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LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE OF MEMORY IMAGES IN POLISH AND GERMAN LANGUAGE OBITUARIES FOR MARCEL REICH-RANICKI², AS A MEDIA TOOL FOR THE PROFILING OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY

The media contribute to the process of strengthening and consolidating the collective memory of specific communities by taking, emphasising, and disseminating particular topics and contents. In this context, the so-called mediatised memory (see Assmann, 2007, Zielińska, 2018) occurs more and more often, as well as the media mechanisms and strategies for forming or deforming reality that influence or even model our memory of well-known figures, events or processes. It is both mediated and caused by the language which 'on the one hand appears as a substance and a 'bearer' of collective memory, and on the other, as a medium that shapes the contents of collective memory' (Czachur, 2018). The aim of the following paper is to investigate the selected corpus (obituaries) and determine to what extent the analysis of specific approaches in the field of linguistics and discourse can lead to the conclusion regarding mediatised and collective memory (see Czachur, 2016; Czachur, 2018). Additionally, it attempts to show whether and to what extent the media model the collective memory, as well as create and disseminate the linguistic profile of well-known personalities. In order to shed some light on the mediatized memory and to explain it from a linguistic perspective, obituaries for Marcel Reich-Ranicki are subjected to a contrastive German-Polish analysis. The analysis draws on selected methods of linguistic discourse analysis, which serve the linguistic profiling of actors, namely nominations and predicates as well as role assignments referring to the mentioned personality with the aim to investigate the shaping of the collective memory by the media. A detailed contrastive corpus-based analysis of the above-mentioned text type provides an insight into the role of linguistic strategies of remembering in the construction of the collective memory.

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² Marcel Reich-Ranicki – German literary critic of Polish and Jewish origin, born in 1920 in Włocławek; a recognised expert with undisputed reputation, highly regarded by the public and commonly referred to as “the pope of literature”. A few years have passed since he died in 2013, yet he continues to be called the most influential literary critic in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Reich-Ranicki was a charismatic personality, and many people claim that he ‘taught Germans to read and discuss books’. As a critic and later the host of *Das Literarische Quartett* (‘literary quartet’), a TV show extremely popular in Germany during 1988–2001, he was witty, yet uncompromising and merciless in his opinions; his numerous controversial verdicts would determine the future for authors and their works. (Collected for the needs of the analyses conducted by this author, the information is based on bibliography sources, research as well as journalistic materials and video documentaries related to the critic and available in Poland and in German speaking countries).

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1. INITIAL REMARKS

Mass media strengthen and preserve *collective memory*⁵ of specific societies by covering, highlighting and disseminating specific topics and information. The phenomena frequently mentioned in this context include the so-called *mediatized memory* (cf. Assmann, 2007, Zielińska, 2018) as well as media related mechanisms and strategies for its formation or deformation, affecting or indeed modelling our memory of specific people, events and processes. This is mediated and enabled by language, which “on the one hand [is seen] as a substance and a carrier of collective memory, and on the other hand as a medium giving shape to the contents of collective memory” (Czachur, 2018). In this context it has been postulated by Waldemar Czachur that social memory “should be a subject of linguistic analyses”, because contemporary linguistics “perceiving language as a medium for conceptualization of reality and as a carrier for our experiences” provides “a wide range of instruments which may optimise previous research findings” related to memory.

The above postulate provided an inspiration for me to examine a selected corpus (of obituaries⁶) and determine to what extent text and discourse analysis tools make it possible to unravel mediatized memory, and consequently to draw conclusions with regard to collective memory of a given society (cf. Czachur, 2016, Czachur, 2018); the study was also intended to determine whether, and to what extent, mass media can model collective memory by creating and distributing the *linguistic profile* of well-known people.

Here it should be emphasised that the article is not intended to investigate to what extent memory of Reich-Ranicki created by the selected media was accepted by their audiences; instead, it is designed to determine what image, or what mediatized memory, will serve as the basis for constructing memory related to the critic. Nevertheless it can be assumed that readers would at least partly adopt the image created for this personality, in view of the fact that the print media taken into account here are highly influential.

2. RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS AND BASIC TERMINOLOGY

An attempt to perform linguistic analysis to draw conclusions about development of collective memory of the specific societies related to the distinguished German critic should be preceded with a systematic overview and detailed discussion of the conceptual apparatus typically used in related linguistic research and applied by the author in the considerations presented in the article. Collective memory as a concept frequently appears in the context of research in social memory, even as a synonym of the latter term. Is this justified? The

³ Denominatives – lexical items used to denote the objects, ideas and facts relevant to the particular discourse.

⁴ Predicatives attributing certain properties to reference objects.

⁵ Terminology related to memory is defined in further sections of the article.

⁶ The term *obituary* is used here in line with its meaning adopted in German-language references, and is generally defined as a memorial article, representing journalistic or column-type writing, published in print as well as electronic media (cf. Bogner, 2006) shortly after the person’s death. For detailed discussion of obituary as a genre, see Hanus 2015 and Hanus 2016.

question was discussed in a conversation with Waldemar Czachur by Astrid Erll, Bożena Witosz and Robert Traba. A highly fitting comment was expressed by Witosz (2014) who said:

Regarding the category of collective memory, in my opinion the problem discussed in humanities and related to the need to precisely define the commonly used terms, such as group memory, collective memory, cultural memory and historical memory, is of lesser consequence for linguistics (2014). (...) I believe that from the viewpoint of linguistic research a fully satisfying definition was proposed by Barbara Szacka, who described collective memory as “a pool of images held by members of a given group and related to its past, to people and events inhabiting their history, [...] collective memory comprises all intentional references to the past taking place currently in the group’s life” (2014).

