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LINGUISTIC DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE ROMA IN THE POLISH-LANGUAGE WEB 2.0 DISCOURSE

A b s t r a c t. This paper aims to discuss the results of studies about the scale of verbal discrimination against the Roma in the Web 2.0 discourse held in Polish. These studies have helped in specifying the scale of not only intentional antigypsyism exhibited by the participants to the discourse but also highlight culture-specific habits perpetuated in the language, which unintentionally foster discrimination against the Roma. In addition, results that have been obtained and interpreted help in clarifying the phenomena in question as components of mediatization of discrimination, developing primarily on the Internet, and above all in the area defined as Web 2.0, and particularly visible in social media.

Keywords: language; pragmatics; critical discourse analysis; mediatization; social media; Web 2.0; Roma; antigypsyism; discrimination.

> *society's acceptance of small acts of discrimination eventually led to ghettos and extermination camps*
> (Holocaust survivor Marian Turski during commemorations at the Auschwitz Nazi death camp in Oswiecim in Poland in 2020 [Gera, 2020])

INTRODUCTION

The principal goal of this analysis is to examine the real scale and structure of antigypsyist semantics (Guet, 2008; McGarry, 2017, pp. 5-6; Saunders, 2011, pp. 147-148) on the Polish Internet. It draws from quantitative studies conducted on the Web 2.0 media content co-created by the users (DiNucci, 1999;

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Herring, 2013, pp. 2-4; Payal, 2012) and – as a necessary foundation – the analysis of the general position of the Roma in a mediatized (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999, p. 249) world of discriminatory verbal communication.

1. MORE THAN JUST VERBAL DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination against the Roma is one of the major (moral and ethical) problems facing contemporary Europe. The collective consciousness of European societies is thoroughly permeated by the belief that the Roma should fully adapt to cultural and social norms of the country, in which they live. From the majority point of view, such assumption may appear correct, however, historical amnesia helps us to easily forget about the scale of discrimination against the Roma running through the veins of history of European countries, which does not bode well their gradual inclusion in the life of European societies (Fraser, 1995, pp. 101-195). Today, the problem is that European values proposed to the Roma as a result of social inclusion are not always reflected in practice. An example can be the encouraging of "Romnia" ("Romnija"/Roma women), who are discriminated (externally and internally) at multiple levels, to break free from the patriarchal system of the Roma communities. Yet, what the European equal treatment of men and women has offered them in return continues to remain a theoretical construct. Actually, this is not the problem of the Roma but of the majority society. The Roma has gone through deep changes over the recent 30 years. These changes were very deep for the cultural minority (but they would have been equally deep for a nation or an ethnic group), which had survived for ages by sticking to its proven, perpetuated cultural model, which was protected against the hostile external world by schematically structured intra-group relationships governed by the *Romanipen* principles (different to almost every Romani group or subgroup), which became original survival strategies. On the other hand, the mainstream society, or, more precisely, its attitude to Roma, has not changed. Despite much deeper knowledge about Romani people (however, not common across societies), still in most cases human behaviour is driven by stereotypes, aversion, underpinning expectations that Roma will assimilate and give up their culture. That leads to minor acts of discrimination in everyday social situations (e.g., a refusal to employ on grounds of ethnicity (*A persisting concern*, pp. 17-19)) but also to acts of violence, such as those in Ukraine (Coynash, 2018) in 2018, in Greece (*Athens*) in 2017 or in Hungary (Horváth, 2016) in 2008-2009.

Although occurrences such as the ones mentioned above occasionally happen in Europe, the everyday reality of members of Romani community is not filled with acts of severe discrimination and racism (Essed, 1991, pp. 49-56) committed by angry mobs of the mainstream society. Obviously, there is no excuse for such behaviour which is clearly unacceptable. However, in fact, it is not directed at all Romani people unlike the more problematic and oppressive everyday discrimination (also referred to as "individual/personal" (Hamelmann et al., 2017, pp. 63-64)). The latter one is experienced in education and employment (or rather unemployment) contexts as well as in other types of social situations and relationships (*A persisting concern*, pp. 25-45). In most cases such discrimination does not take organised, collective forms; it is neither orchestrated nor structured by anyone. Often times the perpetrators (fellow citizens of Roma) are not aware of the ethnic dimension of their actions and effects thereof (McGarry, 2017, pp. 247-248). These are manifestations of antigypsyism founded on historically embedded habits, perpetuated cultural patterns and stereotypes (Pickering, 2001, p. 4). Everyday discrimination frequently overlaps with verbal discrimination as a reflection of antigypsyism deeply rooted in the language (Hastrup, 2002, p. 3).

