and complex sentences. Such a tendency is observed owing to the fact that most informal topics found in the corpus were rather monotonous in comparison to more formal topics such as politics or natural disasters, which contained more emotions, feelings, engagement, and understanding. The sentences in those messages were full of extended vocabulary, emotive language and advanced grammatical structures.

Last but not least, the posts, comments, and messages should also be analyzed from the sociocultural perspective. It is interesting to mention that several American messages included references to the Bible and God. Such references were noticeable in the posts and comments connected with cataclysms and some other natural disasters. There are some respondents who claim that most cataclysms are a punishment sent from our God because of our bad behavior. Strange as it may seem, such a phenomenon was not observable in the Polish comments and posts. We cannot make a generalization whether the Poles or the Americans are more religious since in our dissertation we have
not taken into account religious matters; however, according to some researchers (Cox, 2016; Fleurbaey, 2018), 68% of the Americans pray at least several times a week and more than 53% of those people consider religion to be very important in their life. Despite the diversity of other religions and movements (e.g.: Baptists, Methodists, Buddhism, Islam) and their attitudes towards God, faith is still important to the American respondents. Another similar research carried out by Pawłowska (2015: 80) reveals that more than 60% of the respondents who took part in her research are deeply religious and 30% of them go to church at least once a week. For this reason, one possible explanation of lack of references to God and the Bible in the answers obtained from the Poles in our questionnaire may be connected with the fact that the respondents who took part in our research might not have been strongly embedded in religious matters. We may assume that they do not reveal their attitudes towards religion since they have not been asked about it in the questionnaire. Further research would allow us to check whether the Poles are so religious that they do not want to make references to God and accusing him of punishing us or that they are not interested in religious matters.

Finally, we have decided to check whether the American users of the Internet understand a passage of the text on the first reading. Understanding and being aware of grammatical and lexical correctness may also depend on respondents’ ability to decode messages and comments in a proper way. To achieve our aim we have decided to use Gunning Fog Index, discussed in Chapter VI, p. 171. Such an approach towards the topic reveals that in Facebook posts and comments concerning informal themes (holidays, events, celebrations) with simple vocabulary and not advanced grammar, the Fog Index equals between 7 and 8, which means that the language of these posts and comments is quite simple and the American users of the Internet do not have difficulties to read such messages. Nevertheless, the index in more formal and serious topics (politics, elections, breaking news, debates, natural disasters) with sophisticated vocabulary and advanced grammar equals between 12 and 13, which indicates that it is pitched to an audience of college graduates who comprehend the content of these posts and comments successfully. The higher fog index of posts and comments, the more advanced grammatical and lexical structures appear in them (passive voice sentences, complex and compound sentences, impersonal constructions, a wide range of collocations, sophisticated vocabulary) and the more time is needed to understand the context of the message fully.
Taking everything into consideration, we hope to have shown in this dissertation that thanks to the interdisciplinary character of our dissertation, the language of the Internet can be analyzed and shown from three various perspectives: linguistic, sociological, and cultural. The language of the Internet is constantly changing and those changes are inevitable due to several reasons. One of them is that the respondents represent their own norms and attitudes, which are observable in their posts and comments, for example in using swearwords, emoticons and in their outlook on grammatical and lexical correctness. Also, one cannot forget that attitude towards some cultural aspects such as religion or politeness cannot be interpreted similarly. Our results revealed that the respondents from both countries represent opposing attitudes towards the interpretation of chosen emoticons or towards references to God and the Bible.