In line with the above suggestions by Witosz, the terms *collective memory* and *social memory* are treated here as synonyms. Like Witosz, I adopt here Szacka’s definition of *collective/social memory*, as “a pool of images held by members of a group about its past” (Szacka, 2006). Additionally, like Traba, I assume that this is “a dynamic process embedded in time and determined by real social and political contexts surrounding it” (Traba, 2014)⁷. With respect to *mediatized memory*, like Kinga Zielińska, I assume that it is closely correlated to memory conveyed by language (and operating with verbal expressions), as proposed by Wojciech Chlebda (2012); however, here such expressions are distributed by media which treat the object of memory as a theme, using both linguistic exponents and elements of other semiotic codes (cf. Zielińska, 2018). It is created as a result of formation or deformation of reality by media and is a derivative of an author’s experience, additionally constituting a foundation for constructing images related to a given issue by the audience.

In order to determine to what extent examination of texts, carried out using text and discourse analysis tools, allows to draw conclusions regarding collective memory related to Marcel Reich-Ranicki, distributed and reinforced by mass media among readers of Polish press and print media published in German speaking countries, it seems necessary to identify the relations linking memory and language. Like Czachur, I assume that “memory becomes a type of social knowledge, constituted by language, and subject to dynamic change” (Czachur, 2016), and that – as emphasised by Antos, “large part of our knowledge is not only represented and stored in texts, but also is only constituted in linguistic terms as a text” (Antos, 2009, Czachur, 2016). Hence, texts are multimodal forms enabling development of knowledge rather than merely forms manifesting knowledge. **Therefore, if we examine the knowledge communicated by media to their audiences and related to Marcel Reich-Ranicki, we will determine, I believe, what memory of the man they try to preserve among their readers.**

The study will explore the knowledge distributed by mass media, and consequently the memory constructed by them with regard to the actor of the discourse Marcel Reich-Ranicki (mediatized memory) and contained in the language/texts. **The research procedure ap-**

⁷ Dynamics, as an inherent characteristics of collective memory, is also discussed by Czachur (2018). Likewise, it was listed as a basic component of this type of memory by Halbwachs (1985), who emphasised its importance.

plied to determine the specifics of this memory is designed to identify the roles attributed to Marcel Reich-Ranicki by print media and determined based on predications and nominations, since their specificity seems to most accurately correspond to the research questions. This is justified by the fact that collective knowledge, according to findings of linguistic discourse analysis, is manifested by the use of such specific categories as keywords, metaphors, argumentative topoi, nominations, predications, etc. (cf. Busse/Teubert, 1997). Analysis of nominations and predications⁸ related to the main actor of discourse, i.e. Marcel Reich-Ranicki, will then be intended to identify roles assigned to him by print media in obituaries, and to examine the way these roles affect the specific linguistic profile built for the remarkable critic, and consequently how they contribute to preserving images of memory about him. The additionally applied contrastive analysis will focus on similarities and differences in building the media profile for Marcel Reich-Ranicki and will enable conclusions related to the memory preserved in and by mass media in the two cultures.

The analysis presented in the study takes into account nominations defined as language units used to depict elements of non-linguistic reality. In other words, nominations are understood as “all forms of reference, both evaluating and neutral” (Miller, 2014), expressed in language by nouns, pronouns and nominal phrases, including those with a complex structure. On the other hand the term predication is used here, in line with the concepts proposed e.g. by Reisigl (2007), with reference to such language units that are created to, explicitly or implicitly, assign specific traits to concrete objects. In language these are realised by predicates, or more precisely by predicative expressions⁹. It can be expected that the analysis will make it possible to draw conclusions with regard to the attitude of the specific print media to the relevant object, and the knowledge communicated to the general public, contributing to consolidation of specific collective/social memory.

A look at the German critic taken from different points of view, based on examination of nominations and predications depicting roles attributed by mass media to Reich-Ranicki and exploration of the resulting images constructed by Polish and German print media, taking into account social, cultural, historical and ethical perspective, will provide material for creating a comprehensive profile of the critic in the two areas studied. The roles¹⁰ identified based on the analysis of nominations and predications in the relevant corpus will provide a basis for conclusions related to profiling of Marcel Reich-Ranicki in print media from German-speaking countries and from Poland. This way it will be determined what roles the

⁸ Analysis of nominations and predications, aimed at identifying evaluating opinions with regard to specific phenomena or people, was applied by researchers even in the late 1980s. Detailed theoretical concepts related to this are credited to, e.g. Bellmann, Büscher, Girnth and Reisigl. For more information about these concepts, see: Bellmann (1989), Büscher (1996), Girnth (1993), Herbig/ Sandig (1994), Reisigl (2007); Stenschke (2005).

⁹ Detailed theoretical considerations related to predication and nomination in discourse, as well as certain conclusions from sample corpus analyses can also be found in Hanus (2014).

¹⁰ This approach indirectly makes reference to interactive roles of discourse actors, proposed by Ingo Warnke and Jürgen Spitzmüller in the model of multilayered discourse analysis (cf. Warnke/Spitzmüller, 2009). The authors' approach is mainly based on the concept of discourse actors and their roles determined by discourse [diskursbedingte Rollenzuschreibungen]. They talk about the roles which the specific actors attribute to themselves and the roles which they assign to the other actors of the discourse [Selbst- und Fremduweisungen] (see: Kaczmarek, 2018, see also Adamzik, 2002; Albert, 2008; Bonacchi, 2013, Hanus, 2018).

critic will be remembered for. Importantly, in this case the print media are understood as actors assigning specific roles to the German literary critic, relative to the viewpoint adopted by the author and identified by the researcher, i.e. moral, historical, characterological and social viewpoint. Extracted based on the analysis of nominations and predications, the roles attributed by print media to the critic will be used as determinants in complex profiling of Reich-Ranicki. The frequency of the specific nominations and predications will provide basis for defining the roles and for the subsequent conclusions related to the profile of the relevant person.

3. ROLES IDENTIFIED BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF NOMINATIONS AND PREDICATIONS IN OBITUARIES WRITTEN IN GERMAN AND POLISH¹¹

Analysis of nominations and predications shows that German press, following the passing of the greatest expert in literature, profiles *the pope of literary criticism* from the viewpoint of six basic roles, depending on the adopted approach, i.e. (a) a great personality in the world of literature, (b) an uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power, (c) a pugnacious, frequently overbearing egocentric, (d) a popular showman eager to stand in the spotlight, as well as (e) a victim of the holocaust who forgave his oppressors, and (f) a man raising controversy due to his obscure past. Polish press, while profiling Reich-Ranicki, positions him in four key roles: (a) a scornful, egocentric and uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power, (b) a popular showman liking to impress and dominate, (c) a valued figure in German literature, as well as (d) a person with dubious, or in fact, murky past.