2. EVERYDAY DISCRIMINATION

Although occurrences such as the ones mentioned above occasionally happen in Europe, the everyday reality of members of Romani community is not filled with acts of severe discrimination and racism (Essed, 1991, pp. 49-56) committed by angry mobs of the mainstream society. Obviously, there is no excuse for such behaviour which is clearly unacceptable. However, in fact, it is not directed at all Romani people unlike the more problematic and oppressive everyday discrimination (also referred to as "individual/personal" (Hamelmann et al., 2017, pp. 63-64)). The latter one is experienced in education and employment (or rather unemployment) contexts as well as in other types of social situations and relationships (*A persisting concern*, pp. 25-45). In most cases such discrimination does not take organised, collective forms; it is neither orchestrated nor structured by anyone. Often times the perpetrators (fellow citizens of Roma) are not aware of the ethnic dimension of their actions and effects thereof (McGarry, 2017, pp. 247-248). These are manifestations of antigypsyism founded on historically embedded habits, perpetuated cultural patterns and stereotypes (Pickering, 2001, p. 4; Wodak, 2021, pp. 98-100). Everyday discrimination frequently overlaps with verbal discrimination as a reflection of antigypsyism deeply rooted in the language (Hastrup, 2002, p. 3).

3. FREE MEDIA

The freedom of the media and of expression are ideas that have acquired a specific meaning and a new dimension in the Internet context. Undoubtedly, the Internet is the most democratic medium which provides a platform for articulating and making one's interest available to almost everyone (van Dijk, 1997, p. 7). By becoming universal, the Internet created an opportunity to minority groups marginalised when it comes to access to formulating costly messages for the media to reach out to big groups of recipients (Saunders, 2011, p. 138) and level up their communication opportunities (van Dijk, 1993a, pp. 254-257; 2009, p. 64). In reality, although the process unrolled in accordance with these assumptions, the Internet got filled with all sorts of ethnic prejudice, aversion taking the form of verbal aggression and hate speech. Like other media, the Internet (van Dijk, 1993b, pp. 242-243), instead of becoming a new communication space free from prejudice, turned into another space of discrimination.

4. INTERNET AS A SPACE OF PUBLIC VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Automatically, on the Internet verbal content (sporadically supplemented with visual (Odrzywołek, 2015) and/or audiovisual content, always accompanied by, e.g., written comments, i.e., words) is the main form of discrimination. It includes texts written by journalists and published on information platforms (also on the websites of "traditional" press publishers), as well as non-professional original content published by the users on websites, blogs, social media, and other Internet media dedicated for publishing private content. From the viewpoint of the analysis of verbal discrimination featuring on the Internet, the activity of Internet users, such as the writing of comments to the original content (posted by journalists as well as non-professional private individuals) is extremely important (Czachur, 2020, p. 3). This is the area of the least formalised verbal communications, which best reflect the almost totally unrestricted and ruthlessly as well as abusive exploited the freedom of speech (Yong, 2011, pp. 386-387). In this case, the freedom of speech is understood as a possibility to write anything irrespective of any social or even legal consequences. Today nobody believes in being able to remain anonymous on the Internet (Kondzioła-Pich, 2018, pp. 164-166), however, largely because of the sense of distance and lack of direct contact, comments continue to be treated as private rather than public statements. As shown by the study of 2017 6% users in Poland believed that the Internet (except private websites) is an exclusively

private space (*Prywatność w sieci*, p 5). Yet, we need to account for the difference between declarative meaning associated with a place where the user interacts on an everyday basis with a substantial group of people and effects of her/his often emotional reactions and messages formulated under such circumstances. In addition, even if non-private, the space of Internet communication is viewed as a *different public space*, in which one may be free to share a much more unrestricted (meaning: less determined by social norms) content. The status of public content on the Internet was partly regulated in the Polish (codified) legal system on 17 April 2018 when the Supreme Court of Poland in case IV KK 296/17 decided that "the Internet-published content, although physically stored on hard discs, nevertheless creates a »certain space« and when it is available on websites, access to which is unconstrained, such space should be considered public" (*Sąd Najwyższy: kasacja RPO zasadna – internet jest "miejscem publicznym"*). It means that communications and statements universally available on the Internet are public (Papacharissi, 2002, pp. 10-11, 20-23).

I. MATERIALS, METHODS AND RESEARCHING
THE WEB 2.0 DISCOURSE

Language never remains indifferent to social reality and actively interprets it (Bartmiński, 2007; Kashima et al., 2008). What is more, it is a source of reverse power, as given names to objects, phenomena, and people (as well as groups of people) in linguistic reality organizes social reality and provides its interpretation (Boroditsky, 2001; Ervin-Tripp, 1967; Whorf et al., 2012). The connection of the socially functional effect of names is particularly visible in the case of endoethnonyms, as exemplified by the name Rom (a man), which serves to auto-identify people who belong to this ethnic group and is juxtaposed with the name Gadjo/Gadje given to non-Roma, which, due to the meaningfulness of the minority group identifier, takes away humanity from everyone else (Gadjo/Gadje) automatically serving to strengthen the social distance.

Such a way of naming – haracteristic of ethnic groups and used to distinguish themselves from other ethnic elements – emains in a slightly changed form also valid in contemporary linguistic reality. However, its dominant function is no longer to separate "us" in order to preserve our distinctiveness, but to consolidate the social order by confirming the inferior position of "others". An attempt to justify such an approach may be made by referring to established mechanisms of heuristic evaluation (Kahneman, 2011), but the development

of civilization, the ideas of democracy, human rights, and equality of people, are opposed to such an approach. Name giving to others and ways of communicating them in connection with social reality almost automatically bring to mind two methodologies that are related in this case.

