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Rhetoric of the public image

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Krzysztof Bosak's Nomination Acceptance Speech – Transposing an American Genre into Polish Political Rhetoric

Przemówienie akceptacyjne Krzysztofa Bosaka. Transpozycja amerykańskiego gatunku do polskiej retoryki politycznej

Abstract

The article combines methods pertaining to Rhetorical Genre Studies and Discourse-Historical Approach in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of Krzysztof Bosak's nomination acceptance speech which he delivered during the 2020 Confederation presidential primaries. The discussed genre of political speech is rarely realized in European contexts. Given various differences between the American and the Polish political systems, Bosak did not follow every pattern of the standard variant of the genre. Rather, his speech appears to be more similar to a nomination acceptance speech of a third-party candidate. Overall, Bosak emerged as the leader of a divided and heterogeneous party, which was not given much attention by mainstream media. The paper investigates how these factors contributed to the structure and content of the speech. Moreover, recent decades have seen a rapid rise in significance of (far) right-wing movements in Europe. As Confederation is a relatively new political formation, there is a gap in research regarding the properties of its discourse. Thus, the present paper compares the discourse of the coalition with practices of politics of fear (Wodak, 2021).

Artykuł łączy metody z zakresu retorycznych studiów gatunkowych oraz podejścia dyskursywno-historycznego w celu przeprowadzenia kompleksowej analizy przemówienia Krzysztofa Bosaka, wygłoszonego podczas prawyborów prezydenckich Konfederacji w 2020 r. Omawiany gatunek jest rzadko realizowany w kontekście europejskim. Biorąc pod uwagę różnice między amerykańskim i polskim systemem politycznym, Bosak nie zastosował się do wszystkich wzorców standardowej odmiany tego gatunku. Jego przemówienie wydaje się raczej przypominać mowę akceptacyjną wygłoszoną przez kandydata reprezentującego pomniejsze formacje (*third-parties*). Zasadniczo Bosak przyjął rolę lidera podzielonej i niejednorodnej partii, której media głównego nurtu nie poświęciły zbyt wiele uwagi. W artykule zbadano, w jaki sposób czynniki te wpłynęły na strukturę i treść przemówienia. Co więcej, w ostatnich dekadach w Europie nastąpił gwałtowny wzrost znaczenia ruchów (skrajnie) prawicowych, do których można zaliczyć także Konfederację. W artykule porównano dyskurs tej stosunkowo nowej formacji politycznej z retoryką polityki strachu (Wodak, 2021).

Key words

Confederation Liberty and Independence, discourse-historical approach, rhetorical genre studies, right-wing discourse, nomination acceptance speech

Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość, podejście dyskursywno-historyczne, retoryczne studia nad gatunkami, dyskurs prawicy, przemówienie akceptacyjne

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1. Introduction

The recent rise of (far) right-wing discourse in Europe has been covered in relative detail (Wodak, KhosraviNik & Mral 2013; Forchtner 2019). Despite the fact that there are many far-right parties in contemporary Europe and certain issues are more prominent in certain countries, scholars agree on the general common features of the discourses of such formations. Ruth Wodak (2021), discussing contemporary right-wing populism, argues that such formations create an enemy (its type depends on the respective historical/political traditions¹), which is subsequently blamed for the present woes and is construed as a threat to the nation. These practices are described as “politics of fear”. They include a clear-cut division between “us” and “them”, opposing political correctness, and a negative attitude towards globalization and immigration. “Us” are portrayed as conservatives who work hard for the homeland, while “them” are cosmopolitans, supporters of close integration within the European Union, openly advocating abandoning traditional values (Rensmann 2017). Furthermore, Wodak (2021, 27) states that right-wing populist formations appeal to common sense and can generally be considered anti-intellectual. Examples of such parties are Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance, Alternative for Germany, the UK Independence Party, the Freedom Party of Austria, or the Dutch Party for Freedom (Mudde 2016).

As regards Polish right-wing parties, the discourse of Law and Justice (the ruling party since 2015) has been amply discussed mostly by Krzyżanowski (2018, 2020; see also Krzyżanowska & Krzyżanowski 2018), but the discourse of Confederation Liberty of Independence (*Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość*; henceforth referred to as Confederation), has not been extensively studied. As the support for the party has been progressively growing since its inception at

1. For example, Wodak (2019, 21) claims that Dutch, Swedish, or Polish right-wing populist formations concentrate mostly on perceived dangers associated with Islam, whereas Italian, Hungarian, or British parties consider immigrants and ethnic minorities as a threat to their respective national identities.

the end of 2018, it appears that the party might play a significant role in Polish and European politics in the nearest future. While political scientists have described the party as extreme and more radical than Law and Justice (Zagórski & Santana 2021), there is scarce research on Confederation with regard to rhetorical and discourse studies. This paper attempts to bridge this gap by analyzing a speech delivered by one of the most prominent members of the party in a key moment of the 2020 presidential campaign.