The role which is most frequently attributed by German press to Marcel Reich-Ranicki is that of **a fearless and ruthless arbiter with the highest authority in matters related to literature**. In this context it is pointed out that he had virtually unlimited power, and was dreaded by writers. Indeed, Reich-Ranicki was able to put completely unknown names up onto a pedestal, or damage the reputation or even completely ruin the career of established authors. This quality of his character is clearly reflected by numerous nominations used by authors of obituaries: *Literaturpapst* [pope of literature], *der wortmächtige Kritiker* [critic, master of words], *Literatur-Instanz* [the highest instance in literature], *meistgefürchteter Kritiker* [the most dreaded critic], *zentrale Instanz der deutschen Literaturszene* [the highest instance in the German literary scene]. Importantly, the term *Literaturpapst* [pope of literature] as a rule appears in a pejorative context. Reich-Ranicki *the Pope of Literature* is depicted as a person whose opinion is final and indisputable; a person who does not accept any criticism or objection, and does not yield when faced with convincing arguments. The remaining nominations in the relevant corpus also mainly appear in negative contexts. The predications, applied in depictions of Reich-Ranicki as an uncompromising highest instance in literature, highlight the critic's ruthlessness and boldness regarding his views:

- nahm kein blatt vor den mund [he did not mince his words],
- machte bücher zu bestsellern oder vernichtete sie [he made books into bestsellers or destroyed them with his criticism],

¹¹ The research material discussed in this article was acquired from obituaries published in Polish and German print media (regional and national) and in online media. The corpus was collected from articles which appeared in Polish (11) and German (22) press directly following the passing of Marcel Reich-Ranicki, i.e. from 18 Sept. 2013 to 26 Sept. 2013.

- sagte den deutschen, was sie zu lesen oder zu vernachlässigen hatten [he told Germans what to read and what not to read],
- bestimmte das bundesdeutsche Verständnis davon, was gute Literatur ausmacht [he defined the German understanding of the concept of good literature],
- ermöglichte, unterband und unterbrach im Laufe der Jahre etliche Schriftstellerkarrieren [over the years he facilitated, thwarted or torpedoed more than one writing career],
- hat gelobt, aber auch gnadenlos getadelt [he praised but he was also merciless in his criticism],
- war sehr scharf. Er befahl dem Publikum regelrecht: So und so müsst ihr über dieses Buch denken! [he was very forceful. He ordered his audience: you must think this and that about the book!]
- bissig wie Kraus, ironisch wie Heine, gewandt wie Kerr wollte – und konnte – er sein [as biting as Kraus, as ironic as Heine, as eloquent as Kerr – this is what he wanted to – and could – be],

as well as fear evoked by him in writers:

- war gefürchtetste aller Kritiker [he was the most dreaded of all critics],
- war mit seiner direkten Art geachtet, aber auch gefürchtet und bei manchem Schriftsteller verhasst [he was respected for his straightforwardness, but he was also feared and even hated by some writers],

It is often pointed out in German press that the critic was always able to precisely justify his choices and opinions:

- seine Kritik hatte zwar einen hohen Grad an Emotionalität, aber er hat es durchaus geschafft, seine Urteile dabei sehr intensiv zu begründen. Bei allen Wutausbrüchen gab es immer auch den Versuch, sein Urteil plausibel zu machen [his critique was emotional to a degree, but he was able to substantiate his judgments very accurately. In all outbursts of anger he would always do his best to justify his opinions],
- war mutiger Charakterkopf, Leitwolf und unabhängiger Kritiker, der allen die Stirn bot und dabei höchste inhaltliche Schärfe mit einem geradezu drolligen Typus verband [a bold man, with a character, leader of the wolf pack, independent critic, standing up to everyone, and combining the highest precision of the substance with entertaining form].

It is very often that in the relevant corpus the critic is shown in the context of his unparalleled, even inconceivable **popularity with the mass audience**. Indeed, he is referred to as *Popstar der Kritik* [popstar of criticism], *eine der populärsten Persönlichkeiten des Landes* [one of the most popular personalities in the country], and *Fernsehstar* [TV star] – this in fact is the second most frequent role attributed to Reich-Ranicki. This popularity is a result of his marvellous talent as a showman. Here it is emphasised that, on the one hand, Reich-Ranicki had this extraordinary ability to attract attention, to speak in an intriguing way, and consequently win over large audiences, including people who had never been interested in literary matters:

- war ein permanenter Protest gegen Langeweile und Mittelmaß [he personified a permanent protest against boredom and mediocrity],
- ihm gelang das Unmögliche, nämlich sogar im Fernsehen als Solist zu glänzen: Eine halbe Stunde redete er in „Marcel Reich-Ranicki solo“, und verstand es, den Monolog

stets kurzweilig, spannend und abwechslungsreich zu halten [he achieved the impossible, namely to shine on TV as a soloist: in his show „Marcel Reich-Ranicki solo“ he would speak for half an hour, always keeping his monologue entertaining, fascinating and varied],

- hat es geschafft, auch Leser zu erreichen, die sich bis dahin nicht mit Hochliteratur auseinandergesetzt haben. Er hatte die Fähigkeit, nicht nur ein Elitepublikum anzusprechen, sondern eine breite Leserschaft für Texte zu begeistern, die ihnen sonst vielleicht fremd geblieben wären [he also managed to appeal to readers who had not been into the so-called high literature before. He had the ability not only to reach to elite audiences, but he would also inspire the general public to read texts that would otherwise have not gained wide attention],

On the other hand, however, German press frequently points to motivations inspiring Reich-Ranicki to act in certain ways, i.e. his desire to stand out and dominate or to impress with his erudition, which definitely provides an argument allowing a conclusion about the critic's vanity:

- war berühmt für seine Show. Reich-Ranicki war jemand, der auch öffentlich Theater gespielt hat. Das war eine Performance, vielfach künstlich inszeniert. Er war in der Öffentlichkeit partiell ein anderer Mensch [he was famous for his show. Reich-Ranicki was someone who also acted in public. This was a performance, often intricately staged. In public he was partly a different person],
- war sich bewusst, dass er mit großer Kritik mehr öffentliche Resonanz bekommt als mit Lobreden [he knew that strong criticism would resonate more with the public than eulogies],
- war einer, der nicht abtreten konnte und den man nun mit Trauer abtreten sieht [he was a person who could not leave, and now it is in grief that he is leaving],
- ihm gelang das Unmögliche, nämlich sogar im Fernsehen als Solist zu glänzen: Eine halbe Stunde redete er in „Marcel Reich-Ranicki solo“, und verstand es, den Monolog stets kurzweilig, spannend und abwechslungsreich zu halten [he achieved the impossible, namely to shine on TV as a soloist: in his show „Marcel Reich-Ranicki solo“ he would speak for half an hour, always keeping his monologue entertaining, fascinating and varied].

Closely linked to all of the above, another significant role attributed by mass media to Reich-Ranicki was that of a **pugnacious, frequently overbearing egocentric**, an attitude which definitely did not win him friends and allies. Analysis of nominations and predications shows not only his vehement temper or his unyielding stance in disputes and judgments but also his authoritarian manner, egocentrism or even vanity:

- Literatur musste ihn persönlich ansprechen, berühren, überzeugen; was er nicht verstand, was ihm nicht gefiel, wurde verdammt, aussortiert, ignoriert [Literature had to touch him and resonate with him personally; that which he did not understand, which he did not like, was condemned, sorted out, ignored],
- war gar nicht darauf angewiesen, unterrichtet oder unterhalten zu werden, weil er selbst der beste Lehrer und Unterhalter war – abwechslungsreich, temperamentvoll und nie um eine Pointe verlegen [he would never allow anyone to instruct or entertain him because it was he who was the best teacher and speaker – versatile, high-spirited, with a right punchline up his sleeve],

- Nie hat es ihn gekümmert, ob seine Urteile auch gerecht waren; er sprach, und die Welt hatte verstanden [He never cared whether his judgments were fair; he spoke and the world understood],
- mit seinen Kritiken machte sich unter den Autoren auch ziemlich schnell Feinde [with his criticism he made enemies among authors pretty quickly],
- hat die unendlichen Ehrungen, Weihungen und Verneigungen, die ihm im Laufe seines langen Lebens und Wirkens zuteil wurden, mit der Würde und dem Selbstverständnis eines Königs ohne Land, eben einer nationalen Institution, entgegengenommen [countless distinctions, honours and commendations awarded to him during his long life were received by him with dignity and self-confidence of a king without land, or a national institution of sorts]

As identified by the analysis of nominations and predications, another role attributed to Reich-Ranicki, less significant than the aforementioned, and used by print media for profiling him, is the **role of a great and outstanding personality in the world of literature**. In this context it is emphasised that the critic immensely contributed to the promotion and popularity of German literature in the German society and in other countries; other related aspects include his remarkable intellect and unique personality: *Deutschlands bedeutendster Literaturkritiker* [the most influential literary critic in Germany], *großer Mann* [great man], *der größte Literaturkritiker unserer Zeit* [the greatest literary critic of our time], *Deutschlands wichtigster Literaturkritiker* [Germany's most important literary critic], *der berühmte Intellektuelle* [renowned intellectual],

- war der große Kritiker in der Geschichte der deutschen Literatur und der größte unter seinen Zeitgenossen und Nachgeborenen [he was the great critic in the history of German literature, the greatest among his contemporaries and successors],
- war der berühmteste Literaturkritiker aller Zeiten [he was the most famous literary critic of all times],
- war international geachtet [he was internationally recognised],
- galt als der einflussreichste deutschsprachige Literaturkritiker und hat vielen Deutschen die Literatur nahegebracht [he was regarded as the most influential German-speaking literary critic and he brought literature to many Germans],
- hatte sich großen Respekt der Literaturkritiker zu Lebzeiten erarbeitet [he had earned great respect of literary critics during his lifetime],
- hat die Literatur aus den kleinen elitären Zirkeln in die Mitte der Gesellschaft geführt [he brought literature from the narrow elite circles into the central arena of the general public],
- ist zu einem der angesehensten Literaturkritiker der Nachkriegszeit geworden und hat sich wie kein anderer um die Deutlichkeit der Kritik verdient gemacht [he became one of the most respected literary critics of the post-war era, and – like no other – rendered outstanding service to the clarity of criticism],
- war eine Institution, mit ihm endet ein Kapitel deutscher Literaturgeschichte, ja eine Ära: die des sogenannten Großkritikers, der mit der Person einsteht für seine Urteile, Vorlieben oder Irrtümer [he was an institution; with him ends a chapter in German literary history, or indeed an era: that of the so-called Great Critic who stands by his judgments, preferences or errors].

The final two roles listed above, less frequent in print media and consequently less emphasised, include Reich-Ranicki's **role of a victim of the holocaust who forgave his oppressors** and the **role of a controversial person**.

The nominations related to the former role mainly point to Reich-Ranicki's experience of Nazi atrocities: *Holocaust-Überlebender, Verfolgter, der Betroffene, Zeitzeuge des Holocaust*. On the other hand the predications additionally highlight the fact that he successfully overcame the trauma of genocide and chose the country of his oppressors for a place of his residence, also deciding to celebrate and to promote German literature for the rest of his life:

- hat dem Land der Täter einen großen Dienst erwiesen [he did a great service to the nation of his oppressors],
- ist in das Land der Täter zurückgekehrt [returned to the land of his oppressors],
- hat die Traumatisierung gewissermaßen ausquartiert [he in a way managed to evacuate the trauma],
- war Überlebender eindrucksvoller Zeitzeuge des Holocaust [he survived, becoming an impressive witness of the Holocaust].