The first is linguistic pragmatics, which, using the basic structure of the semiotic triangle (Ogden & Richards, 1989, p. 11), enables such naming and linguistic labelling. In a broader linguistic context, reference can be made to the social conditioning of semantic potential that can perpetuate social roles (Halliday, 1973, p. 101) and, by extension, language coded valuations. Pragmatic mechanisms closely link the conscious construction of linguistic messages with a choice from the potential richness of meanings contained in language, together with the evaluation reflected in linguistic communication (Hess, 2019), which in some communication situations can be an evaluation forced out by the sender of the message on its recipient through the very structure of the statement (Awdiejew, 1994), thus extending the possibility of evaluation beyond a simple assignment of language labels or metaphors (Klebaniuk, 2012). This refers directly to the concept of pragmatic evaluative meaning, which can be based on both extended units of meaning and direct sets of broader connotations (Dam-Jensen & Zethsen, 2007; Czachur, 2020, pp. 160-163) related to the meaning of context for the interpretation of a language sign (Hansen, 2012, pp. 594-596), of the whole message and its social (again contextual) effects. Language, on the one hand, reflects the system of social values imprinted into an individual but, on the other hand, it reproduces this system by creating evaluative messages (Catalano & Waugh, 2020, pp. 294-297).

The CDA is the second methodological basis. In this case, it is obvious that the discourse itself is not only a manifestation of a higher level of language organization, but a complex communication structure, taking into account social and cultural contexts. This is why the CDA is a suitable method for studying the scope of Web 2.0 language communication on Roma at the social level (van Dijk, 1993c, pp. 359-360). It allows us to view the discourse (at a basic level in language) as an element organizing the reality and ensuring social order. Such a basis allows for the identification of poorly visible relations between communicative events and language as well as the wider context and social and cultural phenomena, reflected in the media communication practice (public and private) and, consequently, in contextually broadly defined discourse (Fairclough, 1993). Often a secret and explicitly unexpressed attitude to "others" (in this case, the Roma), is reflected in language and communication, influencing

social relationships, while supporting the maintenance and reproduction of certain social relationships (van Dijk, 1998; Lipiński 2020, p. 64).

By using evaluative expressions, deeply-rooted stereotypical phrases or just endoethnonyms (In Polish: "Rom" – singular (a Roma man), "Romowie" – plural) or exoethnonyms (In Polish: "Cygan" – singular, "Cyganie" – plural) and their respective grammatical forms in Polish, statements that on the face of it and intentionally are not negatively loaded, when examined on grounds of the pragmatic discourse analysis linked with the CDA and supplemented with value analysis (*Minorities* pp. 6-13, 18-22; Kozakiewicz, 2016, pp. 71-93; Slavíčková & Zvagulis, 2014; Szymańska & Hess, 2014, pp. 42-54; van Dijk, 2016, pp. 385-391), reveal their discriminatory nature uncovering antigypsyism deeply rooted in the mentality and language. Concrete structures through which the phenomenon is manifested are diverse and closely linked with the language, in which they are formulated. However, because of the Internet and the content that it proliferates (most intensely within Web 2.0), verbal antigypsyism becomes clearly visible and made public (Hamelmann et al., 2017, pp. 61-62). Leaving aside research and expert messages which do not reach wide circles of recipients, most messages available on the media (including also content generated by non-professionals) that are associated with Roma and received by big audiences are negative (ibid., pp. 69-103), often going beyond the border of hate speech (*Fact sheet*, pp. 1-3). Nevertheless, even when positively loaded messages pop up here and there, comments to them almost always exhibit discriminating tendencies against members of this ethnic group. Obviously, it cannot be said about all comments that are made, as they are not always negative but the trend is rather clear.

1. RESEARCH STUDY: CIRCUMSTANCES AND STRUCTURE

Based on everyday, although not fully methodologically structured, monitoring of the Polish Internet discourse concerning Roma that has been carried out since 2016 one might say that there are many examples of verbal discrimination against Roma in original texts posted on the Internet and comments to them. They are easily identifiable and clearly stand out with their aggressive language and (also in the case of content that is neutral on the face of it) and visible negative attitude to Roma minority encoded in it (Hamelmann et al., 2017, pp. 65-66; Silva et al., 2016). When making press reviews and focusing on information concerning Roma one gets a subjective impression that while texts about Roma are not very frequent, almost always (either in the original

content or in the comments to it) you come across negative opinions. However, based on such fragile foundations it is hard to draw any conclusions as to the scale and power of the negative Internet discourse about Roma. Therefore, below the paper discusses results of a short-term (one month) quantitative study on the Web 2.0 discourse held in Polish based on which we identified and described the scale of statements made about Romani people, which we categorised according to basic criteria into positive or neutral (these two categories are relevant only for statistical reasons as neutral messages satisfy expectations of Roma and do not incur any social damage) and negative, which reflects verbal antigypsyism.

