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**INTERPERSONAL METAFUNCTION IN OPINION  
TEXTS IN BRITISH AND CZECH MEDIA DIS-  
COURSE**

**Diploma thesis**

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I hereby declare that I have written this diploma thesis on my own and presented a full account of the works cited and the consulted literature.

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Theoretical part</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1. What we talk about when we talk about an opinion text</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2. Language as a functional element of social practice</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1. Metafunctions	12
2.2. The importance of context	13
<b>3. On media discourse</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1. Going digital	17
3.2. On the selected media	21
3.2.1. British context	21
The Guardian	22
The Independent	23
3.2.2. Czech context	23
Aktuálně.cz	24
iHNed.cz	24
<b>3. Simulated relationship</b>	<b>26</b>
3.1. Authors	27
Jan Lipold	28
Martin Fendrych	28
Petr Honzejek	29
Jakub Horák	29
John Rentoul	30
Mark Steel	30
George Monbiot	31
Owen Jones	32
<b>4. Methodology of the analysis</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Practical part</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>5. Analysis</b>	<b>36</b>
5.1. Proximity	36
5.2. General groups	38
5.3. Persons - are you in or are you out?	42
5.3.1. First person singular	42
5.3.2. Second person plural/singular	45
5.3.3. First person plural	48
5.4. Imitation of a dialogue	51
5.5. General results	54
5.6. Other phenomena	57
5.6.1. Cultural references	57
5.6.2. Personal style	58

Factual - Analysis	59
Opinionated - Commentary	59
Satirical	59
Literary	60
5.6.3. Duality	61
Natural enemies	62
Far or close to home	62
Britain vs. EU, Remainers vs. Leavers	64
The people vs. the system/the government	65
5.6.4. Positioning	66
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Resumé</b>	<b>70</b>
Consulted Literature:	71
Works cited:	71
Analysed texts	74

# Introduction

## "Comment is free, but facts are sacred"

C. P. Scott presented his famous claim in 1921 in his essay "A Hundred Years"<sup>1</sup>, marking the centenary of *The Guardian*, where he worked as an editor and later became an owner. The message Scott conveys in this simple sentence – which later became the motto of *The Guardian* – is quite clear to anybody at least lightly acquainted with the world of the media. Giving voice to various opinions for, as Scott states, "the voice of opponents no less than that of friends has a right to be heard", while being responsible with the truth, the facts.

Volumes have been written about the factual practice of the news, long before the current "post-truth age" in which the discussions about facts and their desirable presentation are frequent and comprehensive to the point of redundancy, while the opinion is such a wide and seemingly self-explanatory notion that it does not seem to require analysis. But – is it really that simple? Are opinion texts in the media just expressed opinions about facts? Or are they more complex than that? Comments should, in Scott's view, have the freedom to be expressed. But what else are comments free to be – or do?

In this thesis I will argue that unlike the news/facts, opinions/comments are free to directly engage. They are free to be personal, to communicate on a human level. They are by definition free to persuade, even manipulate. The authors of opinion texts are free to choose the tools not only to convey information and their interpretations of it, they are also free to use textual, contextual and intertextual means to enact a relationship between them and the reader.

Considering the principle of communication choices and the functional level of language, I will turn to Halliday's theory of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which introduces the concept of metafunctions, for the theoretical basis. Since the thesis aims to focus on the interpersonal aspect of the opinion texts, of all three Halliday's metafunctions, the central will be the interpersonal metafunction, however, the three cannot exist entirely separately. As a support for the functional approach and to illustrate the practical implications of the described environment, the opinion texts will be also defined in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2002/nov/29/1>

text type/genre. This definition is also important in terms of the reader's expectation, for genre presents the general type of text in discussion and therefore a template with which a common consumer of the media would have an experience. An experience with a number of texts of the particular type results in expectations with which the reader approaches any given text of the particular type.

Since the SFL is a general theory of language, the particular discourse of the media will be introduced more closely, followed by description of the intricacies of digital journalism.

While the SFL will be used as the theoretical background, as I do regards the opinion texts in functional sense, the analytical tool for describing the text type and ultimately for the specific analysis of a particular aspect I chose Critical Discourse Analysis, following Fairclough's view of discourse as "use of language seen as a form of social practice, and discourse analysis is analysis of how texts work within sociocultural practice." (7)

The media are an increasingly more digital environment, which is why texts have been chosen from online platforms. Online texts are naturally prominent in the space of social networks, they are convenient in terms of sharing, immediacy, speed of the information spreading and intertextuality.

The practical part of the thesis will consist of an analysis of the immediate tools that allow the author to establish a bond with the reader beyond the mere process of communication, and an excursion to the more contextually based features of the opinion texts that carry similar effects but are not as direct as the analyzed phenomena.

This thesis aims to map out the environment in which opinion texts exist and function in general, to serve as a ground stone for the present and future research. The present research will specifically look into the strategies which the authors of opinion texts choose to use to enact a relationship with the media consumer, to create texts that are more engaging and presumably trustworthy for the reader, and to measure the usage of the chosen strategies, while also mentioning other types of strategies. The texts were chosen from two publications representing the English discourse (*The Guardian* and *The Independent*) and two publications representing the Czech discourse (*Aktuálně.cz*, *iHNed.cz*). The two discourses will be compared in the analysis, however, it is important to note, that the scale of the analysis is not such that it could be representative of the whole English or Czech written media discourse.

# Theoretical part

## *1. What we talk about when we talk about an opinion text*

Even though I do not intend to analyze the texts used for the practical part in terms of genre analysis, it is important to define the type of text I will be dealing with in order to lay out characteristics that are expected of the text from both the point of the author and the reader. The definitions I will be presenting can be seen as prescriptive and the everyday use of the text may not fully conform to the exact structure that is described – in fact in Czech stylistic tradition the cover term “opinion text” can refer to several genres/text types. As Fairclough (1995) points out:

“When people produce or interpret texts, they orientate towards conventions as ideal types, by which I mean that texts are produced and interpreted by reference to them but certainly do not simply instantiate them. In saying that conventions have the status of ideal types I am not suggesting they are purely imaginary; there are texts which closely match ideal types (as well as others which do not), so that people learn them from concrete textual experience. Let us work from the most abstract to the most concrete (textual) level.” (13)

Fairclough differentiates text types and genres:

At a lower level of abstraction, text types are those configurations of genres (and so of discourses, voices, styles, modes, activity types) which have developed and become conventionalized for particular categories of activity in particular types of social situation. A text type is situationally and historically quite particular, a genre is more abstract, though particular text types may be more or less generically complex, closer to or more distant from genres. (Fairclough, 14)

Since I am not attempting to pursue genre perspective in this paper, I will not be dealing with this distinction and will only address what Fairclough would classify as a text type, the conventionalised use.

The general characteristics, such as they will be specified in this chapter, however, are widely used in practice, therefore they are repetitive and both the author and the reader can be presumed to have previous experience with them. This experience shapes the way the reader approaches the text, what the expectations are, how they are fulfilled or disrupted and what effect it creates.

In the spectrum of traditional media text formats, opinion is, unsurprisingly, one of the admittedly and deliberately opinion-based genres, which means that it does not fall under the desired standard of news objectivity. To claim, however, that the new stories, a format which should be strictly fact-based and not opinionated, are objective would mean to



ignore the reality. As Blažková (2012) says: “A newspaper is capable of expressing its ideology by publishing stories about events which are prioritized as news and thus highlighted. Additionally, a paper can also be adding various meaning to these events when commenting on them.” (226) It is the comment part of the media practice that involves the opinion pieces.

In the Czech stylistic view of the opinion, the format falls into the reporting system (as opposed to the so-called news writing). The news writing system focuses on factual information about topics that are considered relevant or interesting for the reader (Jílek, 55). There is an ideal requirement for objectivity, unbiased and balanced description (58). Reporting preserves the informative quality in many ways and adds interpretation, analysis, opinions with persuasive element and entertainment (79) The linguistic features connected to reporting are very varied and the form allows for greater creativity. Since subjectivity is overt and deliberate, it is possible and sometimes even desirable for the author to make his or her individual style noticeable. Jílek (2009) identifies the origin of opinion piece (*názor, komentář* in Czech) in a news story, for it reacts immediately to current content of the news section, uses the facts from it and interprets them, comments on them. In terms of linguistic features Jílek points out the usage of subjective line of reasoning, expressive words and shallow, baseless interpretation (92). Osvaldová, Halada et al. (2007) share this definition and note that the tradition of opinion in the Czech discourse tends to be polemic, political and at times even satirical (103). All of these features are also true of editorial, which can be viewed as a subtype of opinion.