In the corpus acquired from German print media, the renowned critic appears in one more role, that of a **man raising controversy due to his obscure, suspicious past**. The role does not occupy a leading position, it is not widely discussed, but the very fact that it is recognised as one of the dominant roles shows that it cannot be ignored in the critic's profile. The related nominations which are predominant include: *umstrittener Zeitgenosse, eine der umstrittensten Persönlichkeiten des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Predications additionally point to the causes for the controversy:

- war nicht festlegbar [he was not definable],
- war als Konsul im polnischen Generalkonsulat in London tätig, 1949 bat er aus politischen Gründen um seine Abberufung [he worked as a consul in the Polish Consulate General in London; in 1949 he asked to be dismissed from the function for political reasons],
- arbeitete in Polens kommunistischem Geheimdienst und im diplomatischen Dienst [he worked for Polish communist intelligence and diplomatic services].

Polish print media mainly emphasise Reich-Ranicki's relentlessness. He is depicted as a **scornful, egocentric and uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power**, who was more likely to severely criticise than to praise, and whose opinions were pivotal for many authors' 'to be or not to be': *papież niemieckiej krytyki literackiej* [the pope of German literary criticism], *wyroczenia* [the oracle], *wyroczenia w sprawach literackich* [the literary oracle], *papież krytyki literackiej* [the pope of literary criticism], *kapryśny papież* [fussy pope],

- decydował o losie książek na niemieckim rynku wydawniczym [he decided about the fate of books published in Germany],
- nie wahał się krytykować najbardziej znanych niemieckich pisarzy; surowo oceniał późniejsze utwory Güntera Grassa [he did not hesitate to criticise the most renowned German writers; he presented harsh opinions about later works of Günter Grass],
- decydował przez dziesięciolecia o losach niemieckich pisarzy [for decades he determined the fortunes of German writers],
- nie wahał się krytykować najbardziej znanych niemieckich pisarzy [he did not hesitate to criticise the most renowned German writers],

- słynął ze zjadliwej krytyki [he was famous for virulent criticism],
- miażdżył przed kamerami polską literaturę, zarzucając Stasiukowi, Tokarczuk i Tulli, że piszą książki prowincjonalne [he slammed Polish literature on TV, arguing that Stasiuk, Tokarczuk and Tulli wrote provincial books].

It is also pointed out that Reich-Ranicki was extremely touchy. Indeed, the critic could not stand any opposition or criticism:

- z innych rozkosznie kpił, lecz gdy sam był krytykowany, łatwo się obrażał [he delightfully mocked others, but when he was criticised he would easily be offended],
- chętnie demonstrował w nim [Kwartecie literackim – A.H.] swoje nastroje, zachowywał się jak sędzia lub operowa diwa [he eagerly showed there (in Das Literarische Quartett) his mood; he would act like a judge or a diva].

Reich-Ranicki in Polish press is also often shown as a **popular showman liking to impress and dominate**. He was most frequently depicted with such nominations as: *popularny krytyk literatury* [popular literary critic], *popularna, barwna postać* [popular, colourful personality], *legendarny krytyk literacki* [legendary literary critic], *showman*. The nominations referring to his popularity may suggest positive features of the critic, however even a rough selection of predications identified in the relevant corpus does not leave any doubts; indeed, this component of Reich-Ranicki's profile carries clearly negative associations, by pointing to his vanity, self-conceit, willingness to dominate and outshine others:

- skupiał na sobie uwagę, a rozmowy zamieniały się w show jednego aktora [he attracted attention and the discussions turned into a one-man show],
- wiedział jak uprawiać krytykę przed kamerami [he knew how to be a critic in front of cameras],
- zdominował audycję [he dominated the show],
- dzięki telewizji stał się bardziej popularny niż autorzy książek, o których mówił [owing to TV he was more popular than the authors of the books which he reviewed],
- dzięki kontrowersjom, które wzbudzał, był niesamowicie popularny [owing to the controversies incited by him, he was extremely popular],
- chętnie demonstrował w nim swoje nastroje, zachowywał się jak sędzia lub operowa diwa [he eagerly showed there his mood; he would act like a judge or a diva].

Notably, however, among the predications we can find more guarded opinions, statements neutralised with positive elements and those with mildly positive overtones:

- wiedział jak uprawiać krytykę przed kamerami, ale nie był po prostu showmanem [he knew how to be a critic in front of cameras, yet he was not simply a showman],
- błyszczał elokwencją, erudycją i niezwykłą energią [he impressed with his eloquence, erudition and amazing energy],
- wykazywał się dużym poczuciem humoru oraz wygłaszał błyskotliwe, odważne, choć kontrowersyjne opinie [he displayed a great sense of humour and voiced brilliant, bold yet controversial opinions],
- był niezwykle barwną postacią niemieckiej sceny literackiej [he was an extremely colourful personality in the German literary scene],
- swoją popularność zawdzięczał również wyjątkowemu temperamentowi [he also owed his popularity to his unique temper].

Ultimately, however, this component of his profile suggests that Reich-Ranicki was inclined or he even needed to constantly arouse interest and admiration in the public, to set the tone and dominate the discussions held on TV or on the radio, to be in the centre of

attention thanks to his original and unorthodox opinions, which could also be surprising, biased or even unfair. Nevertheless, this type of approach, presumably intentional, significantly contributed to his popularity. Whether he gained new admirers or made new enemies, he would build up his popularity.