Internet monitoring (February 2019) was based on two keywords in all their forms and numbers: "Cyganie" (Gypsies) and "Romowie" (Roma). Technical scope of the analysis covered the following categories of Internet content: Internet fora, micro-blogs (Twitter), Facebook, video (YouTube), digital press, and press comments. Categories were narrowed after data had been collected because no references were found to Roma in other micro-blogs, on portals offering video content and on any social media (e.g., Instagram). Data were collected for the discourse held in the public space to which access is not restricted by passwords or the need to log-in.

II. RESEARCH

A direct objective of the study was to collect data that would allow identifying the frequency with which Roma-related information appears in diverse online channels and drafting an average characteristics profile for evaluative content featuring in such communication events in relation with the use of endonyms or exoethnonyms.

A research problem significant for the results of the quantitative study consisted in failing to learn the total number of communication events analysed for the presence of keywords. This prevented us from specifying the proportion of Roma-related communication in Web 2.0 discourse held in Polish.

Ultimately, for comparative analysis, we used the following Web 2.0 channels: Internet fora, micro-blogs (Twitter), Facebook, YouTube (with comments), and online press (with comments). There were 1,739 Roma-related communication events, in which the term "Rom" appeared and 3,362 events that contained the exoethnonym. Hence, the disproportion continued and showed a more frequent (66%) use of potentially negative (repressive-discriminatory) term "Cygan" in the Web 2.0 language discourse.
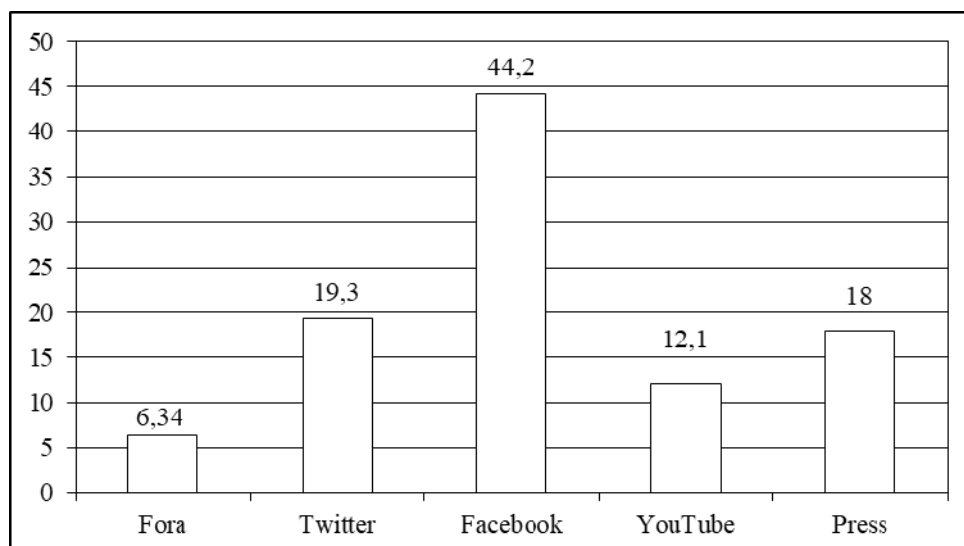
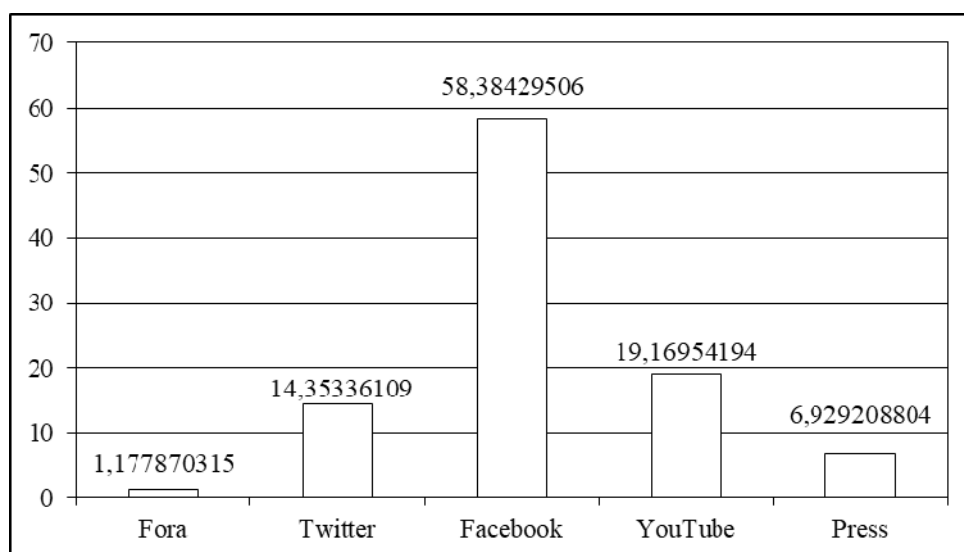Figure 1. Percentage share of the term "Rom" in Web 2.0 channels