We hope that our findings illustrate most distinctive similarities and differences in using the language of the Internet both by the Poles and the Americans. It is noticeable mostly in types of sentences (simple, compounds, affirmative, interrogative), grammatical structures (passive vs active voice sentences, the number of personal and impersonal constructions) or a range of vocabulary. From the linguistic point of view, interrogative sentences appear both in formal and informal topics; however, the number of these sentences and functions vary. For instance, informal topics contain fewer interrogative sentences and their main function is aimed at obtaining more information about the weather, accommodation or facilities in particular holidays resorts (‘What is the weather like in Morocco now?’, ‘Jaka jest pogoda o tej porze roku?’), ‘What can you recommend in France for sightseeing?’). In the case of more formal topics, the function of the interrogative sentences is aimed at warning about potential dangers (‘Do these people know that another hurricane is going to strike this area?’, ‘Was it announced that soon the level of water will rise?’), offering help (‘How many people are in danger?’, ‘How can we help those people?’ ‘Maybe we could encourage more people to vote in the elections?’), speculating about oncoming events (‘Any predictions for the following hours?’ ‘Czy wiadomo już, czy zagrożenie minęło?’), or organizing mass actions in which more people are involved (‘Why not organize one big protest?’, ‘Any actions already taken? Maybe some organizations could join?’ ‘Hey people, any ideas or any support which you could offer?’). Comparing the results obtained from the Poles and the Americans, we may conclude that more informal topics contain simple sentences, very often verbless ones (‘So far so good with Christmas’, ‘Of course not, all in
progress’, ‘Czyżby już święta? No bez jaj’, ‘Wesołych i spokojnych!’; ‘Just two weeks and Kevin Home Alone again!’). The more formal topics, the more advanced sentences (‘I think there used to be some honor and integrity and their party yeah ever since Reagan things are pretty much sucked because of Republicans who claim that they have rights to do everything they want to’, ‘Many people decided to choose the Democratic party, but many of them, who didn’t know their program, thought that they will rule well.’). Our findings bear out the assumption that the Americans use more idioms than the Poles. It is also observable that more idioms appear in informal topics (‘Have a ball’, ‘Not a chance in hell’, ‘Make the cut’, ‘Who is going to hit the road today at 11 pm?’). Impersonal constructions are used more often by the Americans both in formal and informal topics (‘It is claimed that this law was announced last night’, ‘It is shown that this party is gaining more and more votes’, ‘It was noticed by my friends that the conditions for diving were better in Egypt’). We also notice that the Poles use more swearwords both in formal and informal topics than the Americans. It must be mentioned that one swearword in English has several equivalents in the Polish lexicon and they could be used interchangeably, for instance: ‘These fucking politicians should be blamed for all what is going on in the country’, whereas in the Polish language: ‘Pierdolone dziady’, ‘Zjeby polityczne’, ‘Popierdoleńcy, którym się w dupach przewraca’, ‘Pojebani ludzie sławy, którzy tylko chcą pieniądze zgarniać’, ‘Pierdolnięci politycy i ich rządy’. In contrast to the Poles, the Americans very often use idioms to replace swearwords: ‘how on earth do you plan to appeal to women after everything you have do hurt them?’. Also, our results reveal that more abbreviations are used by the Americans. Our findings show that abbreviations appear both in formal and informal topics (‘idk tbh, let’s go there’, ‘omg what idiots!’, ‘btw, I found some interesting offers on tripadvisor, lol’, ‘remember to book it asap’, ‘możemy np pojechać tam metrem’, ‘nw co będzie lepsze? Doradź mi’).

We assume that on the basis of our data and the answers gathered from the respondents, all those changes in the language of the Internet will soon be commonly accepted, standardized, and used by more users of the Internet. But for the limitations of the study, these results could be even more precise and they would enable us to verify the language of the Internet by correlating different variables, for example the age of the respondents and types of social networks they prefer or the level of education and types of posts and comments written by them.


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Dear interviewees,

The main aim of this questionnaire is to check whether the language which we use on social networks differs from our spoken language which is used in everyday communication. Another purpose of this survey is to verify whether the language of social networks is fully correct or not. It is also crucial to focus on the sources of potential mistakes and their kinds. This survey is anonymous and consists of 19 questions. In some of them, more than one answer can be possible. Put a cross (X) in the right box. In some questions, you are kindly asked to justify your choice or your opinion.

Thank you in advance for filling in this questionnaire which is necessary in my PhD dissertation.

1. Sex:
   - female
   - male

2. Age:

3. Nationality:
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................

4. What kinds of social networks mentioned below do you usually use? (check all that apply)
   - facebook.com
   - interpals.net
   - YouTube.com
   - Instagram
   - twitter
   - Skype
   - Linkedin
   - None of them
   - Others:
   ........................................................................................................................................
5. Indicate the frequency of using social networks included in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than 5 hours per day</th>
<th>5-10 hours per day</th>
<th>10-15 hours per day</th>
<th>More than 15 hours per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpals</td>
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<td>Skype</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkedin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What are your main reasons for using social networks?
- [ ] communication purposes
- [ ] educational purposes
- [ ] looking for job offers
- [ ] meeting new people
- [ ] fun and entertainment
- [ ] none of them
- [ ] others: ................................................................................................

7. Eric Chester has created his own hierarchy of communication needs. Please, rank the following in order of importance from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least preferred to you and 5 is the most preferred to you if all else fails.