Another role attributed to the German critic by Polish print media is that of a **person with dubious, or in fact, murky past**. This is mainly conveyed by the extremely vivid nominations referring to him as: *cenzor z komunistycznej Bezpieki* [censor in the communist security services], *agent wywiadu [intelligence worker]*, and *tajny agent UB [secret agent of the Security Bureau]*. **Undoubtedly, references to Reich-Ranicki's obscure past are found in such predications as:** *był agentem komunistycznych służb bezpieczeństwa* [he was an agent of communist security services], *pracował jako tajny agent UB [he worked as a secret agent of the Security Bureau]*. However, the corpus also contains more subliminal predications with no explicit suggestions of cooperation with the communist authorities:

- próbuje się kreować na człowieka zbliżonego do ruchu oporu w getcie, a tak naprawdę nie ma na to dowodów i trzeba zakładać, że był on tam również człowiekiem władzy w tym trudnym okresie [he tries to present himself as a person involved in resistance in the ghetto, but there is no evidence of that and one should assume that he was also linked to the authorities during that difficult time],
- pytany o swoją przeszłość w bezpiece nigdy nie udzielał konkretnych informacji, z niechęcią wracał do okresu swojej pracy w MBP [when asked about his past in the security bureau he never provided concrete information, he did not like to talk about his work in the Ministry of Public Security],
- był agentem komunistycznych służb bezpieczeństwa [he was an agent of communist security services].

Undeniably, however, such statements do imply such collaboration or other possible acts Reich-Ranicki could be blamed for.

Besides the roles clearly associated with a negative image, the recognised German critic appears in Polish print media in a role of a **valued figure in German literature**. In this case he is introduced by means of nominations acknowledging his achievements, his renown, and his dedication to literature: *najbardziej znany krytyk literacki Niemiec* [Germany's best known literary critic], *wielka postać niemieckiej krytyki literackiej* [a great personality of German literary criticism], *sławny krytyk literacki* [famous literary critic], *światowej sławy niemiecki krytyk literacki* [world famous German literary critic], *przyjaciół literatury* [friend of literature], *przyjaciół literatury, wolności i demokracji* [friend of literature, freedom and democracy].

The related predications mainly point to Reich-Ranicki's position in Germany, his great authority and recognition in the world of literature:

- jego pozycja w Niemczech od wielu lat była niepodważalna [his status in Germany was unquestionable for years],
- był niekwestionowanym autorytetem świata literatury [he was indisputable authority in the world of literature],

and his dedication to literature, which he often referred to as his native land:

- kochał kulturę niemiecką i ją wybrał [he loved German culture and he chose it],
- był wielkim miłośnikiem i propagatorem niemieckiej literatury [he loved and he promoted German literature].

4. CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

The roles identified in the Polish and German language discourse, and defined by print media for Marcel Reich-Ranicki, were at the next stage subjected to contrastive analysis. In order to provide an overview of the matter in question and to make sure the reader gets a clear picture of the roles assigned in both corpuses to Marcel Reich-Ranicki, presented below is a list of these roles, compiled based on the contrastive analysis, and taking into account the frequency with which the specific types of nominations and predications appear in the material. Looking at the chart one cannot help but notice that some roles appear in both research areas, even in the same positions of the list. Some roles to a lesser or greater degree correspond and are related to one another (cf. Table 1):

Table 1. A list of roles assigned to Reich-Ranicki by Polish and German press in the media discourse following the critic's death. Similar roles observed in the two research areas are highlighted in the same colour

REICH-RANICKI IN GERMANY	REICH-RANICKI IN POLAND
Uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power	Scornful, egocentric and uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power
Popular showman eager to stand in the spotlight	Popular showman liking to impress and dominate
Pugnacious egocentric	A person with dubious, or in fact, murky past
A great personality in the world of literature	A valued figure in German literature
A victim of the holocaust who forgave his oppressors	–
A man raising controversy due to his obscure past	–

Occupying the most prominent position on top of the list both in Polish and German language discourse, the role of Reich-Ranicki as an *uncompromising expert with virtually unlimited power*, is closely linked, also in terms of frequency, to two more roles (*popular showman* in both corpora and *pugnacious egocentric* in the German-language corpus). By overlapping with each other, they constitute a kind of thematic group referring to the characterological picture of the popular critic. Print media in both cultures emphasise that the critic's opinions concerning literary matters and the reading public for decades were of extreme importance. No other literary critic in Germany had an authority or following among readers that would even distantly match the recognition enjoyed by Reich-Ranicki. His verdict frequently was final and his opinion incontestable. He had a power to raise onto a pedestal, or to destroy authors with his devastating criticism, wrecking their careers. In the corpus collected from Polish print media the role of uncompromising expert is supplemented with the attributes *scornful* and *egocentric*, which clearly suggests that the scornfulness and egocentrism are related to Reich-Ranicki's role of an expert literary critic. This silhouette, this form of the role appearing most frequently in the Polish corpus results from the specificity of the nominations and predications occurring in this context. Clearly dominating here are the terms suggesting harshness and arbitrariness of the German critic's opinions about Polish authors. Polish print media reproach him for ignoring opinions of other reviewers and literary experts and for minding only his own prestige and career, which he

also advanced by voicing unexpected, surprising and frequently unfair opinions and verdicts; one fitting example, already quoted above, comes from an article by Justyna Sobolewska: “he slammed Polish literature on TV, arguing that Stasiuk, Tokarczuk and Tulli wrote provincial books” (“Polityka”, 19.09.2013). His harsh, and not always justified, criticism was aimed at such established German writers as Martin Walser and Günter Grass. For example in a report by a PAP correspondent, signed as //gak/, we can read: “he did not hesitate to criticise the most renowned German writers; he presented harsh opinions about later works of Günter Grass” (PAP, TVN24.PL, 19.09.2013). The opinion of Reich-Ranicki, as a *pugnacious egocentric* also appears in the German corpus, yet in this case it is defined as a separate, fully autonomous role; in the diagram it is listed as number three in terms of frequency. Here it was distinguished and listed in the diagram as a separate item since it relates to a completely different area of Reich-Ranicki’s activity and his role representing a completely different profile. The German critic seen as a pugnacious egocentric in this case appears in the context of his TV-related activity, or more precisely, his long-term involvement in “Literarisches Quartet” [literary quartet], where Reich-Ranicki usually did not let the other critics speak, he would authoritatively voice his controversial opinions, drawing the audience’s attention mainly to himself, and creating a one-man show, despite the presence of other experts in the discussion.