Figure 2. Percentage share of the term "Cygan" (Gypsy) in Web 2.0 channels

When it comes to the term "Cygan," it is used clearly predominantly on Facebook. For "Rom" the same social medium (Facebook occurrences dominate in the everyday stream of data) dominates, however, the distance to other channels is a bit smaller. The biggest difference was observed for online press – percentage share of "Rom" was three times higher than "Cygan." Moreover, for comments to original content posted in online press almost 60% cases are "Rom" while "Cygan" – slightly below 50%. In absolute numbers, on Facebook and YouTube the term "Cygan" could be found three times more frequently than "Rom," while in the press "Rom" prevailed although only by 1/3rd. A similar (positive) quantitative trend was visible on the Internet fora, however, its scale was bigger, the term "Rom" was used 2.5 times more frequently. Data for Twitter are balanced and indicate the slight quantitative dominance of the term "Cygan," although the share of "Rom" compared to other communication channels is rather high for Twitter and equivalent to that of online press.
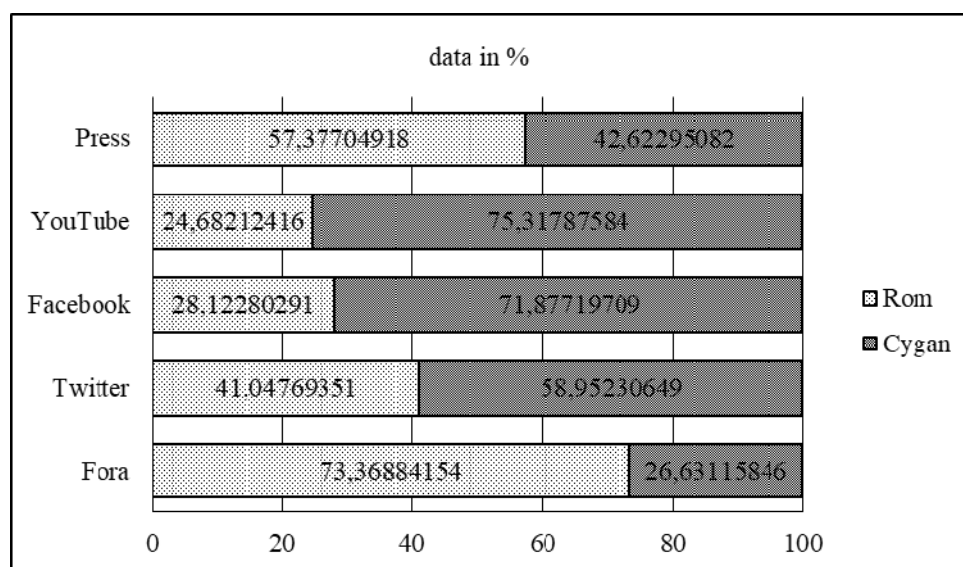

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of the relationship between the use of terms "Cygan" (Gypsy) and "Rom" (a Roma man) in Web 2.0 channels

The comparison of percentage share of "Rom" and "Cygan" for each communication channel shows, which channel covered by the analysis *is the most and*

the least discriminatory. This links with our earlier assumption that "Cygan" more often carries negative content while "Rom" is positive or neutral. As demonstrated in the below more in-depth content analysis (mainly for comments in online press category) it is not always the case, however, we will continue using this distinction so that we could assess concrete messages based on the use of endonyms or exoethnonyms.

The least discriminatory channel (Internet fora) is guided by specific rules. These are often non-accidental groups of people interested in a specific (often specialist) subject, which is why their communication is deliberately targeted and phrased. Their focus on concrete subjects does not leave much room for too many side discussions and they very consciously strive to stick to general social norms, including relatively neutral attitude to Roma. It imposes a specific, automatic language discipline and, based on content analysis of separate contributions and the use of the term "Cyganie" (Gypsies) in these contributions posted on the Internet fora, in most cases the term is used not to express negative attitude to this ethnic group but results from standard uses of the language and discriminatory habits embedded in them.

The most discriminatory is YouTube, however, not when it comes to the original content posted on this social medium but, above all, to comments. Their multiplicity, hard-line assessment of content, and clear verbal discrimination have earned YouTube this position. We need to admit, however, that audiovisual original content potentially exerts the strongest impact and elicits the most intense reactions (Patzak, 1982, pp. 110-112; Treichler, 1967). Data from Facebook do not differ much (3 percentage points) from those for YouTube. The ranking of Facebook in the frequency of the use of the term "Cygan" can be explained by the fact that FB is often viewed as a very private social medium. As a result, authors post public messages and comments, which they treat as part of private communication, hence they sometimes contain statements, which they would have never posted (deliberately) in the public discourse.