- [ ] personal meetings
- [ ] phone calls
- [ ] e-mails
- [ ] Facebook or other social media
- [ ] text messaging

8. Do you think that the language which we use on social networks differs from our spoken language which we use in everyday communication?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

9. Do you think that our spoken language has influence on the language which we use on social networks?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
10. What are the main differences between the language used on social networks and our spoken language which we use in everyday communication?

11. When you write posts on social networks, do you pay attention to grammatical correctness (proper tenses, punctuation, spelling etc )?
   □ Yes
   □ No

12. Please rank the following in order of importance from 1 to 5 where 1 is the least important to you and 5 is the most important to you

   I pay attention to grammaticality and overall correctness when:
   □ I am talking to someone on facebook chat
   □ I am writing my comment under someone else’s post
   □ I am commenting on the video / the song / the photo I have already watched / heard / seen
   □ I am giving my own, longer post / advertisement
   □ I do not pay attention at all

13. When you see a message / a comment / an advertisement written on social networks by another user, you pay attention to: (Check all that apply)
   □ its length (whether it is a short message or longer one)
   □ potential mistakes it may contain
   □ its content
   □ its framework (paragraphs, type of font, spacing etc)
   □ its style
   □ its usefulness and practical implication
   □ none of them
   □ Others ……………………………………………………………………………………………

14. What kinds of mistakes do you usually notice in posts which are present on social networks? (Check all that apply) If possible, please, justify your opinions.
   □ grammar
   □ lexical
   □ stylistic
   □ spelling
   □ punctuation
   □ coherence
   □ None of them
   □ Others:
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
15. In your opinion, what are the main sources of mistakes which appear in messages / comments? (Check all that apply)
- lack of knowledge
- people’s laziness
- lack of time to pay attention to grammaticality
- focusing on content of the message rather than overall correctness
- problems with writing an online post
- None of them
- Others:

16. In your opinion, what kinds of factors determine the way we write online posts and comments? (Check all that apply) If possible, justify your choices.
- age
- gender
- education
- nationality
- social background
- technological skills
- None of them
- Others:

17. How often do you use emoticons?
- always
- usually
- often
- sometimes
- occasionally
- never

18. What kinds of emoticons do you use the most often? (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emoticons</th>
<th>Frequency of using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☺</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>:-)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☻</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>:/</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>:D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>😊</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>:P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:-O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. In your opinion, what is the role of emoticons in online messages?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
APPENDIX B – THE POLISH VERSION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Drodzy Ankietowani,

Głównym celem tej ankiety jest sprawdzenie czy język, którego używamy na portalach społecznościowych różni się od języka mówionego, którego używamy w codziennych rozmowach. Innym celem tej ankiety jest zweryfikowanie czy język portal społecznościowy jest w pełni poprawny językowo czy też nie. Ważne jest również aby skupić się na źródłach potencjalnych błędów i ich rodzajach. Ta ankieta jest anonimowa i składa się z 19 pytań. W niektórych pytaniach więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana. Proszę postawić krzyżyk (X) w odpowiednim miejscu. W niektórych pytaniach proszę uzasadnić swój wybór oraz swoją odpowiedź.

Dziękuję z góry za wypełnienie ankiety, która jest niezbędna w przeprowadzanych przeze mnie badaniach potrzebnych do napisania pracy doktorskiej.

1. Płeć:
   - [ ] kobieta
   - [ ] mężczyzna

2. wiek:

3. Narodowość:

4. Których z niżej wymienionych portalów społecznościowych używasz najczęściej?
   (Więcej niż jedna opcja jest dozwolona)
   - [ ] facebook.com
   - [ ] interpals.net
   - [ ] YouTube.com
   - [ ] Instagram
   - [ ] twitter
   - [ ] Skype
   - [ ] Linkedin
   - [ ] żadne z powyższych
   - [ ] Inne:

301
5. Proszę zaznaczyć częstotliwość używania wymienionych poniżej portali społecznościowych.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mniej niż 5 godzin dziennie</th>
<th>Od 5 do 10 godzin dziennie</th>
<th>Od 10 do 15 godzin dziennie</th>
<th>Więcej niż 15 godzin dziennie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
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<td>Linkedin</td>
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6. Jakie są Twoje główne powody używania portali społecznościowych?
- cele komunikacyjne
- cele edukacyjne
- szukanie ofert pracy
- poznawanie nowych ludzi
- zabawa i rozrywka
- żadne z powyższych
- inne: .........................................................................................................