Harcup (2014) defines objective journalism as the kind that “separates the reporting of facts from the journalist’s (or news organization’s) own comment or opinion”.

It is important to note, that the theoretical definitions and the practical usage of media texts may differ in some aspects. Theoretical literature in both English and Czech discourse fulfill a rather descriptive role, rather than having an effect of a manual. In the end the various media bend the genres to their needs, their brand and specifics of the newsroom. It is not frequent in the case of Czech media, but the British newspapers tend to have either a public or non-public editorial guide with instruction specific to the tradition and practice of the medium. Another element is – especially regarding the non-objective portion of the media content – the authorial style of prominent journalists, in which case their individuality is encouraged by the editors and sought after by the consumers.

The form is not the only area where the theory and practice do not always correspond. As Harcup points out, “journalism training and ethical code emphasize the separation

between fact and opinion, but in practice the line is often blurred, not only in forms of advocacy journalism or oppositional reporting that reject ideas of impartiality but also in tabloid newspapers that frequently incorporate unattributed comment into the text of news stories”<sup>2</sup> Opinion is “a personal, collective, or organizational viewpoint, the expression of which is traditionally eschewed in news reporting unless it is attributed to a source or the subject of the story. While news sticks to the facts plus attribution, editorial columns exist to give the editor’s official opinion on an issue, and personal features or columns are free to state the opinions of their named authors”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Harcup, keyword Opinion

<sup>3</sup> Harcup, keyword Opinion

## ***2. Language as a functional element of social practice***

In 1961 Halliday introduced the approach to linguistics labelled Systemic functional linguistics (SFL), building mainly on the theoretical influence of Malinowski, Whorf and Firth, under whom Halliday studied. (Kress, 1976, 6)

Concerning Malinowski, both Halliday and Firth accept his definition of meaning as the function in context, Halliday does not adopt most of Malinowski's functions, but he incorporates certain features into his system of metafunctions. Whorf's influence is mainly in his relation of language and culture. Firth was Halliday's Cambridge professor and Halliday took over his attempt to link linguistic components to sociolinguistics (referring to Malinowski), but Kress argues that Halliday should not be considered a Neo-Firthian linguist, because he does not use Firth's work in prosodic analysis, which is what many Firth's followers consider to be his most significant contribution.

Halliday himself also mentions the works of Hjelmslev and Prague Linguistic Circle as influential for his theory.

Halliday taught his approach at the University of Sydney and influences the creation of Australian systemics developed by Jim Martin, Joan Rothery, Fran Christie and others. Other trails of SFL can be found in the UK in the research of Margaret Berry, Dick Hudson, Chris Burler, Robin Fawcett, Geoff Thompson, Tom Bartlett and others. A Toronto branch includes Michael Gregory, Jim Benson, Michael Cummings and Bill Greaves. Perhaps the most important follower of Halliday's theory is Christian Matthiessen, who currently resides at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

SFL is a theory of language, which examines meaning in social context and considers the main feature of the language its function, while still taking into account the structure. Halliday identifies five dimensions of language, which are structure (syntagmatic order), system (paradigmatic order), stratification, instantiation and metafunction. (20) He recognizes the two basic functions of language, which are to make sense of the human experience and act out human social relationships. (30) For the purposes of this thesis we are going to delve deeper into his concept of metafunctions and later to the addition of context.

## 2.1. Metafunctions

The triad of metafunctions Halliday came up with reflects into several layers of his theory starting with the three lines of meaning in the clause (clause as a message corresponds with textual metafunction, clause as an exchange corresponds to interpersonal metafunction and clause as representation corresponds to ideational metafunction) and he argues that: “the three-fold pattern of meaning is not simply characteristic of the clause; these three kinds of meaning run throughout the whole of language, and in a fundamental respect they determine the way that language has evolved. They are referred to in systemic account of grammar as metafunctions...and the concept of ‘metafunction’ is one of the basic concepts around which the theory is construed.” (2013, 84)

In terms of why Halliday introduces a new term for the functions of language, he presents an explanation suggesting that: “there is a long tradition of talking about the functions of language in contexts where ‘function’ simply means purpose or way of using language, and has no significance for the analysis of language itself...But the systemic analysis shows that functionality is *intrinsic* to language: that is, to say, the entire architecture of language is arranged along functional lines. Language is as it is because of the functions in which it has evolved in the human species. The term ‘metafunction’ was adopted to suggest that function was an integral component with the overall theory.” (32)

At this point he names three metafunctions: ideational (which consists of experiential and logical), interpersonal and textual.

The ideational metafunction is language concerned with the theory of human experience, the experiential part refers to the grammatical choices that the speaker makes to construe meanings about the world, whereas the logical function is linked to the logical–semantic relationships between one clausal unit and another. (Halliday 2009, 232)

The interpersonal metafunction is concerned with the choices the speaker makes to enact his/her personal and social relationships with other people.

“This kind of meaning is more active: if the ideational function of the grammar is ‘language as reflection’, this is ‘language as action’. We call it the interpersonal metafunction, to suggest that it is both interactive and personal.” (Halliday 2013, 31)

The third metafunction relates to the construction of text, it is therefore called textual. Halliday suggests, that it can be considered an enabling or facilitating function “since

both the others...depend on being able to build up a sequence of discourse, organizing the discursive flow, and creating the cohesion and continuity as it moves along.” (31–32)

While the SFL is used as the theoretical background, as I do regards the opinion texts in functional sense, the analytical tool for describing the text type and ultimately for the specific analysis of a particular aspect I chose Critical Discourse Analysis. Fairgough follows Halliday's premise "in assuming that language in texts always simultaneously functions ideationally in the representation of experience and the world, interpersonally in constituting social interaction between participants in discourse, and textually in tying parts of a text together into a coherent whole (a text, precisely) and tying texts to situational contexts (e.g. through situational deixis)." (6)

## **2.2. The importance of context**

As Talbot points out, a "particular discursive event...does not happen in social vacuum; it is shaped by situational, institutional and social structures," (13) and concerning the previously mentioned Halliday's kinds of meaning she adds that the cues to those meanings "are interpreted with the help of other resources beyond the text. A text only has meaning when it is engaged with, but its formal features impose constraints on what it can mean, on how it can be interpreted." (14)

Outside of the scheme of the language dimensions that Halliday introduces, he mentions context as a vital feature in language analysis, for every act of communication functions in context of a particular situation. He therefore introduces his 'ecological' theory of language', which takes the factor of situation and culture into account.

The contextual potential of a community is its culture – what we call the context of culture, following Malinowski. The context of culture is what the members of a community can mean in cultural terms; that is, we interpret culture as a system of higher-level meanings – as an environment of meanings in which various semiotic systems operate." (32)

While he admits that analyzing a particular culture might be too difficult of a struggle, he suggests that there is a manageable way to do so through identifying and describing institutions and supports the theory by claiming that: "systemic functional contributions along these lines have been made in a number of areas including the family, education, administration, the media, and healthcare." (33)

True to the form, Halliday presents three categories of context that can be linked to the system of metafunctions, and these are field, tenor and mode; those he defines as “sets of related variables, with ranges of contrasting values. Together they define a multi-dimensional semiotic space – the environment of meanings in which language, other semiotic systems and social systems operate.”

Field values correspond to the ideational metafunction, they refer to the nature of the social and semiotic activity, what is going on in the particular situation. Following the scheme, the interpersonal metafunction resonates with tenor and refers to the participants of the situation and focuses on the roles they play in the socio-semiotic activity. Mode refers to the role of the language and other semiotic systems present in the situation and corresponds to the textual metafunction. (33)

When approaching text, we are able to analyze whether they tend to be more field-oriented, tenor-oriented or if the orientation is a combination of the two. The implication for the media discourse and for the particular type of texts we are dealing with in this thesis, the opinion, will be explained later.

### **3. On media discourse**

The position of the media in present-day society should not be understated, it is a source of information that forms public opinion, is able to shift moods and trends, set topics and state state what is and is not relevant for the relevant for the society's knowledge. As Talbot (2007) puts it: "for some sections of society, at least, the media have largely replaced older institutions (such as the church, or trade unions) as the primary source of understanding of the world" (3)

When focusing on the media environment and the content it produces, we have to make distinction between the terms *text* and *discourse*. We view the two through analytical perspective: *text* as the observable product of interaction, a cultural object, and discourse as the process of interaction itself, a cultural activity. (Talbot 2007, 9) Focusing on media we will understand *text* as the products of journalistic work, including actual texts, videos, images etc. *Discourse* will encompass the activity of making them – the character of the work, the position of the author, institution, the media environment and the intertextual and interactive elements connected to it.