Confederation is a Polish right-wing coalition established at the end of 2018. Initially, it was set up by Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope (KORWiN²) and the National Movement (*Ruch Narodowy*) when the two parties decided to join forces for the European Parliament election in 2019. In the following months other right-wing organizations would join the alliance and on 27 February 2019 the name Confederation KORWiN Braun Liroy National Movement was announced. However, Confederation failed to obtain any seats in the European elections, as they received just 4.55% of the votes, which was slightly below the 5% threshold. Despite positive opinions as regards their electoral campaign (Kolczyński 2020), the coalition experienced considerable internal turmoil and changed its name to the current one. The alliance announced its start in the 2019 parliamentary elections, successfully obtaining 11 seats. Both KORWiN and the National Movement introduced five MPs to the lower house of the Polish Parliament (Polish: *Sejm*); the last seat was picked up by Grzegorz Braun – the leader of Confederation of the Polish Crown, a hard Eurosceptic and monarchist party.

2. The 2020 Confederation primaries

Before the 2020 presidential elections, Confederation organized presidential primaries with a complex delegate system. There were sixteen conventions during which presidential electors were selected. The final convention took place on January 18th in Warsaw. Krzysztof Bosak, Vice-Chairman of the National Movement, won the elections, as in the final round he beat Grzegorz Braun. Other candidates were Artur Dziambor, Konrad Berkowicz, Janusz Korwin-Mikke, Jacek Wilk (all represented KORWiN), Krzysztof Tołwiński (Agrarian-Consumer Confederation), Paweł Skutecki (STOP NOP), and Magdalena Ziętek-Wielomska (an independent candidate). The point of the paper is to discuss Bosak's acceptance speech and its

2. Polish: *Koalicja Odnowy Rzeczypospolitej Wolność i Nadzieja* (Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope). The name of the party is a play on the surname of its leader, Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a former EMP (2014–2018) who has been active on the Polish political scene since the sixties. For a broader discussion of Korwin-Mikke's political biography and significance, see Chwedczuk-Szulc & Zaremba (2015).

generic characteristics, as well as to present his discursive construction of social actors.

While presidential primaries are not restricted to the United States only, they are rarely organized in Europe, and such speeches are predominantly delivered in American contexts. Since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first nomination acceptance speech in 1932, the genre has been a vital part of the American political discourse (Nordvold 1970, 34). It is worth mentioning that there are considerable differences between the primaries organized by the Democrats and the Republicans, and minor American parties (e.g. the Green Party, the Libertarian Party), referred to as third parties. Neville-Shepard (2016, 126–127) points out that third-party nomination acceptance speeches have different functions than standard variants of the conventional genre. Firstly, they serve as an introduction for lesser-known politicians to the public. Secondly, candidates outline the themes and policy issues they stand for. Thirdly, such speeches usually tend to be more polarizing and directed towards people tired of the prevailing system. Lastly, nominees highlight their agency and present themselves as a real threat to mainstream politicians, which is a way of garnering more media coverage.

Third-party speeches also differ from the standard variant with regard to their form and structure. According to Neville-Shepard (2016, 127–129), candidates begin their speeches by accepting their new role. Secondly, they delineate their vision of the country, which is usually more extreme than that of major candidates; and, regarding conservative third parties, grounded in Christian faith. Thirdly, they present themselves as outsiders, attempting to legitimize their candidacy in the eyes of voters who see them as too radical. Further, they reject the notion of a wasted ballot, arguing that even if a third-party does not win an election, taking a symbolic stand may be even more important than a victory. Finally, they deviate from the ceremonial style of the standard variant, relying on bluntness and portraying mainstream politicians in a negative way.

While Confederation did manage to obtain parliamentary representation in 2019, the party's current impact on politics is limited as it is not a part of the ruling coalition. Therefore, status-wise the formation might bear more similarities to a third party rather than a well-established party. Also, the political systems in the United States and Poland are vastly different. Poland has a multi-party system and usually four or five parties are represented in the parliament. On the other hand, Law and Justice and Civic Platform have taken turns ruling Poland for sixteen years and it is often argued that the Polish party system might effectively be frozen around the two formations (Szczerbiak 2013; Wilczyński 2019). Also, given the position of Confederation, it seems that the goal of the primaries was not to select a candidate with a realistic chance of getting to the second round, but rather to

gain media coverage and electoral support which would strengthen the party on the Polish and European political scene. Thus, the present paper investigates how Bosak's speech resembles a third-party nomination acceptance speech as it is probable that the speech might share more qualities with this genre rather than the standard variant of presidential nomination speeches delivered by Democrats and Republicans³.