7. Eric Chester stworzył swoją własną hierarchię potrzeb komunikacyjnych. W skali od 1 do 5 proszę zaznaczyć jak ważne są dla Ciebie podane poniżej formy komunikacji gdzie 1 oznacza najmniej preferowaną opcję, a 5 najbardziej.
- osobiste spotkania
- rozmowy telefoniczne
- wiadomości e-mail
- Facebook i inne media społecznościowe
- wiadomości tekstowe

8. Czy myślisz, że język, którego używamy w mediach społecznościowych różni się od języka, którego używamy w codziennych rozmowach?
- Tak
- Nie

9. Czy myślisz, że nasz język mówiony ma wpływ na formę i użycie języka, którego używamy w mediach społecznościowych?
- Tak
- Nie
10. Jakie są główne różnice pomiędzy językiem, którego używamy w mediach społecznościowych, a naszym mówionym językiem używanym w codziennych rozmowach?

11. Czy zwracasz uwagę na poprawność gramatyczną kiedy zamieszczasz post na portalach społecznościowych? (poprawność gramatyczna, interpunkcyjna, ortograficzna)?

12. Które z poniższych kwestii dotyczących poprawności gramatycznej są dla Ciebie najważniejsze? Proszę uszeregować wg ważności (od 1 do 5), przy czym wartością najmniejszą jest 1, natomiast największą jest 5.

13. Kiedy widzisz wiadomość / komentarz / ogłoszenie zamieszczone(ą) na portalu społecznościowym przez innego użytkownika, zwracasz uwagę na: (więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana)

14. Jakiego rodzaju błędy zazwyczaj dostrzegasz we wiadomościach widocznych na portalach społecznościowych (więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana)
304

□ inne:

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

15. Według Ciebie, co jest główną przyczyną błędów pojawiających się na portalach społecznościowych? (więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana)
□ brak wiedzy
□ lenistwo
□ brak czasu na zwracanie uwagi na poprawność gramatyczną
□ zwracanie uwagi na zawartość wiadomości niż na jej formę i poprawność gramatyczną
□ problemy z zamieszczaniem wiadomości na portalach społecznościowych
□ żadne z powyższych
□ inne:

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

16. Według Ciebie, jakie czynniki wpływają na to w jaki sposób piszemy i zamieszczamy posty i wiadomości na portalach społecznościowych? (więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana)
□ wiek
□ płeć
□ edukacja
□ narodowość
□ pochodzenie społeczne
□ umiejętności informatyczne
□ żadne z powyższych
□ inne:

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

17. Jak często używasz emotikonek?
□ zawsze
□ zazwyczaj
□ często
□ czasami
□ okazjonalnie
□ nigdy

18. Proszę zaznaczyć znakiem [X] jakiego rodzaju emotikonek używasz najczęściej. (więcej niż jedna odpowiedź może być wybrana)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rodzaj</th>
<th>Użycie</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inne:</td>
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</table>

19. Według Ciebie, jaka jest rola emotikonów?

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SUMMARY

This work concerns a comparative analysis of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Polish and English Facebook chats. The dissertation consists of three theoretical chapters, one chapter devoted to methodology, three chapters concerning research, its analysis, recapitulation and the last one devoted to conclusion remarks.

Chapter I functions as an introduction to the history of the Internet, social media and their development. Various definitions of social networks illustrate that they can be perceived from many different perspectives. The description of new media shows that they could not exist without old media which used to be popular in the past. Entertainment, diversity, autonomy are among the features which are typical of new media. This chapter ends with the description of the process of communication which is extremely important on social networks.

Chapter II concerns the description of language. It starts with a very brief introduction to three different approaches which also serve as a background to all linguistic processes. We also pay attention to different models of communication which show us that communication is in fact a complex process and depending on the situational context it may have various purposes. Naturally, one cannot forget about mutual relations between language and social norms set up by the members of society who also contribute to the development of language. This chapter ends with a description of various forms of language which may be primarily spoken, but perceived as written ones or the other way round.