The default nature of the media discourse is being public and undergo different rules and influences than face-to-face or mediated interaction – in this case it is customary to talk about mediated quasi-interaction, which is in its essence monological and pointed at an indefinite, dispersed audience. The monological feature can be disputed when accounting for the element of intertextuality, which will be discussed later.

In attempt to come closer to the audience, the media cover the public nature with an illusion of private approach, which modifies the communicative choices of the journalist/presenter. Talbot brings up an example of TV host, who create an illusion of private interaction with the audience which reflects in the language; she argues that: "while the context of broadcasting production is the public domain, most people listen or watch in the private domain, where they do not necessarily want to be lectured, patronised or otherwise 'got at'." (25)

In the print media the concern is similar, the reader needs to be taken into consideration and in case of opinion-based text the author also constructs a personalized interaction with the reader using specific language. In the attempt to give the illusion of interpersonal communication, media personalities, such as TV or radio hosts, reviewers or opinion authors need to establish credibility for the target addressees, to give a firm impression,

that their name and opinion has a value and it is in the interest of the viewer/listener/reader to pay attention to them.

Any text can be said to have an implied reader, an imaginary addressee with particular values, preoccupation and commonsense understanding . In having to construct an imaginary person to speak to, media producers are placed in a powerful situation. They are in a position to attribute values and attitudes to their addressees, presenting them in a take-for-granted way. (Talbot 2007, 47)

Of course this approach could imply the mediocentric paradigm, giving the media absolute power and no competence in choice to the audience, but it is not the case. The position of the addressee in the communication process is of great importance; Widdowson (2012) says that “co-operation is a communicative imperative. Unless you co-operate in some degree, you cannot communicate at all. But since co-operation must involve some convergence of space, there is always another imperative involved which has to be taken into account: what I have called the territorial imperative – the natural urge to assert one’s own personal space and protect it against intrusion. The enactment of any discourse involves the tactical reconciliation of these two imperatives as each participant negotiates position on line.” (14) In the specific situation of media communication we can see the parallel in the author’s struggle to communicate his/her position to the reader and the reader’s defensive impulse to prevent this to succeed entirely.

Being aware of that the media producers do need to strategize in terms of the approach to the reader a personalizing the communication is one of the strategies which are provably being used. Since the ways to track and describe the character of the readership are improving in efficiency all the time, the authors are more and more capable to adjust the language to the desired target group.

While analyzing the audience we usually work with the default presupposition of the readers full attention and understanding. However, Hermes (1995) warns that: “it is simply not possible to read characteristics on audience from the surface of the text: there is no single text that has the required monopoly position to exert such influence. All texts are used in context of other media texts and genres; all readers bring their social and cultural background to texts; reading can be a fleeting, transient pastime that does not leave much of a trace.” (147) In this thesis, though, we will dismiss such cases, for our attention is predominantly on the producers their process, strategies and their concept of the target reader.

Drawing on Hermes’ quote and Talbot’s quote in the chapter about context we can claim



the necessity to approach the text not as a singular analysis subject without ties to anything external. Here we encounter the concept of dialogism or intertextuality, a crucial concept to the whole media discourse, but even stronger in the online media, as explained later. Talbot defines dialogism as: “conceiving of a media text as a tissue of voices and traces of other texts; when we engage with it we go into dialogue with them. (63)

Building on Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, the term intertextuality was coined by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s and was primarily used in literary theory.

Warnick and Heinemann (2012) do not restrict intertextuality only to text but extend it to a larger scope claiming that: “intertextuality is not just cross-reference and allusion between written texts. It also includes response to the larger cultural context and elements within that context with which readers are likely to be familiar.” (77)

### **3.1. Going digital**

Media in general are very prone and at the same time vulnerable to technological development. With every major innovation, especially involving speeding of the communication process, some portion of attention is taken away from the older media and given to the newer and faster ones. In the beginning of the digital revolution, there were public and even expert voices suggesting, that the printed press will be rendered irrelevant by the widely spread internet access, but similarly to the previous technological changes such worries were proven baseless.

After the initial uncertainty how to approach the free and incomprehensibly vast content available, the publications usually chose to transfer individual parts of the content on the web. Where several years ago a web user could find mainly news service and entertainment in a slightly sketchy form, since the online content was perceived as a secondary product to many print publications, today the online content receives more and more editorial attention. The media I am addressing in this thesis were and still are known among the media consumers for their opinion pieces in the print form (apart from *Aktuálně.cz*, which never had a print form) and this reflected even on their online presence in time. That proves that online journalism does not seem to obliterate the traditional genre forms like opinion pieces and columns. In online forms these sometimes tend to melt together and in certain aspects they also incorporate features of blog.

The digitalization of media, however, does bring significant changes to the form of the presented content. One might presume that in the digital space length would not be a problem, since the layout is not restricted, but the reading behavior online is very different from print. As Warnick and Heinemann (2012) point out:

Web reading...is discontinuous and fragmented; readers read rapidly and piece together what they read from various sources. As Nancy Kaplan has noted, in Web reading, there is no predetermined next node in the reading process, and readers must continually make choices about what to read next. As they read, they proceed by weighing alternatives, constructing forecasts, and then continually modifying their expectations. . . They are restless. In such an environment, intertextuality has an appeal. It is modular and does not depend on sequenced text. It offers a wide repertoire of ways to engage attention, such as the use of hyperlinks to external resources, as readers become complicit in constructing the meanings of the texts they encounter. (77)

While the reading habits evolve and change based on the character of the reading environment, the choice of source of the information is not as random as it would seem, as Warnick and Heinemann also argue: "Media ownership is as important as ever in the convergent media environment. The key global communication firms are both more concentrated (in their range of owners) and more extended (in their global reach) than ever before. And while the Internet may provide access to a much greater range of media providers, many users still obtain their media from a handful of sources." (183)

I select three aspects of online access that influence the approach to the content: speed, convenience connected to readership and the aforementioned intertextuality. Speed of the information exchange is vital to evolving society and is a characteristic quality the media strive towards and compete for. Even though the radio, TV and the print media still hold a strong position on the media market, even the most conservative traditional media establish an online presence and its significance keeps getting stronger. Thanks to its immediacy and interactive element, online media became a key player in the public debate, gaining even more value when combined with the social networks. It may be argued that the speed could impair the quality of the editing process of the production, because „the process of digitalization usually entails more work being carried out at greater speeds by fewer people“<sup>4</sup>. There are several possible reasons for this approach to be accepted in practice – the print version is finalized and cannot be changed, so strict editorial attention is vital, whereas the online version can be edited any time. Also print and online texts differ in terms of the reader's perception capacities, the choices and

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<sup>4</sup> (Harcup, keyword Digital media)

restrictions of length, structure and position in the publication are governed by the character of the medium.

Due to the speed requirement the news are seen “in the making”, mimicking the process of TV breaking news in a sense, the information has to be presented as soon as possible, preferably for the particular publication sooner than the others, and then the process of updating starts. The whole production is tightly linked to the social media, where the immediate contact with the reader takes place and it is the social media space, where most of the traffic for the online publications comes from.