3. Analytical approach

In order to thoroughly discuss Bosak's speech, generic (in the sense of pertaining to genre) criticism will be applied. In general, one can distinguish between three fundamental methods of generic criticism: generic description, generic participation, and generic application (Harrell & Linkugel 1978, 274). In the present study, Bosak's speech will be analyzed with the help of generic participation and generic application. Overall, generic participation involves investigating if an artifact may be perceived as belonging to an already existing genre (Kinnick 2004, 33). Further, it requires three steps: a) describing the perceived situational requirements as well as organizing principle of the genre; b) describing the perceived situational requirements as well as organizing principle of the analyzed artifact; c) juxtaposing the properties of the artifact and those of the genre in order to verify whether the artifact belongs in the discussed genre (Foss 2018, 188–189). Afterwards, using generic application, it will be assessed whether the speech successfully fulfilled the required characteristics of the genre and how it impacted its effectiveness (Kinnick 2004, 33). As generic description appears to be more useful in examining multiple artifacts in order to verify whether a particular genre exists (Foss 2018, 184), it was not selected as a method for the purpose of the present investigation.

Genre is defined in congruence with Rhetorical Genre Studies – as a response to socially conditioned situations (Miller 1984, 151). Traditional approaches considered genres to be characterized predominantly by regularities in their features and disregarded their historical conditions and the social values ascribed to them in a given context. They also focused on literary texts (Hanks 1987, 670). Deviating from that notion, RGS concentrate on social dynamics and aspects of forming non-literary texts (both spoken and written). Scholars working within the RGS paradigm are interested in ways in which texts function as a reflection of social situations and in what way and why cultural artifacts are created (Artemeva 2004, 6). Charles Bazerman (1988, 62) claims that genres are socially ratified and facilitate communication in repeated situations. Furthermore, Amy J. Devitt

3. For a detailed discussion of this type of the nomination acceptance speech, see Ritter 1980, Benoit 1999.

(2000, 698) states that according to the new approach, genres are not defined by their formal features, but rather situations and functions in a given social context. Moreover, audience expectations play a vital role in shaping genres (Jamieson 1975, 415). Anna Bendrat (2016, 238–239) also points out that for RGS scholars a genre is not solely a formulaic phenomenon, but it is perceived as an aspect of social actions and should be examined from a pragmatic perspective. This approach allows for a profound investigation of the rhetor's intentions and the social reality he/she intends to create. Therefore, attention will also be paid to the socio-political context of the speech. In order to do that, the rhetorical situation of the speech will be discussed.

Lloyd Bitzer (1968, 5–8) argues that the rhetorical situation is based on three aspects: the exigence, which he describes as an obstacle that needs imminent improvement and change; the audience – the people who are able to contribute to the postulated changes (under the influence of the discourse created by the speaker); the constraints, which are defined as the elements that constitute the situation due to their power to limit the actions that are needed to modify the exigence. As argued by Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Jennifer Stromer-Galley (2001), in unprecedented situations hybrid genres are formed, which are a combination of already existing genres.

In addition, regarding contemporary European political discourse, scholars have observed a growing trend of Americanization of political communication. The term “Americanization” refers to the phenomenon observed in countries outside the United States that have attempted to implement an American style of political campaigning (Scammell 1998, 253). While discussing Americanization in the context of European political discourse, Winfried Schulz (2008) mentions personalization (candidates' personal traits seem to be highlighted whereas complex and substantive issues are not put on the forefront), professionalization (specialized experts and communication consultants are hired to plan and coordinate the campaign, many of whom are from the US), a marketing-oriented approach (election campaigns resemble media events), negative campaigning (campaigns focus on a negative presentation of rivals rather than positive self-presentation), news and issue management (parties attempt to draw the attention of the media), and framing campaigns as a rivalry between the candidates. Scholars have also suggested the reliance on social media (López-García & Pavía 2019, 6) and appealing to a younger audience (Thurnher 2009, 35) might be other features of Americanization as this phenomenon is constantly expanding. Thus, a successful transposition of a genre typically associated with American politics into Polish political discourse may be seen as a next step in further and more pronounced Americanization of Europe.

Aside from establishing generic characteristics of Bosak's presidential nomination acceptance speech, the article discusses his discursive representation of social actors, which will allow for a profound analysis of the party's discourse, which, as mentioned earlier, has not been analyzed properly in the literature. Therefore, the analysis of the adherence of the speech to third-party nomination acceptance speeches will be accompanied by a thorough examination of discursive strategies implemented by Bosak. Thus, not only does the study investigate the degree of Americanization of Polish politics (on the example of an implementation of a genre typically associated with the United States into Polish political rhetoric), but it also explores whether the discourse of Confederation is similar to the discourse of other contemporary populist right-wing formations, commonly referred to as politics of fear (Wodak 2021), whose aims have been delineated in a previous section of the paper.

In order to reach the latter objective, the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) will be used in the study. DHA is a branch of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that emphasizes the role of the sociopolitical context in the analysis (Wodak & Meyer 2009). Similarly to RGS, DHA considers discourse as a social practice, which means that it is an element of society rather than an external factor. In DHA, the discourse-society relationship is therefore dialectical (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Furthermore, DHA has been one of the fundamental approaches implemented in studies concerning contemporary right-wing discourse (Wodak 2021, 73–76).