Online press, which is a combination of user comments and texts authored by professional (although not always) journalists is the most specific component of all Web 2.0 elements of discourse that we examined. On the face of it, apparently the least discriminatory and predominantly (in relative and absolute numbers) using the term "Rom." Therefore, in this case a detailed contextual and pragmatic qualitative analysis was carried out for concrete statements published by journalists and featuring in comments. Examination focused on evaluative expressions included in statements about Roma and identified attitude to them (often unconscious) encoded in the language.
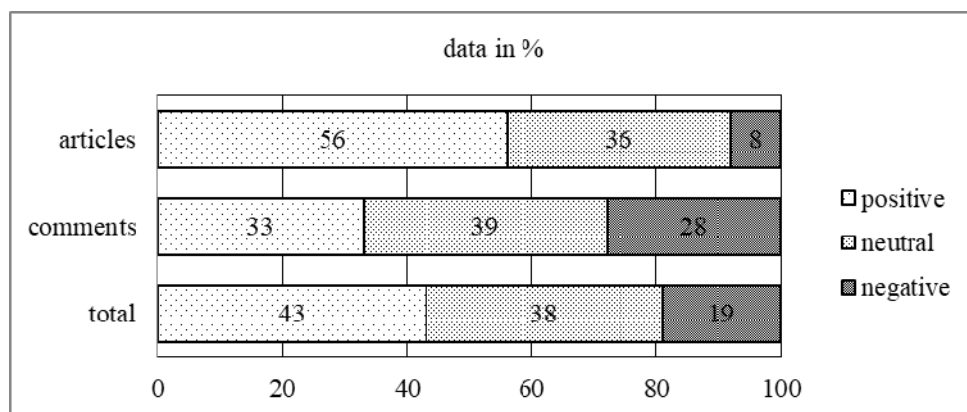
data in %

articles | 56 | 36 | 8 |
comments | 33 | 39 | 28 |
total | 43 | 38 | 19 |

0   20   40   60   80   100

□ positive
⊠ neutral
▓ negative

Figure 4. Proportion of positively or negatively loaded and neutral statements in the category Online Press for endonym "Rom"

data in %

articles | 41 | 47 | 12 |
comments | 5 | 10 | 85 |
total | 22 | 27 | 51 |

0   20   40   60   80   100
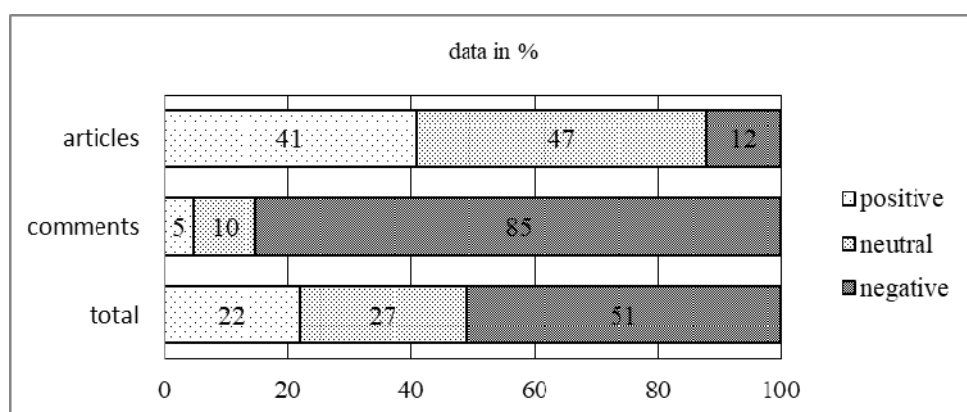
□ positive
⊠ neutral
▓ negative

Figure 5. Proportion of positively or negatively loaded and neutral statements in the category Online Press for the exoethnonym "Cygan" (Gypsy)

Special attention is drawn to very small difference (15 percentage points) in the positive evaluation of the two terms in press articles. That is the outcome of the fact that the term "Cygan" is being, consequently, and partly in accordance with the intention of the Polish Roma, used in names and in historical contexts. For comments it works differently; negative attitude is linked with the term "Cygan" while "Rom" is associated with at least neutral evaluation as stipulated in the initial assumptions. As many as 85% comments in which the word "Cygan" was used evaluate the group negatively (only 5% positive

evaluations), while for the word "Rom" only 28% statements were negative. On the other hand, it is "as much as" 28% and only 1/3 of these comments exhibited positive attitude to Roma.
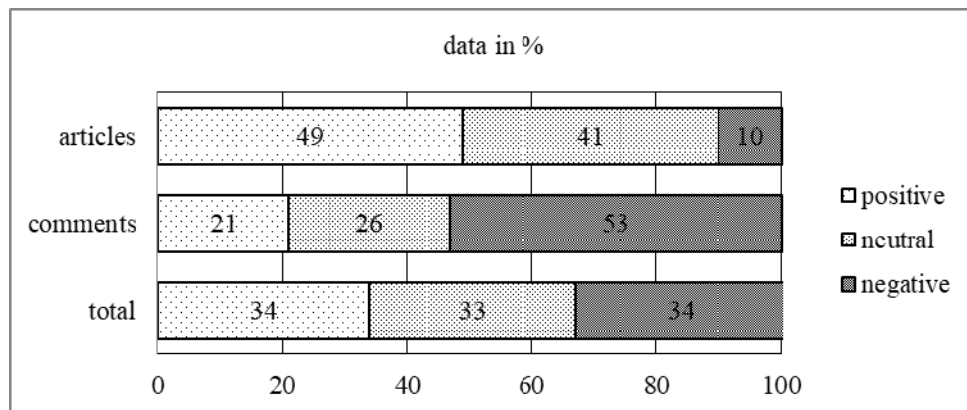

Figure 6. Percentage share of positively or negatively loaded and neutral statements in the category Online Press for endoethnonym "Rom" and exoethnonym "Cygan" (Gypsy)

Summing up all the examined comments, irrespective of the term that was used, 53% are negative and 21% positive while in journalistic content the proportions are reversed in favour of positive evaluation (10% and 49% respectively) with neutral statements (41%) being much broader and closer to positive.