The above role is also linked to the role identified in both discourses and listed as number two, i.e. *a popular showman eager to stand in the spotlight, liking to impress and dominate*, because the two roles in many cases occur jointly or even overlap, due to the fact they are strongly interrelated. Ultimately, as shown earlier, the two roles, and in the case of the German-language corpus the three roles mentioned above, constitute a kind of thematic group. The role of *a popular showman eager to stand in the spotlight* is realised in a similar way in both discourses. In both cases it is emphasised the critic had the extraordinary ability to win the hearts of many readers, listeners and viewers. Reich-Ranicki was able to appeal to those who had never been interested in literature. He could talk in an engrossing way, captivating for an ordinary person, who this way was encouraged by him not only to reach for the recommended books, but also to independently search for new things to read; indeed, for this the critic constantly provided a motivation and inspiration. He evoked adoration in viewers and readers. He had a gift of persuasion, of almost hypnotic nature.

The most frequent roles, related to the characterological picture of the famous critic, constitute one facet of the diagram. At the other end there is a role considered from historical and social viewpoint, i.e. the role of *a man raising controversy due to his obscure or murky past*. In the Polish language discourse it is listed directly after the roles related to the critic’s characterological picture, i.e. as item three, corresponding in the German language discourse to the final role related to the critic’s character, i.e. *pugnacious egocentric*. Although in the German language discourse it does not rank very high, the role has been identified among the six roles most effectively depicting Reich-Ranicki, which suggests that print media from German-speaking countries in their obituaries – despite the fact that generally writings of this type contain praise for the deceased – did not ignore the facts related to the Polish past of the German critic of Jewish origin. Nevertheless, Polish and German print media do not build this role in the same way. Polish media, in connection to the Polish period in Reich-Ranicki’s life, explicitly attribute to him the role of *a person with dubious, or in fact, murky past*, referring to him with such vivid nominations as: *an agent of security services, censor in the communist security services, and intelligence worker*. Furthermore,

analysis of predications suggests facts and arguments allowing a conclusion why this recognised critic did not have crystal clear conscience: *when asked about his past in the security bureau he never provided concrete information, he did not like to talk about his work in the Ministry of Public Security*. German print media address this issue with far greater cautiousness when writing about Reich-Ranicki, and referring to: *a controversial type, controversial personality, a person difficult to define/grasp, one of the most controversial figures of the 20th century*. None of the authors writing in German elaborate on Reich-Ranicki's work in communist security services, or try to go into details or discover the truth about his past in Poland. German print media merely present information on the existing, frequently conflicting, opinions about the former prisoner of the Warsaw ghetto. Most frequently comments related to those times are made in the context of unexplained and unconfirmed facts. It is important, however, that these issues are not ignored, and this role of the critic is specified. Indeed, it seems difficult to ignore this aspect, in the face of reports and publications which have revealed certain facts from the relevant period of the critic's life, to mention only the opinions voiced by Tilman Jens or Gerhard Gnauck.

In the German language discourse, a role directly next to those relating to Reich-Ranicki's personality and his position in Germany (item five), defines the critic as *a victim of the holocaust who forgave his oppressors*. Notably, this role is assigned to him only by German press. In Polish print media there are no references to this aspect, possibly due to the fact that the issue concerns the relations between the German society and a surviving Jew who forgave that society. This role, however, is extremely important as it provides insight into certain moves and reactions of German press, or in fact a lack of response from Germans, as a society indirectly responsible for the atrocities of World War II, to the accusations presented for instance in Gnauck's publication or allows to understand the characteristic behaviours presented by Marcel Reich-Ranicki and his attitude to the related discussion. After all for Germans their great critic is *a victim of holocaust, an oppressed person, a witness of those tragic times and events brought by Nazi Germany not only onto Jewish people; however he returned to the country of his oppressors, and he advances and promotes German literature, spreading it throughout the world. How could they, and what right would they have to criticise him, or to judge him?!*

In the discourse, which in terms of the genre consists of obituaries, it would be difficult to imagine a corpus which would not contain nominations and predications referring to the relevant person's accomplishments. Both in the Polish and German language discourse it is possible to distinguish a role of Reich-Ranicki as *a great personality and valued figure in German literature*. Interestingly, in both corpora the role occupies the same (fourth) position, however in the classification based on the material from German print media it is followed by two more roles with lower frequency, and in the Polish corpus it is the final position. Given the above, one should point out that the role emphasising the recognition for and acknowledgement of the well-known critic, particularly in the Polish-language discourse, is not of utmost importance in giving shape to Reich-Ranicki's profile in print media. The nominations and predications reflecting his outstanding achievement and extraordinary personality are overshadowed by those referring to his authoritativeness, determination and egocentrism. These in fact constitute the core of the critic's profile.

The analysis of the nominations and predications appearing in the print media discourse following the critic's death shows two, partly conflicting, profiles of Marcel Reich-Ranicki, with the constituents outlined below.

The profile of Reich-Ranicki presented by Polish press definitely carries negative traits. The observations related to the critic's outstanding accomplishments and merits as well as his expertise in literature and literary criticism (the related remarks usually appearing at the start), are accompanied with comments pointing to his authoritative attitude, often strongly subjective opinions, as well as eccentric looks, his egocentrism and tendency to indulge in making scornful remarks in his professional life. It is clearly emphasised that Marcel Reich-Ranicki was a talented showman, able to attract attention of the wide public to issues related to literature, however in this context the critic's extreme sense of self-importance is also pointed out. In contrast to the accomplishments, attention is drawn to the facts revealed with regard to his murky past in secret services, to the carefully concealed Polish part of his biography and his fierce denial of the accusations related to his work in intelligence services.