Of course, intertextuality is not a term that came into existence with the invention of the Web, but its role is certainly even more powerful and direct in the online environment. Warnick and Heinemann (2012) address the environment of the new media, focusing specifically on the political campaigns and commentary in the online space. They point out that:

...an interesting dimension of online campaign activity and commentary has also been extended in the form of intertextuality, or cross-reference between social context, public events and developments, and the political scene. Intertextuality developed content offers many opportunities for social commentary and public amusement, but it also raises public awareness of the missteps of public figures and their shortcomings through satire and parody.” (preface IX)

With the intertextual potential enhanced, there is one feature of the print media consumption of information and that is the compactness of one publication, which offers a repetitive schema in each issue – usually of news, which are in some cases introduced by an editorial and usually completed later on by opinion pieces that are thematically connected to the news and draw on the information, so the reader is familiar with the context. As was mentioned earlier, the online readers choose rapidly and step-by-step what they are going to read next and does not follow the traditional process of getting the news and the opinion respectively. Warnick and Heinemann point out that the

sites of commentary, resistance and political parody, as well as entertainment sites involving social criticism may not be immediately understandable to all users. Being able to identify the relevant inter texts that enable users to understand what is being said is a vital component in the success of persuasive communication...the producers of such sites...need to negotiate the tension between making their content so accessible the it lacks originality and uniqueness on one hand and, on the other hand, developing the content with allusions that are so arcane and specialized as not to be understandable. (87)

Concerning the position of the opinion pieces in the online publication in terms of their

authors, it is comparable to the print media, however it is magnified in a certain respect. Even in the print media the personality of the author and his or her established credentials is what makes the opinion valuable to the reader and therefore the publication. The print media readers tend to be selective in their choice of publication not just for the quality of news but also for the reliability and expertise of their commentators, who are either experts in the field they write about or they possess social credit – for example literary or public figures. In the online production the identity of the author is even more significant, for the published texts often work in concord with the author's presence on social networks. The reader can therefore feel closer to the authors, can follow them online not just for the official texts but also outside of the publication environment. That, however, does not mean, that the publications are irrelevant. They still provide an institutional credit and reputation to the authors, which mainly stems from the reader's experience with the printed form and allows the authors to present themselves as more trustworthy than the authors of blog, who also suffer by their sheer numbers. In this case the traditional loyalty to the publication can extend to the online space. This of course does not apply to new, purely online media, which in Czech context are mainly built on the personalities and reputations of the editors-in-chiefs<sup>5</sup>, who gained the public credit while working in print media. Digital environment is a convenient platform for forming like-minded communities focused on certain topics, products or political and social streams. Online media are also a part of this phenomena, not only is there a tendency to allow for extensive interactivity and contact with the readers/viewers/listeners, the social network presence establishes a community of supporters, but also critics reading, commenting, sharing and using the content in discussions.

Halliday (2013) also notices the connection between the technology advancement and the content and communication between the author and the audience even more tenor-oriented, he claims that: "...the development of social media does indicate the extent to which companies are trying to leverage people's need for 'sharing' and orientation towards the interpersonal." (42)

Warnick and Heinemann (2012) stress the development and changes connected to increasing influence of the digital media:

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<sup>5</sup> For example Svobodné fórum or Echo24 – which is also connected to a printed weekly, but the online form is default

Since new media technologies function as a significant part of our political culture, candidates, voters, and critics must come to terms with how to make sense of persuasion in a digital medium...the Web employs a logic of referentiality and intertextuality where discourse is often characterized by fragmentary and disjointed statements and questions... forms of rhetorical criticism such as narrative criticism or pedantic analysis that traditionally focus on more linear and self-contained discourses might not apply to the hyperspatial and hyper temporal nature of the Web without some adaptation. (41)

### **3.2. On the selected media**

Being aware of the position, management, political preference and ownership of the publication/medium should be crucial not just for media analysts, but also for any media consumer. The reason is best summed up by Blažková (2012):

. . . a medium is able to not only construct *media reality*, but also to stress its point of view, thus spreading its beliefs and opinions. . . people do not act on the basis of reality, but they behave on the basis of their interpretation of reality. (226)

In media environment, we have to account for the fact that most publications are owned by individuals or companies (apart from the public media or special cases - such as *The Guardian*, as will be explained shortly), and can use media ownership to promote business or agenda that might not be necessarily in the best sense of the reader, who seeks objective information. Fairclough (1995) points out that: "institutions construct their ideological and discursive subjects; they construct them in the sense that they impose ideological and discursive constraints upon them as a condition for qualifying them to act as subjects." (39)

#### **3.2.1. British context**

British mainstream print media are traditionally divided based on their political leaning into the right or the left part of the spectrum, where the division line is clear and known to both the producers and consumers of the information.<sup>6</sup> The individual publications take positions on key issues in the public debate and do not avoid being linked to political parties, in case of certain issues they might even openly campaign for one side of the argument; in the time of making of this paper the most prominent example would be the Brexit referendum in 2016. The two publications chosen for analysis in this paper are both

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<sup>6</sup> <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2017/03/07/how-left-or-right-wing-are-uks-newspapers/>

traditional broad sheets (a term that does not address the actual format of the publication anymore, rather the solidity of the news – to be compared with tabloids)<sup>7</sup> on the left side of the spectrum and were chosen, because their online presence has got very prominent and offers a considerable amount of content. They both also increased activity on social networks. Stemming from their political likeness and similar positions they take on key issues, the texts are comparable without the influence of opposite argument perspective.

### ***The Guardian***

Founded 1821, this daily newspaper presents itself as left-leaning intellectual reading for cultured readers. The number of monthly global unique visitors online is 3.5 million. The paper is owned by Guardian Media Group, published by Guardian News and Media. It has an exceptional self-reliance status thanks to the Scott Trust Limited<sup>8</sup>, which is supposed to ensure that the paper is financially independent and the profits are re-invested into back into the journalistic process. <sup>9</sup>Apart from profit from the sales and the trust to fall back on, *The Guardian* also made several attempts on crowdfunding campaigns, the most visible is The Guardian MembershiIn terms of the readership demographics, the print version is read mostly by the age groups 65+, 45+ and there is also a spike in the 25-34 age group, the drop is in the 35-44 age grouThe online readership splits 59% to 41% between 35+ and 15-34 respectively. Gender split is not significant, 52% are male readers and 48% female readers. The paper presents the readers as 66% highly educated, 45% working full-time, mostly well travelled, art, food and culture loving people. This is projected in the content, which focuses on the politics and the society mainly, but it also provides quite extensive and popular articles on arts and culture, and of course – sports. The statistic also suggests great loyalty of the readers to this one particular paper, since 95% read no other “quality” newspaper. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> the term broadsheet says as much about content, readership, and branding as it does about size or format because it is used as shorthand for the quality press (also known as the ‘heavies’ in the UK: the Daily Telegraph, The Times, the Guardian, The Financial Times, The Independent...) and their online operations. Guardian actually switched to Berliner size in 2005. (Harcup, keyword Broadsheet)

<sup>8</sup> Its most famous editor was C. P. Scott, and after his death the Scott Trust was created to “preserve the financial and editorial independence of the Guardian in perpetuity” (Harcup, keyword The Guardian)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/membership/2016/oct/24/scott-trust-guardian-owner-journalism-newspaper>

<sup>10</sup> <https://advertising.theguardian.com/files/The-Guardian-Media-Pack-2017.pdf>

## ***The Independent***

One of the youngest British newspapers, *The Independent* launched in 1986 as a left-leaning daily. In Harcup's words, the founders Andreas Whittam Smith, Matthew Symonds and Stephen Glover intended it as "an unashamedly highbrow, quality newspaper that eschewed fawning coverage of royalty, took its ethics so seriously that it would not accept freebies and gave photographs a much better showing than in rival broadsheets."

<sup>11</sup>February 2016 it was announced that *The Independent* would continue as an online daily only and its print version was to be cancelled. At the time of this decision, the print version circulation was 55 193 and the online circulation was 3 331 403, now the online readership is 6 140 183 . The last printed issue was released on the 26th of March. <sup>12</sup>As for the readership demographics, the online readership is 61% to 38% in the 35+ and 15-34 age groups respectively.

The ownership of the publication is considered slightly problematic because of the Lebedev family that bought the newspaper in 2010 for just 1 pound. The controversial figure is mainly Alexander Lebedev, whose past includes involvement with KGB.<sup>13</sup>

### **3.2.2. Czech context**

Although in comparison to the British media, the Czech media do not tend to be openly politically biased, it would be quite an overstatement to claim, that they are independent and fully objective. A simple explanation of the difference between the two media environments might be found in the past; while the British media are traditionally openly allegiant to a particular political stream, in the Czech republic an openly politically engaged publication might evoke connotations with the pre-1989 era of strictly censored journalism in favor of the governing Communist party. When discussing the leaning of the Czech media, the debate usually includes the aspect of questionable ownership and in one case

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<sup>11</sup> Harcup, keyword The Independent

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.newsworks.org.uk/The-Independent>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8587469.stm>

even suspected conflict of interest in connection to politics.<sup>14</sup>

As pointed out earlier, though, problematic ownership can be found even in British context and will not be a prominent feature in this thesis, even though it arguably affects the content, but the scope of selected media could not cover the topic in a satisfactory measure. While the selected couple of British newspaper underwent a similar journey from a broadsheet to either parallel or singular web site, the Czech samples have different origins.