Regarding DHA, one of the essentials of this approach involves the analysis of discursive strategies implemented by social actors to re-shape reality (Carvalho 2005, 3). Discursive strategies are defined as “a more or less intentional plan of practices adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal” (Reisigl & Wodak 2008, 94). Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak (2001, 93–95) also point out five fundamental types of discursive strategies: a) nomination; b) predication; c) argumentation; d) perspectivization; e) intensification/mitigation. Nomination strategies involve a discursive construction of social actors and actions undertaken by them. The speaker forms in-groups and out-groups with the help of various devices such as anthroponyms, deictics, metonymies, metaphors, synecdoches, as well as nouns and verbs used to denote actions and processes (Reisigl & Wodak 2008, 95). Predication strategies characterize and qualify constructed social actors. The aim of that strategy is to attribute certain features to them which can be done through explicit predicates, metaphors and other rhetorical figures, stereotypical attributions of positive or negative traits, comparisons, etc. (Reisigl & Wodak 2008, 95).

Argumentation strategies are used to legitimize positive or negative attributions. One of the most important notions as regards argumentative strategies are *topoi* (sing. *topos*). *Topoi* define the head of the argument. Reisigl and Wodak (2008, 102), define *topoi* as elements of argumentation that connect the arguments with the conclusion or the claim. KhosraviNik (2015, 112) considers *topoi* to be conventionalized argumentation places where warrants are not usually challenged or explained further. Also, *topoi* tend to be based on a taken for granted warrant; they can also be made explicit as conditional or causal paraphrases such as “if X, then Y” or “Y, because X”.

Perspectivization strategies involve positioning the speaker’s point of view, e.g. he or she may express distance or involvement with regard to a given issue. Intensification and mitigation strategies increase or decrease the illocutionary force, which could be realized by diminutives or augmentatives, (in)direct speech acts, modal verbs etc. (Reisigl & Wodak 2008, 95).

4. Analysis

4.1. Rhetorical situation – exigence, auditorium, and constraints

The 2020 presidential elections took place on 28 June 2020⁴, relatively shortly after the 2019 parliamentary elections in which Confederation gained 6.81% of the votes cast. As a new entity on the Polish political scene, the coalition needed to further reaffirm its position and prove that its success was not ephemeral. While Confederation had managed to obtain eleven seats in the parliament in the previous campaign, often it was not taken seriously by mainstream media and voters. Therefore, during the early stages of the 2020 presidential campaign, the party had to consolidate its electorate and distinguish itself from other political entities. Uniting and strengthening a divided far-right Polish environment, which – but for winning four seats in the European Parliament in 2014 – had been largely unsuccessful before 2019, might have been Bosak’s main task. Further, the exigence of the speech centered around dispelling the notion that the Polish far-right comprised of feuding parties of dubious significance. Presidential elections seemed to be a particularly valid pretext for that due to their prestige; while Poland is a country that has a semi-presidential system, the president is referred to as the head of state. Thus, success in such elections could have significantly improved the party’s reputation and status.

During the final convention the candidates were getting eliminated from the presidential race one by one. After having been eliminated, a losing candidate was invited to the podium where they thanked their supporters for the votes and

4. Originally, they had been scheduled for 10 May 2020, but were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

conceded the loss. The results were not predictable until the final round, as in the penultimate round it was Braun who had more votes than Bosak (43% to 37.6%). Also, Bosak's speech was relatively long, as it lasted around 25 minutes. It appears he was not under any time constraints, as opposed to the rest of the candidates whose speeches did not exceed five minutes (except for Grzegorz Braun, the runner-up). However, one might observe that the parties that make up Confederation differ from one another as regards their views on both economy and social issues. Thus, the often conflicting interests and views on politics of the party's members were a major constraint of the speech as it is probable that Bosak, a member of the National Movement, could not have criticized other fractions as it would have created considerable internal turmoil within the coalition.

As regards Bosak himself, despite his relatively young age (he will turn forty in 2022) the politician has been an active politician since his early years. As a 23-year-old he was an MP in the Polish parliament. From 2005 to 2006 he was the leader of the All-Polish Youth (one of the biggest Polish nationalist organizations). He has been Vice Chairman of the National Movement since 2014 and is one of the most influential Polish right-wing politicians. Overall, he is perceived as an authority figure among anti-European and radical movements (Goldstein 2021, 11). Given his high position, it seems that this speech is particularly worth investigating as it in many ways shaped the discourse of Confederation during the presidential campaign.

Overall, it appears that the audience consisted predominantly of supporters of Confederation and it was unlikely the speech would be heard by potential new voters. Furthermore, the participants paid 30 PLN (approx. 7 USD) to the party for the right to vote in the primaries, which signifies that it is likely that only loyal and dedicated voters of the party took part in the event. Moreover, the speech was aired solely on the official YouTube channel of the party and was not transmitted on TV. Therefore, it appears that Bosak addressed his speech to his supporters who expected him to reaffirm the identity of the party and cement its status of a new standard in politics. Also, the absence of mainstream media might have had an influence on the lexis and argumentation strategies implemented by Bosak as numerous instances of radical discourse (further outlined in the next subsection) probably would not have been uttered had the speech been shown on state television.