In German print media Reich-Ranicki is shown as a uncompromising, authoritarian and unyielding expert in issues related to literature, happy to stand in the glow of flashlights, an eccentric showman and an egocentric. In German-language articles, however, these negative traits are always strongly relativised by the emphasis to the fact that the great critic was also an outstanding specialist and a tireless educator of the nation, and consequently a great personality in the world of literature. An important part of the profile assigned to the German critic of Polish and Jewish origin is related to the role of a victim of Nazi terror, saved by miracle from the holocaust and refusing to look for retribution, on the contrary – forgiving his persecutors, and returning to the country of his oppressors in order to promote their cultural heritage. The otherwise flawless profile of the great man of literature is to a degree spoilt by the controversy related to the Polish period in his biography. This aspect, however, is emphasised far less frequently. In the context of his Polish past it is only pointed out that this part of the critic's biography has not been clarified and there is no encumbering evidence. German print media, mostly presenting favourable opinions of the critic, never use any phrases suggestive of his involvement with the Ministry of Public Security. They most frequently mention the fact that he was a resident or employee of the Polish Embassy in London. Even if an article mentions that he worked as a secret agent, there are no references to the Security Office, Polish intelligence or secret intelligence of the Polish government. Likewise, no author mentions the fact the intelligence services of Polish People's Republic were an equivalent of Stasi, functioning in the DDR.

In summary: although according to German print media Reich-Ranicki is an eccentric, unyielding and authoritative literary critic, and an egocentric person, still he is also an outstanding expert in his field, educator of the nation, victim of Nazi terror, miraculously saved from the Holocaust, refusing to seek retribution, worthy of admiration because he forgave his oppressors, and recognised their country as his own, choosing to promote German cultural heritage.

The profile of Reich-Ranicki presented in Polish media is an example of a remarkable, yet uncompromising, unyielding and sometimes unfair expert in literary criticism, a talented showman with a tendency towards vanity, and a person without a clear conscience due to his past as an agent in post-war Poland.

The presented analysis clearly shows differences in the focal points of the profile created for the relevant person in the two cultural areas taken into account. The profile of Reich-Ranicki emerging from German media mainly suggests an egocentric knowing his own value, as well as a victim of German fascism. Results of analysis focusing on Polish press

show the critic's profile leans towards a mean and unfair personality with definitely inglorious past in the service of the authorities of communist terror.

5. FINAL REMARKS

The conducted analysis of nominations and predications allowed to identify characteristic roles which the relevant print media attributed to Reich-Ranicki. The roles determined as a result of discourse exploration are the roles in which the critic is likely to be remembered after his death. It is, however, quite possible that the memory of the critic may take different forms in the two cultures. This is linked with the fact that, in addition to certain analogies, the contrastive analysis of the collected corpus also revealed relatively large differences in the way the critic's image is created by press in the two relevant cultures. In German print media Reich-Ranicki was depicted with criticism but also in positive terms, as a person presenting definitive opinions, unyielding yet competent, a person that is owed a lot by the German society which on the other hand has reasons to feel ashamed and apologetic towards him. Based on the analysis of the roles, the German critic's profile in the Polish print media clearly gravitates towards negative overtones. Although Reich-Ranicki's most obvious contributions to literature and literary criticism are pointed out, a lot of attention is also paid to his inglorious communist period in Poland. This supports the hypothesis that mass media in various cultures may present the same person in different or even conflicting ways, and this fact in the case of obituaries, examined here, contributes to different images created for a dead person and consequently to the memory of that person. Of no little consequence in this case is the fact that here we are dealing with mass media of countries directly related to the relevant person, and countries which during World War II were on opposing sides of the frontlines.

Based on the analysis it is possible to draw a conclusion that, by applying appropriate linguistic means and compositional techniques, mass media can undoubtedly depict, create or in fact engineer an image of the reality conveyed to the public, as a result building mediated memory. Therefore, as shown by conclusions from the conducted analyses, they largely contribute to images related to a given fragment of the reality, which the public may construct, unwittingly to some extent, and consequently they foster development of collective memory in a given group.

By using discourse analysis tools exclusively to explore nominations and predications, which then were applied to define roles of discourse actors, an approach successfully used in the case of large text corpora, it was possible to effectively explore a linguistic image of Reich-Ranicki conveyed by the press and the resulting memory preserved in language. Consequently it was possible to identify differences and similarities, as well as certain nuances in the profiling of the critic by Polish and German print media in *obituaries* published immediately following his death; his profiles were also presented relative to the perspective applied: moral, historical, characterological, and social. The profiling of Marcel Reich-Ranicki in mass media shows the knowledge which print media of the two relevant areas were trying to convey, using adequately selected linguistic means¹², and which they presented to their readers with regard to the critic directly after his death in order to preserve a specific type of memory about him.

¹² The study does not examine linguistic strategies and means applied in profiling of the image of Marcel Reich-Ranicki since this aspect falls outside the scope of this article. The related analyses will be presented in the next study by this author, covering the relevant subject matter.

The attempt to apply selected tools of discourse analysis, undertaken here, was aimed at determining whether the findings allow to expose mediatized memory, and consequently collective memory; the results support the thesis proposed by Czachur, claiming that discourse linguistics has instruments which make it possible to optimise findings of earlier research into memory. Carried out to determine the way of profiling of Marcel Reich-Ranicki, the analysis of nominations and predications applied to identify the roles in which the critic was shown in German and Polish print media and for which he may be remembered, has determined in what way media formulate mediatized memory possibly contributing to the shaping of collective memory of the specific group.

In this context it is necessary to emphasise the specificity of the corpus selected for the study. Obituaries constitute a peculiar type of research material due to the principle "speak well of the dead" adopted by their authors. Yet, the reader does not always know these determinants of the genre in detail. Consequently they may treat information contained in a specific obituary as a foundation, a reliable and legitimate source of knowledge designed to supplement or verify the pool of information related to the deceased person. Such train of thought may be risky or even misleading, particularly for a reader who is not a member of a specific culture, has not encountered or has no previous knowledge of the person. The present study and findings of my previous research focusing on this type of texts show that there are more and more changes in the genre profile of obituaries. This is because authors of such writings increasingly often disregard, relativize or even break the rule "de mortuis nil nisi bene". The reader who does not know details about the person presented in a given obituary will not be able to take a critical approach to information contained therein. Therefore, it is highly likely that they will adopt and remember, at least in part, the image of the person created by press in a form of memory preserved in language (mediatized memory), due to the influential status of print media.

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