### ***Aktuálně.cz***

The page was launched on November the 1st 2005 as a purely online news service, at that time as a part of Centrum Holdings. Without connection to another type of medium, the mission of this news site was to provide independent and original content and publish on an online platform.

In 2013 *Aktuálně.cz* was bought by the media agency Economia, which is owned by Zdeněk Bakala, a businessman and the seventh richest Czech person, according to the Forbes magazine.<sup>15</sup>

Besides news *Aktuálně.cz* also provides opinions by full-time commentators and hosts a blog platform. *Aktuálně.cz* is the third most read online news server with over 2.1 million readers a month.<sup>16</sup>

### ***iHNed.cz***

*iHNed.cz* is the online mutation of the print daily *Hospodářské noviny* and the ninth most read online news server in the Czech Republic with over 940 000 a month.<sup>17</sup> It started was

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<sup>14</sup> <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/04/10/now-the-czechs-have-an-oligarch-problem-too-andrej-babis/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://byznys.ihned.cz/c1-59785970-bakala-posiluje-v-mediich-kupuje-centrum-holdings>  
<http://www.forbes.cz/miliardari/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://online.netmonitor.cz/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://online.netmonitor.cz/>



fully launched in 1999, originally as simply an online form of the daily print issue. The online platform provides online news and opinions, but it is closely interlinked with the print version, paying subscribers have access to the current issue and also to the print archive of the last 20 years.

Both the print and the online publications also belong to the media agency Economia, which is owned by Zdeněk Bakala.

### **3. Simulated relationship**

I have mentioned earlier that the features of public and private communication often blur in the media discourse and the addressee is deliberately led into an illusion of a different kind of interaction than actually occurs, and illusion of an almost interpersonal interaction. O'Keefe (2006) examines the issue mainly in terms of TV interviews, but her concept can also be applied to the written text and the relationship between the author and the reader, which is the case we are looking at in this thesis. She calls the relationship pseudo-intimate and recognizes the four distinct markers accompanying it: the use of pronouns, vocatives, pragmatic markers and response tokens. (90)

Fairclough (2001) claims that due to the actual conditions of production and interpretation in mass communication (he mainly presents this issue in the advertising discourse) "one finds what I shall refer to as a synthetic personalization, a compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people 'handled' en mass as an individual." (52) The reasons why this process is needed is according to him the indeterminate nature of that audience and the indeterminate and complex nature of the producers. (168)

As one of the strategies to establish the interpersonal interaction he mentions invoking cultural knowledge. (183)

O'Keefe and Fairclough both point out the practice of the authors to create roles, which may not match have anything in common with their actual personalities, but are crafted for the purposes of more individual communication. O'Keefe also stresses the author's regular contact with the audience in terms of maintaining the pseudo-intimacy, the effects of this "are not to be underestimated in the process of construction pseudo-relations within the participation framework." (92) In the context of print or online media we could observe the tendency of repetitiveness in regular weekly opinions, a specific place in the newspaper or the webpage or for example in case of one of the publications that are to be analyzed in this paper – weekly e-mail summary of the most important published opinions with links.

O'Keefe identifies an understanding between the author and the audience of a range of shared space, a cache of common knowledge and a sense of common identity. (127) These manifest in the usage of vague categories, pronouns, deictic referencing and self-reference pronouns. (128)

O'Keefe also addresses deictic referencing in pronoun use more closely and introduces the concept of deictic mapping, which refers to the participant deictics. He names two

strategies commonly use: centering, which refers to the participants (we, this, these..) and othering, which refers to the outside context (them, that, those..). (141)

### **3.1. Authors**

It is worth pointing out the variety of the people that are called upon to share opinion under the heading of publication. An intuitive guess would suggest, that this role be offered to a journalist, whose opinions are in line with the general political leaning of the publication and its newsroom. Moreover, it is not only the opinion spectrum, which would seem to require consistency, but also the stylistic form, to which the publication adheres, and the content – in a print newspaper, the opinion section would usually build on the news section of the newspaper, which usually precedes it (with the possible exception of an editorial or a front page column).

In reality, however, the space to publish an opinion is often given to authors, who are not journalists, they can be authors, public figures or – as is the case of two authors analysed for the purposes of this paper – comedians.

The key aspect of inviting such authors to the opinion section is embracing their individual style, allowing the texts to move from the factual journalistic approach paired with opinions or interpretations, to a more literary or satirical tone.

As mentioned earlier, in the age of digital publishing the consistency of both topic and form is more or less preserved, even though the reading style is more fragmented.

The following part offers short profiles of the authors whose texts are analysed in the practical part of this paper.

## Jan Lipold

Lipold is the chief author of the opinion section of *Aktuálně.cz*.<sup>18</sup> His journalistic career took him through a number of Czech newsrooms, including the the national press agency ČTK (ČTK) in the years 1991-1993, the period where the post-communist era media design was being shaped. After, he joined the newsroom of the daily *MF Dnes* for eight years, followed by a year in the weekly *Týden*, only to get back to daily publication *Hospodářské noviny* and after back to weeklies - *Instinkt* and *Týden* again. He switched to the digital media environment in 2010.<sup>19</sup>

Lipold is an exaple of a journalistic approach to opinion texts, his texts tend to be factual, presenting opinions in reporting manner. In 2014 he won the Best Opinion category at the Journalism Award.<sup>20</sup>

Despite him being in charge of a section of an online publication, his personal online presence is very scarce.

## Martin Fendrych

Fendrych, as an author of opinion texts for *Aktuálně.cz* was born in Prague, which is where the focus of a large number of his texts lies. Before the Velvet Revolution in 1989 he had various job including driving cars at the airport, cleaning shopping windows or as working a stoker. He was also involved samizdat activity - contributing to *Revolver Revue* and *Vokno* magazine and copying illegal music and literature.<sup>21</sup>

After the revolution he worked as a press secretary at the department for refugees and the Ministry of the Interior.

His political affiliations were on the right but he was not a member of the party he ran for - ODA. Still in the early 1990s he returned to active journalism, writing political opinions in *Týden* magazine and later its online mutation.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.aktualne.cz/autori/jan-lipold/l~i:author:169/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.jsns.cz/projekty/medialni-vzdelavani/tydny-medialniho-vzdelavani-2017/novinari-a-medialni-odbornici/jan-lipold>

<sup>20</sup> <http://media.e15.cz/zpravy/novinari-si-rozdelili-ceny-za-rok-2014-1185228>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.aktualne.cz/autori/martin-fendrych/l~i:author:243/>

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.denik.cz/ostatni\\_kultura/novinar-a-spisovatel-martin-fendrych-oslavi-sedesatiny-20170109.html](http://www.denik.cz/ostatni_kultura/novinar-a-spisovatel-martin-fendrych-oslavi-sedesatiny-20170109.html)

Fendrych published several fiction novels - *Slib, že mě zabiješ*, *Jako pták na drátě* or *Samcologie* - and a poetry collection.

## **Petr Honzejk**

Honzejk is the editor-in-chief of the opinion section of *Hospodářské noviny*. After studying to become a teacher (with focus on the combination geography-PE) he worked in the Czech national radio, first at a local station, later as a reporter and finally as a broadcast editor. In 2003 he became an editor-in-chief of one of the substations, *Radiožurnál*. His journalistic experience also includes working for the Czech branch of *BBC*.<sup>23</sup>

In 2015 he won the Journalism award for Best Opinion. In addition to his activity at *Hospodářské noviny*, he also frequently offers political analysis for the national television and radio and his personal Facebook profile.<sup>24</sup>

## **Jakub Horák**

Horák is a PR-specialist, media analyst, traveller, author, music producer and political campaign adviser (currently associated with the Czech political party Piráti). After not finishing his studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, he built his professional reputation through his work in advertisement (work for companies such as Absolut Vodka, Nivea or Tchibo)<sup>25</sup> but later became known for his comments on politics and society in general and the significant reach of his online presence, especially on Facebook. Before he became active in the official campaign for Piráti, he founded a satirical political movement called Nevím. Besides his opinion texts he also published fiction: a novella *Ostrov*, novels *Zlatá rána*, *Je to všechno pakárna* and most recently a political satire *Kočky jsou vrženy*, in which Czech political scene is dominated by a tomcat.<sup>26 27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/czech/institutional/aboutus.shtml>

<sup>24</sup> <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/novinarskou-cenu-za-rok-2013-si-prevzalo-11-vitezu/r~7bd701f0cfce11e392710025900fea04/>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.protisedi.cz/article/nejvlivnejsi-lidi-ceskeho-fb-jakub-horak>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.kosmas.cz/knihy/177359/ostrov/>

<sup>27</sup> The name is a response to the political party ANO, whose leader is Andrej Babiš, the former Minister of Finance

## John Rentoul

Chief Political Commentator for *The Independent*, and visiting professor at King's College, London.