4.2. Generic and DHA Analysis

The speech is divided into five main parts:

- 1) Thanking the audience and other candidates
- 2) Calling for unity
- 3) Declaration of values
- 4) Condemning political rivals and anti-values
- 5) Accepting the nomination

Bosak begins his speech by thanking for the support he received during the campaign. Firstly, he expresses his gratitude towards the party's supporters, highlighting that the primaries would not have been possible without their dedication. He also considers their support a sign of hope. In this part of the speech, he uses the first person plural ("it was the third episode of the series we directed for you"; "that was the hope which gave us all a chance") in order to transcend political divisions and accept his new role as the candidate of the party. Subsequently, Bosak thanks his direct opponents, constantly using the first person plural. Thus, his nomination is not solely his own success; rather, it is a sign of a shared victory which needs to be cherished properly. Thereupon, he invites the losing candidates to the stage and asks the audience to applaud them. Bosak stresses that Confederation is a team that has to be united which allows him a smooth transition to the second part of the speech. One might observe that Bosak uses the strategy of mitigation while talking about the event. He does not frame it in terms of his own success; even as a winner, he states the nomination was a great honor for him. By preferring *we* to *I*, the speaker forms an in-group, which is a useful method to persuade his audience (van Dijk 1998). Bosak refrains from speaking from the position of authority but appears to portray himself as one of many. Interestingly, he does not explicitly accept the nomination nor does he call himself a leader or a presidential candidate. Thus, Bosak attempts to mitigate his own victory by portraying it as a shared success.

Afterwards, Bosak proceeds to call for the formation's unity. He points out that the coalition consists of various movements and parties, and acknowledges their importance. Bosak also pays respect to the leaders of other organizations that are part of the coalition. In this part of the speech, Bosak focuses on positive self-presentation of his internal rivals and their supporters. For example, Janusz Korwin-Mikke's relative lack of electoral success (never received more than 3.26% of the votes cast even though he had run for president five times) is not mentioned as Bosak focuses on his experience and refers to him using his formal credentials.

Social actors	Prototypical examples
Janusz Korwin-Mikke and his supporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Chairman • has always obtained good electoral results • has been in politics for so many years • organized, convinced, and dragged his parties on numerous political battles • leader • conservative liberals • classic liberals • libertarians • liberal monarchists • other groups who indentify with these movements

Table 1. Positive presentation of Janusz Korwin-Mikke – nomination and predication strategies.

Similarly, Bosak acknowledges Grzegorz Braun and Paweł Skutecki, both leaders of right-wing grass-root organizations with minimal electoral support. In the end, he discusses his own party and humorously states that there are internal divisions within it as well. Consequently, Bosak does not consider his rivals in the primaries to be his real opponents – he acknowledges their importance to the party and points out that they all fight for a common cause.

Social actors	Prototypical examples
Grzegorz Braun and his supporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he could be standing in the same spot where I'm standing now • leader • contributed so much in terms of effort, commitment, and energy • conservatives • traditionalists • traditional Catholics • people involved in pro-life movements • libertarians • monarchists
Paweł Skutecki and his supporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leader • introduced so many people on the scene • local organizations • civic organizations • pro-family organizations • organizations of dedicated citizens

Table 2. Positive presentation of Grzegorz Braun and Paweł Skutecki – nomination and predication strategies.

Correspondingly, Bosak tries to expand his community and create an impression that it is larger than it really is. By enumerating all entities comprising each formation that constitute Confederation, the politician highlights the fact that the primaries were the reason why all these communities were united. This somewhat exaggerated portrayal of Confederation is amplified by the use of a perspectivization strategy as Bosak speaks from the position of a candidate of a big and inclusive party rather than a new entity. Overall, the candidate does not create divisions within the formation.

The politician concludes that part by stating that despite the differences, all organizations within Confederation are united by a shared goal of being true to their ideas and values. The party itself is presented as a new voice in politics, which operates according to different standards. It is worth noting that this positive portrayal of the party is simultaneously realized through presuppositions and implicit attacks on political opponents (e.g. if Confederation proposes a real civic ethos, it implies that the ethos of other parties is false) who would be mentioned more explicitly in later parts of the speech. Also, enemies are clearly mentioned (the left, political correctness). Thus, Bosak, through nomination and predication strategies, presents Confederation and his direct competitors within the coalition as entities that possess only positive qualities.

Social actors	Prototypical examples
Confederation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new standard of politics in Poland • we are always ready for an ideological confrontation with the left • we are here to suggest a real civic ethos • a shared, politically incorrect project • creates a new political culture • we are all one team

Table 3. Positive self-presentation of the party – nomination and predication strategies.