Chapter III enables us to have an insight into a relatively new phenomenon called computer-mediated communication (CMC) which is compared with face-to-face conversations maintained in our everyday life. The combination of CMC together with face-to-face chats results in the appearance and development of Netspeak – the language of the Internet which combines features which are typical of a spoken language and those which are attributed to written forms. Netspeak itself triggers other phenomena which also contribute to the language of the Internet. Among them one can point out emoticons, emojis, stickers and their role in online communication. Various theories of emotions show us that both cognitive and physiological factors contribute to the way we behave and express our inner emotions on social networks. Clippings and acronyms also help to shape the present outlook of the language of the Internet. Naturally, we cannot
forget that talking on social websites is strictly connected with various forms of speech acts and phenomena such as positive and negative politeness or face-threatening acts.

Despite the fact that talking online differs from face-to-face conversations, yet it is highly probable that our interlocutor may ‘lose’ his or her face because of some oversights. Besides, it is advisable to be familiar with some techniques which may be used in such situations and thanks to them we can ‘save’ our interlocutor’s face. This chapter ends with a description of the Internet user in terms of three kinds of competence: linguistic, intercultural, and media. Each of them focuses on different aspects of the conversation and contributes to the image of the ideal form of the conversation on social networks.

Chapter IV is connected with methodology and functions as the introduction to the analysis of data research presented in the latter chapters of this dissertation. The emphasis is put on the description of the main aims of this thesis, the description of the research tools needed to conduct this research (the questionnaire and the corpus analysis), and the conditions in which it was carried out.

Chapter V illustrates the results obtained from the comparative analysis of the questionnaires distributed among the Polish and the American users of the Internet. It comprises both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis of the questions. The data are presented in the forms of tables and graphs. Verifying those questions helps us to have an insight into how the users perceive social networks, whether they pay attention to grammatical correctness or not, and what is important for them when they see a particular post, a comment or an advertisement.

Chapter VI also includes the analysis, but this time it is based on the corpus which has been gathered. The corpus consists of topics which can be divided into two categories: informal topics (social chit-chats, summer holidays, Christmas) and more formal ones (politics, breaking news, natural disasters). The main objective of this analysis is to find out similarities and differences in grammatical and lexical structures and features of language used both by the Poles and the Americans. Among them one can point out: formal vs informal style, various kinds of sentences (affirmative, interrogative, exclamative, simple, compounds, complex), active voice vs passive voice, personal constructions vs impersonal constructions, swearwords, emotive language, emoticons, etc. The analysis is based on extracts taken from Facebook, to be more specific, from posts, comments, advertisements and messages written by the users on chosen Facebook groups. The analysis is more complex on the grounds that apart from
the frequency of particular grammatical aspects which are gathered in tables, there are also extracts together with descriptions showing the most noticeable similarities and differences between the posts and the comments written by the Poles and the Americans.

Chapter VII functions as the recapitulation of the main research questions together with additional comments, remarks, and conclusions.

Chapter VIII concerns conclusion remarks.
STRESZCZENIE

W niniejszej pracy podjęto próbę kontrastywnej analizy gramatycznych i leksykalnych struktur w rozmowach, postach i komentarzach zamieszczanych przez Polaków oraz Amerykanów na portalu społecznościowym Facebook. Praca doktorska składa się z ośmiu rozdziałów: trzy rozdziały teoretyczne, jeden poświęcony metodologii badań, trzy kolejne dotyczące badań, ich analizy i rekapitulacji oraz jeden rozdział, w którym zawarte są końcowe konkluzje.

Pierwszy rozdział pracy zawiera wprowadzenie do historii Internetu i portali społecznościowych. Rozdział ten pokazuje w jaki sposób rozwijały się portale społecznościowe oraz co wpłynęło na ich sukces albo upadek. Różnorakie definicje portali społecznościowych, które zostały tutaj opisane, przybliżają nam ich wizję postrzeganą z różnych perspektyw. Istotnym elementem tego rozdziału jest opis nowych mediów, które zarówno swój początek jak i późniejszy sukces zawdzięczają starym mediom. Rozrywka, kompletność, różnorodność, autonomia to jedne z wielu cech, którymi odznaczają się obecne nowe media. Rozdział ten kończy ogólne opis procesu komunikacji, który jest istotny w portalach społecznościowych.