Rentoul worked for the *New Statesman* between 1983 and 1988, first as a journalist and later as an editor. In 1995 he started working for the *BBC's* political program *On the Record*, where he stayed until 1995. From *BBC* he moved on the *The Independent* where he held the position of a political correspondent and since 2004 the current position of the chief political commentator.<sup>28</sup> His political leaning is towards the Labour party.<sup>29</sup>

His non-fiction writing includes titles *The Banned List*, *Questions To Which The Answer Is No*, *Listellany* and a biography of Tony Blair, currently he is writing a book on New Labour with Dr Jon Davis for Oxford University Press.

At Queen Mary's University he used to teach a course on the Blair government and currently teaches a course on New Labour in Government.

## Mark Steel

A comedian, broadcaster and author who has presented radio and television programs. Steel started as a stand-up comedian in 1982 and later over time worked up to a regular slot on the *Radio 4* show *Loose Ends*. He appeared on *Radio 5*, where he hosted his own show *The Mark Steel Solutions* and later on TV shows on *BBC 4* and *BBC 2*. He took part in other shows, such as *Have I Got News for You* or the comedy show *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*.<sup>30</sup>

His print contributions were weekly columns in *Socialist Worker*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*.

He published several books, including *It's Not a Runner Bean*, *Reasons to be Cheerful* or *Vive La Revolution: A Stand-up History of the French Revolution*.

He is politically active and openly against the ruling Conservative party and satirizes capitalism and the right-wing political current. He actively takes part in political meetings

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/news/items/hss/87135.html>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-politics-12207867/john-rentoul-chuka-ummuna-and-lord-falconer-on-ed-miliband>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00rtbk8>

and protests and even stood as a candidate in 2000 London elections on the list of London Socialist Alliance candidates.<sup>31</sup>

## George Monbiot

An Oxford graduate, who gained his interest in environment working on farms or as a waterkeeper. He describes his dream job as non-existent at the time of his studies, he wanted to create an environmental program for the *BBC*, where he started in 1985, as a radio producer making wildlife programs. After *BBC* financial reorganisation in the 1980s and 1990s<sup>32</sup> he joined the *BBC World Service* as current affairs producer but soon left for Indonesia to write a book about Suharto's transmigration program. The book was called *Poisoned Arrows*.

This combination of travel, activist interest and journalism resulted in a book about movements in Amazon called *Amazon Watershed*, and a book about assaults on nomads in Kenya and Tanzania, *No Man's Land*.

Back in the UK he continued writing about social, political and environmental causes, *Captive State: the corporate takeover of Britain*, *The Age of Consent*, *Captive State*, two collections of essays (*Bring on the Apocalypse* and *How Did We Get into this Mess?*), *Heat: how to stop the planet burning*, and *Feral: searching for enchantment on the frontiers of rewilding*.

He started writing regularly for *The Guardian* in 1996.

Monbiot is openly behind many activist efforts, for example he co-founded *The Land is Ours*, a movement trying to bring public engagement in decisions about use of the land.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> <http://marksteelinfo.com/about-2/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/feb/20/bbc-war-margaret-thatcher-life-on-earth-grange-hill-eastenders-falklands>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.monbiot.com/about/>

## Owen Jones

An Oxford graduate, a journalist, a columnist previously writing for *The Independent*, currently for *The Guardian* and since 2015 also for the *New Statesman*. Before becoming a journalist he worked as a trade union and parliamentary researcher.

He also provides political opinion and analysis on TV and radio shows, such as *BBC 1's Question Time*, and several news programmes for *Sky*, *Channel 4* and the *BBC*.<sup>34</sup>

Jones is a self-proclaimed socialist<sup>35</sup> and the topics of his texts reflect this position, his main focus is politics, openly supporting the left (however not without criticism aimed at for example some parts of the Labour party – the central, so-called New Labour; or Tony Blair)<sup>36</sup> and criticising the Conservative party. In the time of 2017 elections he openly campaigned in favour of Jeremy Corbyn<sup>37</sup> and in time of the Brexit referendum he campaigned against it.

He published two non-fiction books: *Chavs: the Demonization of the Working Class*, and *The Establishment: And how they get away with it*.

In 2012 he was named the Stonewall Journalist of the Year and in 2013 the Political Book Awards Young Writer of the Year.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/profile/owen-jones>

<sup>35</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/pg/owenjones84/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/owenjones84/about/?ref=page_internal)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/22/tony-blair-centre-left-politicians>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/13/new-labour-dead-jeremy-corbyn-shadow-cabinet-socialist-labour>

<sup>38</sup> <https://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/owen-jones>



#### **4. Methodology of the analysis**

For the purposes of the analysis I have selected five opinion pieces from two authors from each of the four selected publications, altogether eighty texts. I have selected two periods to avoid confusion of the results by specific events or time of the year. The first load of texts covers the period of July-November 2016 and the second load is January-March 2017.

The reason why I decided to create a custom analysis for the opinion texts was because I was attempting to approach a very particular type of text: a text that undoubtedly belongs to the media discourse and is connected to the content of the news and therefore the practices of the news, but also a type of text which in its function and tools to achieve that function resembles advertisement or political rhetorics more than news content.

While the main objective of the news is to inform about events taking place, focusing ideally mainly on the facts, the opinion texts rarely bring a new information. The intent behind them is to present a certain portion of arguments, a certain perspective, a certain opinion. It is written to persuade – or at least offer a particular interpretation of the facts. In terms of advertisement discourse, the opinion is the product that the author attempts to sell.

The interpersonal aspect on the textual level will be observed through phenomena that achieve one or both effects bellow:

- the way the author communicates with the reader individually**
- the way the author defines social/cultural space**

None of the literature that I consulted presented a type of analysis that I felt would achieve exactly what I attempted to find in the chosen type of texts, therefore I have decided to design an analysis based on the pre-reading of the text, selecting the features that I considered relevant to the objective of the thesis and consulting the literature used in the theoretical part of the thesis, looking for mentions of usage of the same approach in different – but related – texts.

In the first part of the analysis I was looking for chosen elements that both alone and combined directly invoke the interpersonal effect - the use of the **first person singular and plural** and **second person singular/plural**, both in the form of pronouns only and combined with verbs. I was also looking for the markers of **proximity**, **imitations of a dialogue** (rhetorical and non-rhetorical questions, imitation of a response) and other elements creating the illusion of conversation with the reader. I also focused on the words used for **general groups** of people, which presumably include the reader, such as *people*, *lidé*, *voters*, *voliči* etc. Reasons why these should be of interest will be explained in the analysis portion of this text.

The chosen phenomena were both a result of my pre-reading of the text and the findings of the authors that were central in the theoretical part of this paper. As was mentioned earlier in the text, Warwick and Heinemann and Fairclough as well highlight the usage of what is known to the reader, what is relatable. This effect is achieved both by **proximity** and the **cultural references**. O'Keefe talks about vague categories (in this paper marked as **general groups**), usage of **pronouns** (in this paper differentiated according to person). The **imitation of a dialogue** was inspired by the concept of simulated relationship (which also applies to some of the previous phenomena).

After the pre-analysis reading of the text, I have decided to exclude **cultural references** from the analysis. The analysis aims to measure the appearance of the particular phenomena, however, these interact with the reader directly by appearing, they can be counted. A cultural reference also creates an interpersonal effect on the reader, but not necessarily directly – it creates a frame of meaning, which could practically mean that just one reference would set the frame for the whole text and the quantitative analysis cannot account for that. However, for reasons that will be explained in the section dealing with the cultural references, the references do have an effect similar to the analyzed phenomena and therefore they will be mentioned and their interpersonal effect described.

Regarding the particular details of the analysis: there will be a different treatments of Europe and the European Union/EU, for while they at times refer to the same meaning, the choice of the term matters. Europe will be taken as a geographical and cultural reference, therefore marked as proximity. The European Union/EU refers to the union of states, an institutional body representing a system.

The results will be measured in pure counts of an appearance of the particular phenomenon, which will later be used in a formula:

**Number of appearances/Number of words in the text=Relevance**

This will be done to account for the different lengths of the texts and allow for comparison of the phenomena and the authors.