A declaration of the values that unite Confederation is the theme of the third part of Bosak's speech. In this part, the candidate lays out his vision of Poland. He stresses that despite the fact that the party is not homogenous, all members share a common set of values which is the basis of Bosak's plan. His vision is described in terms of a backbone of Polish culture; its pillars being patriotism, conservatism, common sense, Christian ethics, economic freedom, and civic ethos.

- [Conservatism] is the attachment to traditional values that resounds in all our speeches.
- We, with common sense, are ready to fight for our freedom and not to adapt to what is imposed on us from abroad.
- Economic freedom and private property are what keep a person free, and if a society is composed of free people, the nation is strong.
- It is the foundation of Christian ethics. It is the foundation on which we base our understanding of conservative values, our motivation to be Polish patriots, to sacrifice our private affairs for the homeland, our understanding of what common sense is, because even common sense disappears where there is a separation from Christian values.
- I also want to mention what I think we all experienced when we participated in the marches of independence. Namely, such a shared experience of national pride. The experience of being in a large group of people who are not ashamed of their patriotism. They are not ashamed of their Polishness, they are not ashamed of their identity.

Table 4. The benefits of Bosak's candidacy – topos of advantage (selected fragments from the speech).

The candidate argues that if these values were implemented, Poland would be a better place. Therefore, Bosak's argumentation strategies with regard to the values he cherishes are based on the topos of advantage. Bosak highlights the importance of traditional conservative values which are inextricably linked with Christianity. He argues that such values are natural to Poles and he and his party would never deviate from them.

Having mentioned extensively his vision of Poland, Bosak proceeds to attack his opponents and their pseudo-values. The benefits and advantages of Bosak's potential presidency are contrasted with dangers that are intertwined with others. The threats identified by Bosak are associated with the European Union and its actions. The candidate argues that further European integration may result in Poland losing its sovereignty. Also, Bosak mentions that the aforementioned traditional Christian values run contrary to the views of Eurocrats who actively want to impose their will on Poles. Thus, while discussing his opponents and their political views, Bosak relies on the topos of disadvantage and the topos of threat as supporting other candidates would have negative consequences for Poland, and they serve hostile forces.

Overall, it appears that this particular set of values does not deviate from the values revered by other European right-wing populists as they tend to call for sticking to a conservative set of principles, with a special attention on national identities and Christianity. In doing so, they appeal to common sense (Wodak

2013, 27–28), which Bosak explicitly names as one of the most significant values that Confederation fights for.

- Our independence, just as it is being given away, sliced, and given to Brussels, is being sliced and given away internationally on the economic front.
- Ladies and gentlemen, this wave is coming to us.
- Due to the influence they inherited, partly in the post-communist institutions, they managed to create their own elite, to occupy many strategic positions in our society.
- [Poland] is becoming a country increasingly dependent on the whims of financial centers, which can decide whether we lend money to the Polish government or whether we stop buying bonds.
- This is not a recipe for an independent state, it is a recipe for a state which is more and more dependent on international centers of power and influence. This is a negation of Polish independence.

Table 5. Dangers mentioned by Bosak in his speech – topoi of disadvantage and threat (selected fragments from the speech).

The enemies of the coalition do not possess the positive qualities of Confederation as their alleged goal is to seize control over Poland. Bosak suggests a hierarchy of enemies. Firstly, there are two Polish main parties (Law and Justice and Civic Platform) which do not have the authentic character that Confederation has. With regard to the former party, Bosak makes a point that Law and Justice is a right-wing party only on the surface, whereas in reality they cooperate with the European Union and therefore act contrary to the Polish *raison d'état*. Civic Platform, on the other hand, is accused of being incompetent. Bosak also makes a reference to the Civic Platform primaries which had taken place a few weeks before. The candidate argues that those primaries had been rigged from the very start and contrasts them with the Confederation primaries that he sees as the voice of common people as opposed to the other primaries in which only party officials took part. Therefore, once again he resorts to the “us” and “them” dichotomy, comparing the (sincere and fair) primaries of his party to those of Civic Platform (staged and fake). Thus, similarly to right-wing populist politicians, Bosak portrays the two mainstream parties as unable to address relevant problems and claims that they fail to understand the needs of the nation (Wodak 2021, 34).

In addition, mainstream Polish parties serve the European Union and George Soros – a pair of enemies considerably more dangerous than the two Polish parties. Thus, he portrays Polish mainstream politicians as devoid of power and significance and argues that their actions are influenced by more powerful entities. Furthermore, the above mentioned foreign forces also possess other instruments of controlling

the Polish society. Bosak claims that the EU and the Soros foundation effectively govern Polish mainstream media which impose their narratives on Poles⁵. In this regard, Bosak specifically names *Gazeta Wyborcza* and accuses it of perpetuating an image of conservatives and nationalists as dangerous and threatening to society. As *Gazeta Wyborcza* is one of the most powerful Polish daily newspapers, it is consistent with Bosak's narrative that Confederation is being attacked from all sides because only this party opposes the dictate of Eurocrats and cosmopolitans. Therefore, Bosak mobilizes his supporters by creating an atmosphere of constant danger coming from powerful foreign forces. The politician frames the political situation as an ideological clash between postmodern neo-liberals and traditional conservatives, clearly positioning his perspective on the issue.