Drugi rozdział skupia się na opisie języka. Rozpoczyna go wstęp dotyczący trzech różnych poglądów na język. Jego różne odmiany i formy obrazują różnorodność i wielorakie użycie. Znaczna część uwagi jest skupiona na wielu modelach komunikacji, które pokazują, że nie jest ona łatwym procesem i w dużej mierze jest zależna od kontekstu sytuacyjnego. Szczególnie ważny jest model hierarchii potrzeb komunikacyjnych Chestera, dzięki któremu możemy dowiedzieć się, które formy komunikowania są najbardziej, a które najmniej akceptowane przez użytkowników Internetu. Nie można również pominać wzajemnych relacji pomiędzy językiem i użytkownikami Internetu, którzy również przyczyniają się do rozwoju języka i zmian jakie w nim zachodzą. Rozdział kończy porównanie języka pisанego i mówionego oraz opis form, które prymarnie zostały stworzone jako ustne, a odbierane są jako pisemne lub odwrotnie – prymarnie pisemne formy odbierane i interpretowane jako ustne.

Trzeci rozdział przybliża nam stosunkowo nowe zjawisko zwane komunikacją internetową, która jest porównywana z cechami typowymi dla rozmowy twarzą w twarz w życiu codziennym. Takie połączenie skutkuje powstaniem nowej formy języka Internetu zwanej NetSpeak, która łączy cechy języka pisanego oraz mówionego. Forma

Czwarty rozdział opisuje metodologię badań i jest wstępem do analizy, która została przeprowadzona i opisana w kolejnych rozdziałach. W tym rozdziale znajduje się opis zarówno głównych jak i szczegółowych celów badawczych, opis narzędzi badawczych niezbędnych do przeprowadzenia badania (ankieta i analiza korpusu) oraz warunków, w jakich te badania zostały przeprowadzone.

Piąty rozdział przedstawia dane z analizy porównawczej ankiet, które zostały przeprowadzone wśród polskich i amerykańskich użytkowników Internetu. Uwzględniono analizę zarówno ilościową, jak i jakościową. Dane przedstawiono w formie tabel oraz wykresów. Dokładna analiza pomaga nam dostrzec, w jaki sposób użytkownicy Internetu postrzegają portale społecznościowe oraz odpowiedzieć na pytanie czy respondenci zwracają uwagę na poprawność gramatyczną i leksykalną podczas rozmów internetowych albo publikowania wpisów oraz ogłoszeń. Dzięki tej analizie możemy się również dowiedzieć, jak często użytkownicy Internetu korzystają z portali społecznościowych, które z nich są ich ulubionymi, jakie formy komunikacji przeważają, jakiego typu błędy są najczęściej spotykane na tych portalach i co jest ich głównym źródłem. Zawarta w rozdziale analiza używania emotikonów w komunikacji internetowej pokazuje nam w jaki sposób kształtują one rozmowy na wspomnianych portalach.
Szósty rozdział jest poświęcony analizie dyskursu. Tym razem głównym przedmiotem analizy stały się aspekty gramatyczno-leksykalne różnych wpisów, komentarzy, dyskusji, oraz rozmów zaczerpniętych z portalu społecznościowego Facebook. Analizie zostały poddane następujące struktury oraz funkcje języka: styl formalny i nieformalny, rodzaje zdań (zdania twierdzące, pytające, rozkazujące, zdania pojedyncze, złożone, wielokrotnie złożone), strona czynna i strona bierna, osobowe i nieosobowe konstrukcje, przekleństwa, język emocji. Zestawienie częstotliwości pojawiających się aspektów gramatyczno-leksykalnych, przykładowe zrzuty ekranu tych wpisów, komentarzy, wiadomości oraz ich opisy pozwalają nam zweryfikować pytania badawcze, które zostały przedstawione w rozdziale czwartym.

Wyżej wspomniana analiza dyskursu obejmuje tematy, które możemy podzielić na dwie kategorie: luźne rozmowy i pogawędki (wakacje, ważne wydarzenia z życia) oraz bardziej formalne rozmowy dotyczące bieżących wydarzeń ze świata (wybory parlamentarne, kataklizmy). Na początku każdej analizy została podana liczba wpisów, komentarzy, zdań, oraz słów, które się tam pojawiają. Dzięki temu jesteśmy w stanie zauważyć różnice w formie i treści poszczególnych tematów. Taka analiza pozwala nam ocenić w jaki sposób zmienia się użycie poszczególnych struktur gramatycznych i leksykalnych, które formy są bardziej widoczne w oficjalnych rozmowach, a które w mniej formalnych. Analiza pokazuje również czy cechy Netspeaku, które zostały przedstawione w części teoretycznej mają swoje praktyczne zastosowanie w części badawczej.

Siódmy rozdział to rekapitulacja wszystkich pytań badawczych razem z końcowymi wnioskami, uwagami oraz obserwacjami.

Ósmy rozdział zawiera końcowe konkluzje.