The low proportion of negative evaluative messages (regardless of the term used) in online press articles should be seen as a positive phenomenon. It most probably flows from the awareness of professional journalists and editors that messages generated by them are public, from their ethnic verbal sensitivity, and the reluctance of ideologically neutral press to stir hostility even in the smallest group of the readers.

Evaluation analyses for other investigated channels in Web 2.0 discourse demonstrated that for the Internet fora and for Twitter proportions of evaluation linked with the use of "Rom" and "Cygan" are close to overall results for press communication messages. The analysis of YouTube and Facebook revealed a clear domination (similar to comments in the Online Press category) of negative evaluation using the word "Cygan" and a far broader collection of neutral statements using the term "Rom" than in an analogous group of commentators in the Online Press category.

III. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The study had to cope with significant difficulty created by the refusal of the agent who monitored the Internet against the use of specific keywords to provide data about the total population of examininig communication events over the month covered by the study. With this information it would be possible to calculate, concretely and precisely, how much place in the Polish Web 2.0 discourse is occupied by Roma-related subjects. Any estimation effort in this area does not make sense. However, in the entire Polish Web 2.0 discourse over a month, slightly more than 5,000 (non-unique) references to Roma were identified. Considering global tendencies in the use of the Internet (Lewis, 2019); 28.5 million of Polish Internet users a month (*Polscy internauci w marcu 2019*, 2019a) and everyday activity of 19.6 million of Polish users of social media (*Polscy internauci w czerwcu 2019*, 2019b) and the fact that Genius registers 130k occurrences from 32 countries a second, it becomes obvious that the size of content filling the Web 2.0 discourse every day is huge. Based on this general overview of hard-to-compare data, we may conclude that Roma-related communication and content is neither permanent nor significant component of everyday communication within the Web 2.0 in Poland. Moreover, the scale of verbal discrimination on the Internet is much smaller than one would expect considering the general problem of discrimination and antigypsyism observed in scientifically non-parametrical Web 2.0 reality (Nicolae, 2004, p. 3).

Analysis of data obtained from the study allows concluding that the noun "Cygan" (Gypsy) is repressive and in most cases when it features in Web 2.0 discourse, it is negatively loaded. Out of the total examined portfolio, 66% statements, in which Roma was referred to as "Cyganie" (Gypsies) were manifestations of antigypsyism. In other cases, the messages were not discriminatory. That was the case of not only press articles referring to historical events but also to comments.

Perpetuated language habit (the power of habit that is not consistently eliminated through systematic education is obvious in language-related contexts) means that not all users associate a given name or term with anything negative. This is confirmed not only by positive but also by neutral statements. However, it is a reflection of the absence of linguistic, ethnic sensitivity which at practical levels turns into unconscious linguistic discrimination. When it comes to using the term "Roma," negative evaluation is visible in only 8% of the statements made by online press journalists. It pops up much more often in comments

and user-original content posted by non-professionals better depicting a typical Web 2.0 discourse with on average 30% occurrence rate in such messages. In many instances, it is the effect of either primitive mockery targeting the resemblance between the sound of the endoethnonym and the name of Italian capital or using the name by people whose attitude to Roma is negative as a *politically correct* substitute for "Gypsy" preserving, however, the discriminatory tone permeating the whole statement (van Dijk, 1987, p. 57).

As a side effect of the study, we validated the assumption about the link between Poles' negative attitude to Roma and the use of the exoethnonym "Gypsy" in Web 2.0 discourse. The diversity of its uses demonstrates that Polish language is filled with historical and culturally embedded antigypsyist habitual patterns. Although they impact the discourse as such, including the discourse held on Web 2.0, nevertheless, they are not reflections of conscious discrimination but manifestations of the absence of linguistic ethnic sensitivity. On the other hand, however, it is hard to consider unconscious these Roma-related discriminatory statements featuring in communication public space only because their authors understood the space for Web 2.0 discourse as private.

The Internet has become an open forum that is not guided by any rules. The freedom of speech and expression understood as the possibility to say what one wants (Nicolae, 2004, p. 3) is only superficially limited by administrators of servers and websites and does not provide a real answer to verbal violence existing in it. This is how the Internet has become not just a space for communication where minorities may share their originally generated content, but another space for discrimination, which has incorporated all the prejudice against them. It is not the official, institutional, journalist-originating content proliferated by the Internet media that poses the major problem, but messages posted by the users of Web 2.0 discourse. This is where the language reveals social attitudes to Roma and, like in everyday discrimination, deeply rooted antigypsyism.

One might risk saying that quantitatively minor scale of verbal violence against the Roma demonstrated by the studies is of lesser importance than unconsciously perpetuating of its elements in the language and their approval by other participants to the discourse. Verbal violence developed on such foundations reflects the embeddedness of antigypsyism in linguistic structures. European societies should disapprove of any of its forms (Nicolae, 2004, pp. 2-3). The decision of the Swiss Federal Court who found Internet user guilty of spreading hateful content (although not targeting Roma) by clicking the "like" button is an example of positive action in this area (Larson, 2017). At the same

time, it confirms the scale of co-responsibility of ordinary Web 2.0 users for the reality they create in its (public) discourse.