Also, to discuss the threats Bosak employs vivid metaphors. Poland's independence is compared to a dish which is being progressively sliced away. One might also observe a reference to war ("new elites occupy strategic positions"). Further, the natural disaster metaphor ("this wave is coming to us") used to describe the dangers coming from the EU is a common strategy in right-wing discourse, aimed at portraying the discussed issue as irrational and tumultuous (Crespo-Fernández 2013, 198).

Social actors	Prototypical examples
Law and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was highly critical of Civic Platform, but stayed on the course after they seized power • constantly brings the state into debt • gives away our independence • makes it difficult to experience national pride • a cartel party
Civic Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister Rostowski was rightfully criticized • their primaries were staged • mortgaged our future • a cartel party
The West (Brussels and the EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • murmurs of insanity • foreign organizations are against us • take away our independence • make us dependent on them • international centers of power

5. It is worth noting that a similar narrative as regards Soros and the EU has been present among right-wing parties in Hungary – Fidesz, Jobbik, and Hungary's Green Party (Lubarda 2019, Lamour 2021).

Social actors	Prototypical examples
George Soros' the Stefan Batory Foundation and Gazeta Wyborcza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failed to achieve credibility among the broad masses of the Polish society • assumed many strategic positions in our society • artificially cultivates non-governmental organizations • tried to get us on the tracks of the so-called Western European progress • self-appointed helmsmen of our social consciousness

Table 6. Negative other presentation.

Moreover, the positive self presentation and negative other presentation appears to have two major goals. Firstly, by presenting Civic Platform and Law and Justice as weak, incompetent, and dependent on the West, Bosak challenges their credibility and attempts to show that he and his party are the only political entities that cherish patriotism and are truly independent. In fact, they are even compared to criminal organizations (“cartel parties”). Secondly, creating an impression of hostile Western forces that are far more powerful than domestic parties shows the audience that the cause that Confederation fights for is significant and needs a considerable amount of support from them, as the party cannot defeat such a powerful foe on its own. Once again, this is an example of right-wing populism as Bosak calls for the support of common people and positions himself as their representative in a struggle against elitist enemies (Wodak 2021, 94). Moreover, Bosak here employs the topos of threat, highlighting the division between the patriotic and noble Confederation, and anti-patriotic Polish parties which are controlled by the European Union. It is also an attempt of changing the perspective as the stake of the elections concerns not just the office of the president, but Polish independence and sovereignty. As it was the case with morals and values, the anti-values condemned by Bosak also seem to mimic the trends observed in European right-wing populist discourse, given his negative stance towards the EU, elites, and mainstream politicians (Wodak 2013, 29).

In the final part of the speech, Bosak accepts the party’s nomination. He considers it to be a mission assigned to him by the groups mentioned throughout the speech and states that he feels a considerable deal of responsibility. This can be observed in the following sentences: “I will do my best to fulfill this mission” and “I want to emphasize that I feel a great responsibility for this mission that you have entrusted to me”. We might notice that Bosak returns to the strategy implemented during the introductory parts of the speech: he uses the first person plural and highlights that him assuming the position of the presidential candidate is a shared success of the

whole party and should be celebrated in such a way. While he does accept being the leader, he does not intend to impose his will on the party. Rather, he pledges to fight for the common goal and highlights the fact that it is not a task that he could complete on his own. This is amplified by the final words of the speech: “Let’s win the first round together”, in which Bosak stresses that the mission is not merely his task and calls for further support. Therefore, he adopts the perspective of just one of many worthy candidates. A clear and unceremonious assumption of the leader's position by Bosak would have contributed to divisions within the party and given the National Movement a sizeable advantage in the party’s hierarchy. Thus, Bosak was extremely cautious in accepting the nomination and avoided calling himself a leader, reverting back to the mitigation strategy discussed earlier.

5. Bosak’s speech and a third-party nomination acceptance speech

The use of the ceremonial and pompous formula of the primaries probably contributed to the party's prestige and gave it credibility, legitimizing it in the eyes of the voters, which could be signified by Bosak’s electoral success. Furthermore, the Confederation primaries were received favorably in the media and praised for their professional character (Gadawa 2020; Kolanko 2020). Thus, one of the main functions of US third-party speeches – persuading the media to cover the campaign in more detail (Neville-Shepard 2016, 127) – was realized. One might also look at this aspect through the lens of a marketing approach, professionalization, and news and issue management (Schulz 2008, 247–253; 257–259) as the coalition successfully managed to grab the attention of mainstream media and emerge as a professional and efficient formation, which had not been the case in its previous campaigns. Thus, it seems that these three elements of Americanization were the most the most pronounced in the 2020 Confederation primaries.