The analysis will answer the questions:

**Which of the described phenomena are most frequently used by an author**

**Which of the described phenomena are most used in the particular discourse**

**Which author uses the particular phenomena most frequently**

**Which discourse on average uses more of the described phenomena on the whole**

Following the results of the analysis, the practical part will introduce other elements of the texts that are less direct in their interpersonal effect and are more connected to the context.

Since the main focus is on the relationship between the author and the reader – which is actively constructed by the author – and the mental cultural space they occupy, I will also describe two strategies how this space can and is used in the text. The two strategies are: **duality** and **positioning**.

It could be argued that in this paper I put myself in the position of the reader and assume the effect which the chosen elements of the text have on him or her. It is an argument that is often raised when CDA methods are used, however there are two points I would like to raise in defense of the chosen approach: firstly, as Fairclough says: „This argument is very relevant to CDA, for part of the critique is directed at analysts who postulate ideological effects solely on the basis of analysis of texts without considering the diverse ways in which such texts may be interpreted and responded to. But there is a danger here of throwing the baby out with the bathwater, by abandoning textual analysis in favour of analysis of audience reception.“ (9)

Secondly, I intend to test the results in the future on a sample of audience.

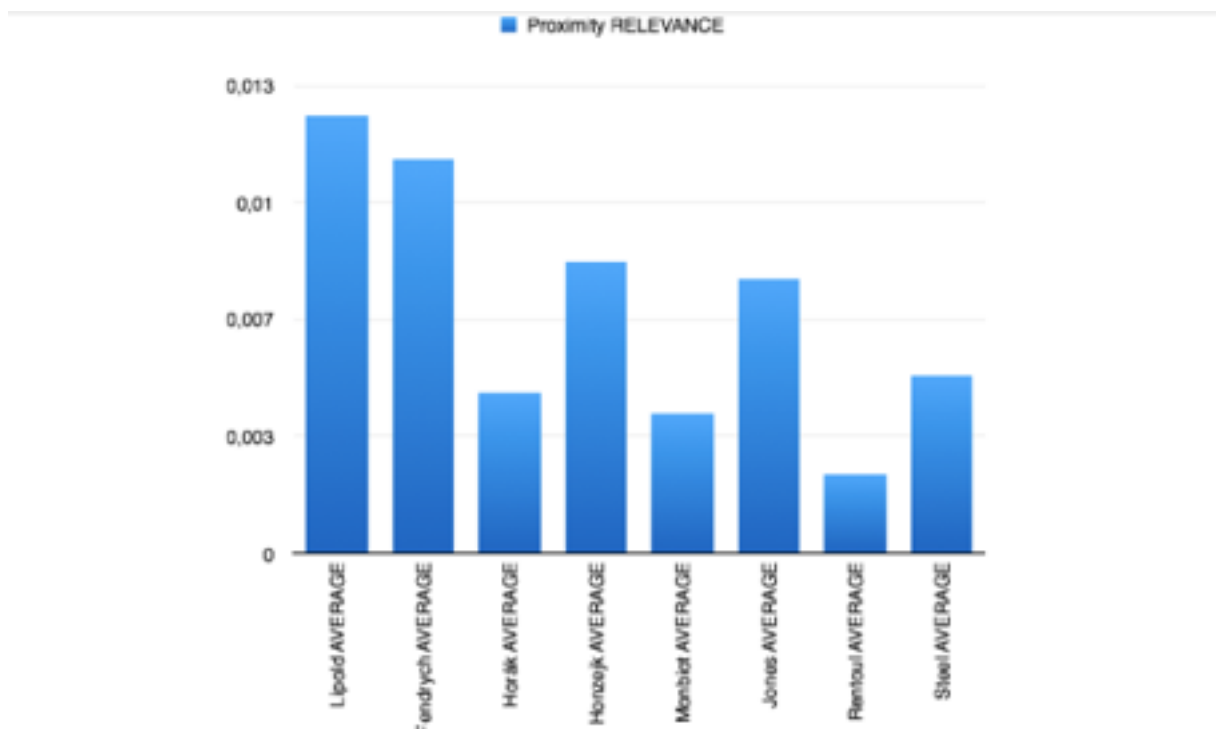
# Practical part

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1. Proximity

Proximity is mainly defined as one of the news values, i.e. the values “by which one ‘fact’ is judged more newsworthy than another” (Bell 1991, 155) Of course, within the topic of this text, we are not looking into news text, but this particular tool, proximity, has a similar, if not more prominent function in the opinion texts that it has in the news. Bell introduced this news value both in terms of geography and culture. In principle, a story has a greater impact on the reader if it refers to events that have happen or are related to the reader’s geographic or cultural space.

Considering the premise, that the analyzed text phenomena in this thesis are used to create an interpersonal bond between the author and the reader, the element of proximity defines the geographical and cultural space of both and sets the context. By using proximity repeatedly, the author keeps reiterating that the topic is relevant for the reader **personally**, while also re-enforcing the notion of a space that is **shared** by the author and the reader.



There appear to be two levels of proximity used in the text that were analyzed:

1. Proximity used as an integral part of the text connected to the topic, i.e. it is necessary/suitable to include them to set the story/topic into a geographical/cultural context. This usage is the similar in the opinion texts and in the news texts.

2. Re-enforcing of the existence of the geographical/cultural space by adding the proximity marker where the context would be sufficient to imply the space.

## Examples: Proximity

<p><b>Petr Honzejek</b></p>	<p>...podlehli <b>čeští</b> voliči víc povýtce dětskému pocitu, že když je pohoda, musí nutně trvat navěky.</p> <p>... zavelelo <b>české</b> veřejné mínění: "Do zbraně!!!"</p> <p>Za "nekorektnost" se už v <b>Česku</b> nestydí leckdo označovat i vyslovenou lež.</p> <p>Vztah <b>českých</b> voličů s Andrejem Babišem je pořád ještě čerstvý.</p>
<p><b>Jakub Horák</b></p>	<p>Pokud <b>tu</b> chtějí bydlet a najdou si práci...</p> <p>V bouřlivých devadesátkách pulty <b>pražských</b> knihkupectví...zaplavily knihy Ginsberga...</p> <p><b>Českým</b> žebříčkům tehdy vévodila kolotočářská sestava Františka Janečka...</p> <p>Jsme <b>tu v té české kotlině</b> tak zalezlí...</p> <p>Milan Chovanec zneškodní útok ISIS v <b>pražském Palladiu</b>...</p> <p>Michaela Marksová převádí babičku s nákupem přes magistrálu v oblasti <b>Muzea</b>.</p>
<p><b>Jan Lipold</b></p>	<p>K otázkám, které se týkají <b>metropole</b></p> <p>Pokud jde o <b>Prahu</b>,</p> <p>To je postup, který by prospěl celému centru <b>metropole</b></p> <p><b>Českému</b> jazykovému sebevědomí prospěje poznávání světa, ne spouštění závěr.</p>
<p><b>Martin Fendrych</b></p>	<p>V <b>Česku</b> byla povinná vojenská služba zrušena</p> <p>V <b>Česku</b> zákon zakazuje nosit zbraně na veřejná shromáždění...</p> <p>Jak dokonalý výcvik by <b>český</b> pistolník musel mít</p> <p>V <b>české</b> společnosti poslední dva roky roste napětí</p> <p>Jízda na kole po <b>Praze</b>...</p> <p>...přijedete na <b>Povltavskou ulici</b></p>
<p><b>John Rentoul</b></p>	<p>The media landscape in <b>Britain</b> has been utterly transformed by the internet...</p> <p>If you look at the readership of <b>British</b> newspapers...</p>
<p><b>Mark Steel</b></p>	<p>That's because he's so passionate about the <b>United Kingdom</b>...</p> <p>...he gives a tiny bit to places abroad instead, to help <b>Britain</b> out.</p> <p>...wider ownership of African wood carvings bought from antique shops in <b>Notting Hill</b>.</p> <p>...you can't move in <b>Lincolnshire</b> for Bulgarians.</p> <p>That's the first rule if you're heading off for a weekend break in the <b>Lake District</b>...</p>

<b>George Monbiot</b>	In <b>Britain</b> , the media largely failed to hold David Cameron to account ...a campaign fronted by the former <b>England</b> cricket captain Sir Ian Botham... ...it could save the <b>British</b> countryside
<b>Owen Jones</b>	<b>British</b> workers have suffered the longest fall in wages Growing personal debt is the price many <b>British</b> workers have paid wages were stagnating or even falling for millions of <b>British</b> workers Better living standards and more equality than we have in <b>Britain</b> are two of the byproducts There will be those in <b>Britain</b> who say: this is none of our business...