Both conscious and unconscious antigypsyist verbal behaviour hinders the integration of Roma as by perpetuating the negative discourse concerning this ethnic group it explicitly and by default impacts the way its members are treated, even if the behaviour manifests itself predominantly in the public Web 2.0 discourse. Using the exoethnonym "Gypsy" is a powerful repressive component in this context. Education is the only way to change verbal behaviours in the public discourse; above all education of representatives of the mainstream society. This is a huge challenge as it involves educating reluctant learners. However, as long as the situation does not change, unjustified (at least on historical grounds) uses of forms of the noun "Gypsy" in any type of content will automatically highlight the potentially antigypsyist nature of messages and become the hallmark of negative evaluation and an instrument of discrimination (Plascencia, 2017, pp. 98-99, 105-106). Also, information in the press about the Romani origin of the perpetrators of crimes and offences should be viewed as antigypsyist. With the exception of this significant issue, regardless of the political profile of online press, journalistic digital content on Web 2.0 reflects the lowest verbal antigypsyism amongst all the examined online media. However, its Web 2.0 affiliation gets revealed in combination with readers' comments. Hence investigating into press communication (in its printed version, i.e., without comments), could produce completely different results. Meanwhile, however, a survey of the Polish Internet discourse on Roma, conducted in 2020, showed that there has been no quantitative or qualitative change in the level and scope of their linguistic discrimination. Given the widespread threat of a pandemic, which could encourage the identification of the Roma as the scapegoat, the lack of change itself must be considered a positive phenomenon.

The complexity of the discussed phenomena together with digital manifestation of everyday discrimination and the spreading of verbal violence and antigypsyist patterns perpetuated in the language across the Internet discourse make up the mediatization of discrimination (antigypsyism). In this case we can see how changes depend on the possibilities offered by the media and the social context (Hepp et al., 2010, pp. 224-226; Schulz, 2004), for which discrimination, racism, antigypsyism are scalable categories in its description. Attention needs to be drawn to the fact that there are two mechanisms underpinning the mediatization of antigypsyism. On the one hand, it is the mediatization of discrimination and verbal violence, on the other hand, a much weaker (quantitatively and qualitatively) mediatization of combating them (Saunders, 2011, pp. 149-150, 152).

CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this paper, it was posed the principal goal of this analysis concerning the scale and structure of antigypsyist semantics on the Polish Internet. Based on the completed and described, quantitative studies and additional analysis of the general position of the Roma in the process of mediatization in the field of verbal discrimination the research conducted in this study leads to the following conclusions.

Despite the fact that the correct form of naming the analyzed minority is endoethnonym "Romowie" analysis showed a more frequent use of exoethnonym "Cyganie." This confirmed that Polish language is filled with historical and culturally embedded antigypsyist habitual patterns. Analysis of data obtained from the study allows concluding that the exoethnonym "Cygan" is repressive and in most cases it is negatively loaded. This is especially visible not in the original media content, but in the comments of users. Because audiovisual original content potentially exerts the strongest impact and elicits the most intense reactions, the largest number of direct antigypsyist comments appeared on YouTube, making it *the most discriminatory* element of the Polish Web 2.0 discourse. Pragmatic mechanisms show that antigypsyism also manifests itself in statements using the endoethnonym "Romowie," and the negative assessment of this group is forced by the sender of the message on its recipient through the structure of the statement itself. The Internet and especially Web 2.0 have become a field of the specific understanding of freedom of speech, creating a new space for discrimination and thus confirming the mediatization of antigypsyism in its two aspects. Roma-related content is not a quantitatively significant component of Polish Web 2.0 in Poland. Moreover, the scale of verbal discrimination on the Internet is much smaller than the general discrimination against Roma in Poland.

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JĘZYKOWA DYSKRYMINACJA ROMÓW
W POLSKOJĘZYCZNYM DYSKURSIE WEB 2.0

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest omówienie wyników badań dotyczących skali dyskryminacji werbalnej Romów w dyskursie Web 2.0 prowadzonym w języku polskim. Badania te pozwoliły określić skalę nie tylko intencjonalnego antycyganizmu przejawianego przez uczestników dyskursu, ale także zwrócić uwagę na specyficzne dla danej kultury zwyczaje utrwalone w języku, które w sposób niezamierzony sprzyjają dyskryminacji Romów. Ponadto uzyskane i zinterpretowane wyniki pomagają w wyjaśnieniu omawianych zjawisk jako elementów mediatyzacji dyskryminacji, rozwijającej się głównie w Internecie, przede wszystkim w obszarze określanym jako Web 2.0, a szczególnie widocznej w mediach społecznościowych.

Słowa kluczowe: język; pragmatyka; krytyczna analiza dyskursu; mediatyzacja; media społecznościowe; web 2.0; Romowie; antycyganizm; dyskryminacja.