On the other hand, while the criticism of the EU and mainstream parties could be perceived as negative campaigning, the speech focused on positive presentation of the alliance and Bosak himself. Also, while he did emerge as the candidate in the 2020 elections, Bosak avoided calling himself the leader; rather, he accepted the position of a *leader* of a united movement. Therefore, the aspect of personalization of the campaign was not particularly highlighted, which is also reflected in the relative absence of framing the campaign as a rivalry between candidates. In fact, Bosak’s rivals in the 2020 presidential elections were not mentioned at all, which signals that the politician did not frame the elections as a contest between persons (focusing on irrational criteria such as their personality traits, character, or appearance) but rather a clash of ideas. This strategy is a contradiction of

Americanization of politics rather than its manifestation (Baines, Scheuer & Plasser 2001, 1108). Thus, while Americanization could indeed be observed in the 2020 Confederation primaries, only selected aspects of it were put on the forefront while some of them were mitigated or absent almost entirely.

Overall, it appears that Bosak's nomination acceptance speech resembles the third-party variant to a great extent. It appears, however, that in Bosak's speech more emphasis is placed on the party's unity than in the standard third-party nomination acceptance speech. This might be explained by the fact that Confederation consists of multiple smaller parties and organizations that at times display conflicting views on the economy and social issues.

Bosak and Confederation seem to position themselves as outsiders situated on the fringes of the Polish political system whose aim is to introduce radical changes to it. A stark division between "us" and "them" was one of the major themes of the speech. Moreover, by delegitimizing the two Polish mainstream parties, Bosak reaches out to voters who are tired of the Law and Justice – Civic Platform duopoly and positions his party as the only real alternative. Interestingly, other Polish parties and candidates were not mentioned in the speech at all. By using this strategy, Bosak appears to present the Polish political scene as similar to the American one: two major parties detached from the common people and an outsider third-party functioning as the voice of reason (cf. Neville-Shepard 2016). It appears that the formula of the primaries helped create the impression that the Polish political scene consists of two dominant elite parties and a minor one that represents common people, portraying it as similar to the American one. This is an aspect that has not been discussed in previous studies on Americanization and it is interesting whether the coalition implements this strategy as a permanent feature of its discourse. As Lloyd (2013) argues, primary elections help parties strengthen them, gather more media coverage, and gain grassroots and national appeal. Given the overall positive reception of the event, it is probable that the party will continue to make use of the primaries in the future, which may contribute to further Americanization of Polish and, if the format of presidential primaries was to adopted in other countries, European political discourse.

6. Conclusions

In closing, one might observe that the discourse of Confederation does not significantly deviate from the discourse of corresponding European parties. Ideologically similar formations (AfD, UKIP, Jobbik, VOX) also consider the European Union to be a hostile organization to European nations and highlight the significance of patriotism and conservative values (Baider & Constantinou 2014;

Breeze 2019; Ferreira 2019). The party's opposition to European integration and political correctness also seems to be in line with ideologically similar European formations (Rensmann, 2017). Further, relying on the topos of threat and the topos of disadvantage is also prevalent among right-wing discourses and is one of the prime examples of politics of fear (Wodak 2011, 2013, 2021). Interestingly, Islam, immigrants, or LGBT communities were not mentioned as a relevant threat. These three social groups have been frequently attacked by Law and Justice (Krzyżanowski 2018, 2020; Wodak 2021). The absence of them in Bosak's speech may signify that the discourse of Confederation might differ in some ways from the discourse of Poland's ruling party. Exploring further differences between the two right-wing formations might be important given the rising position of Confederation in Polish politics. Overall, the instances of politics of fear identified in the study involved framing globalization and European integration as a danger to Polish identity, appealing to conservative and Christian values by referring to common sense, and delegitimizing mainstream parties as not being able to deal with relevant issues.

While this radicalism might be appealing particularly to young voters (as evidenced by the party's popularity among young people; cf. Markowski 2020), the revolutionary and blunt discourse of Confederation might be a burden if the formation tried to present itself as a stable and serious movement with a real impact on politics. In terms of further research, one might investigate how future nomination acceptance speeches change over time. A change in terms of form, structure and content may signify a shift in the party's discourse. That has been the case with Marine Le Pen and her National Rally (formerly the National Front). The French politician, after succeeding her father Jean-Marie Le Pen as the party's leader in 2007, has considerably toned down the party's discourse and brought it closer to a mainstream party, which resulted in a rise in their position and electoral support (Bastow 2018; Mondon 2014; Almeida 2013). It remains to be seen whether Confederation follows that path or it retains the position of a controversial Polish third-party. Given that the timeline between 2019 and 2020 there were three major political elections in Poland in which the coalition took part (European Parliament elections, Polish parliamentary elections, and 2020 presidential elections) it appears there is enough material to properly assess the continuity and change of the discourse of the coalition during its early years. As evidenced herein, combining the Discourse-Historical Approach with that of Rhetorical Genre Studies may allow for an in-depth discussion of a given discourse and offer valuable insights regarding the degree of Americanization in contemporary European politics.

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