On average, proximity was more used by the Czech authors, especially by the authors of *Aktuálně.cz*, Jan Lipold and Martin Fendrych. I propose a hypothesis that the reason for such results could be that both the geographical and cultural context of Britain is wider than the Czech context; the author can therefore use very local references, which will still be close to a large portion of the readership. The two authors who used proximity most frequently also showed a significant tendency to prefer topics relating to the capital, Prague, which in many cases is, of course, relevant to the country as a whole, but in cases of some of the chosen topics were most likely written with the expectation of a large portion of the targeted readers being based in Prague. Here we encounter another element of proximity, which is not of interest within this thesis, but it is very significant in the whole process of producing media content, and that is the beginning of the writing process – choosing a topic, that is suitable to the intended readership. This element is not textual, it is pragmatic, but it is the basis for the textual choices the author makes during the writing process.

## 5.2. General groups

It is thought to be the mission of the news journalism, be it hard or soft news, to provide reporting based on “sourcing and verifying facts and attributing information to sources. (Harcup, 197) In the opinion texts the adherence to facts can be openly omitted by definition, for the author is allowed and encouraged to present his/her opinion. Using general groups is, however, a peculiar form of presenting an opinion. The author in this

case does not openly mark the information provided as his/her opinion, but rather attributes it to an undefined and unlimited (*people, everybody*) or vaguely limited group of sources (*voters, workers,..*). This may not be just the case of attributing a source of information, but also a feeling or reaction to a situation/fact or who is affected by the situation/fact.

Using this elements in the text provides author with the opportunity to express an opinion indirectly, stating it as a fact attributed to a general source, to the public opinion, without it necessarily being true or even likely. It would be difficult to point out the “unfairness” of such a technique for two reasons: firstly, the text is an opinion piece and therefore it does not need to adhere to exact and verifiable facts (although it is desirable that at least the main factual claims have basis in verifiable sources). Secondly, the author could make the case that the statement can be reasonably considered to be true at least for a portion of the described group. This, of course, is the less desirable usage of general groups, I do not suggest, that this textual phenomenon is only used in the described way in all opinion pieces.

We can observe several uses of general groups, however, I will pay special attention to two of them. These two uses are similar in presentation, nevertheless they differ in the effect they convey.

- 1. involves the general group in authors opinion/claim, but does not attribute the opinion or “fact” to it**
- 2. the opinion/claim or “fact” is attributed to the general group.**

### Examples: General groups

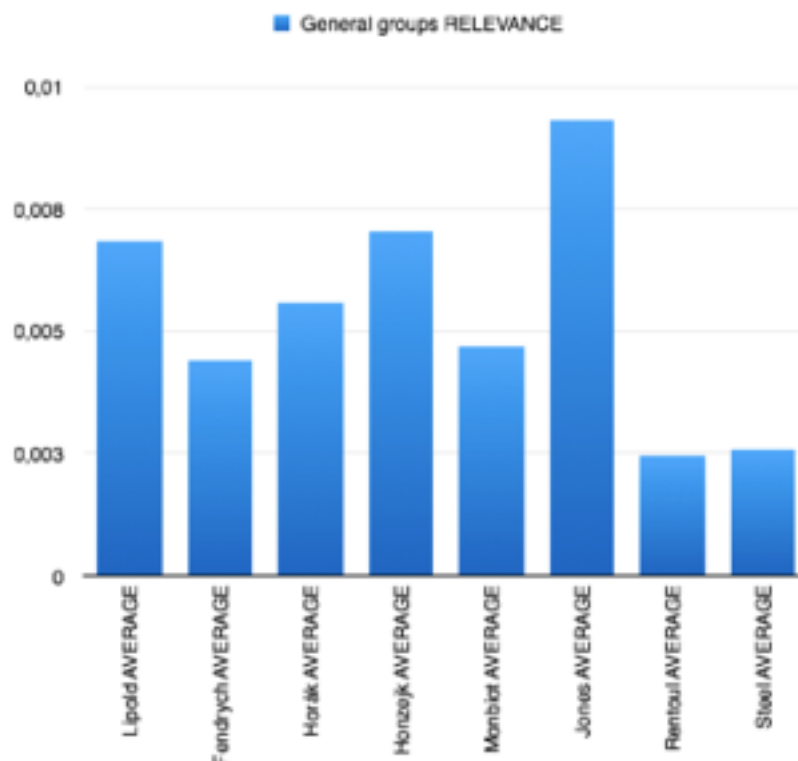
<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	1. Česká <b>společnost</b> se mlátí ve vlnách hysterie sem a tam... <b>Voliči</b> reagují trochu jako malé děti... Něco se stane a <b>lidé</b> požadují razantní “řešení”... 2. Skandálů kolem Andreje Babiše se ještě nestačilo nakupit dost na to, aby <b>voliči</b> pojali podezření... <b>Lidé</b> jsou vesměs přesvědčeni...
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<p><b>Jakub Horák</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>Lidé v mešitách, co se klaní, jsou směšní.  Lidé by neměli mít žádné vyznání...  Pokud by Češi a Češky dělali totéž, nikdy by se ve světě neztratili.  ...přimět lidi vypadnout ze své sociální bubliny a poznat svět.  Chytrého pozorovatele však zarazí jedna věc.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>Je spousta lidí, kteří chtějí jet raději do Jižního Súdánu než do USA a naopak.  ...lidé to sdílí a jsou utvrzováni v domněnku, že kdesi existuje ta "pražská kavárna"...  Někteří lidé by se zasmáli tomu, jak realita překonala Járu Cimrmana.</p>
<p><b>Jan Lipold</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>Opatření na Hradě přidělala lidem problémy.  Masový turismus se stává soupeřem místních obyvatel  Čemu se většina přizpůsobila...  ...proč se tomu obyvatelstvo bez reptání podrobuje</p> <p>2.</p> <p>...domácí publikum má ještě v paměti, jak se tu v nejstřeženějších zónách pohybovala delegace z Osvětiman...  Evropanovi, obyvateli Evropské unie, je to nápadné  Spousta lidí je z toho nesvá.</p>
<p><b>Martin Fendrych</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>Česká veřejnost si již zvykla na lži.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>Mnoho obyvatel měst bere autozáplavu jako samozřejmost  ...Pražáci nečiní žádnou radost se tam proplétat.  Menší část obyvatel už si uvědomuje, že auta v tom obřím množství přinášejí stres...  ...místní lidé si neuvědomí, jak je město bez aut skvělé, přátelské</p>
<p><b>John Rentoul</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>But you will do nothing to persuade people who don't like Trump...  There has been a majority in the British public for leaving or for reducing the EU's powers...  ...but to the peoples of the EU. Our national interest outside the EU depends on their friendship.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>Human beings want to know what is going to happen next...  Other people who already agree with you might feel better...  Most people accept that the NHS needs two things...  ...people would say: "But you're still taking money from us..."</p>



<p><b>Mark Steel</b></p>	<p>1. ...it's the left that makes <b>people</b> miserable. ...it's the natural home for <b>common folk</b> who want to take on the international elite.</p> <p>2. ... it might not harm him as much as <b>people</b> expect... Liberal <b>people</b> think, "haha, this has got to finish him now"...</p>
<p><b>George Monbiot</b></p>	<p>1. This is how <b>people</b> can truly take back control This is about what it is to be <b>human</b>... ...a political model based only on state provision can leave <b>people</b> dependent...</p> <p>2. ...<b>people</b> are atomised and afraid... ...squalor that many <b>people</b> now find hard to imagine. But you can still hear <b>people</b> repeating the old claim...</p>
<p><b>Owen Jones</b></p>	<p>1. Too many <b>people</b> face unmanageable debt ...the everyday experience of all too many <b>Britons</b> ...<b>viewers</b> were treated to a baffling boreathon... A defeatist attitude...says that the media programme <b>people</b> with what to think</p> <p>2. ...meanwhile, <b>voters</b> can repeat back Tory attack lines verbatim on the doorstep ...<b>people</b> do not generally like them... ...many <b>voters</b> believe the Tories are nasty...</p>

On average general groups were more widely used in Czech context, however, the most frequent usage was found in the texts by Owen Jones from the *The Guardian*.



### 5.3. Persons - are you in or are you out?

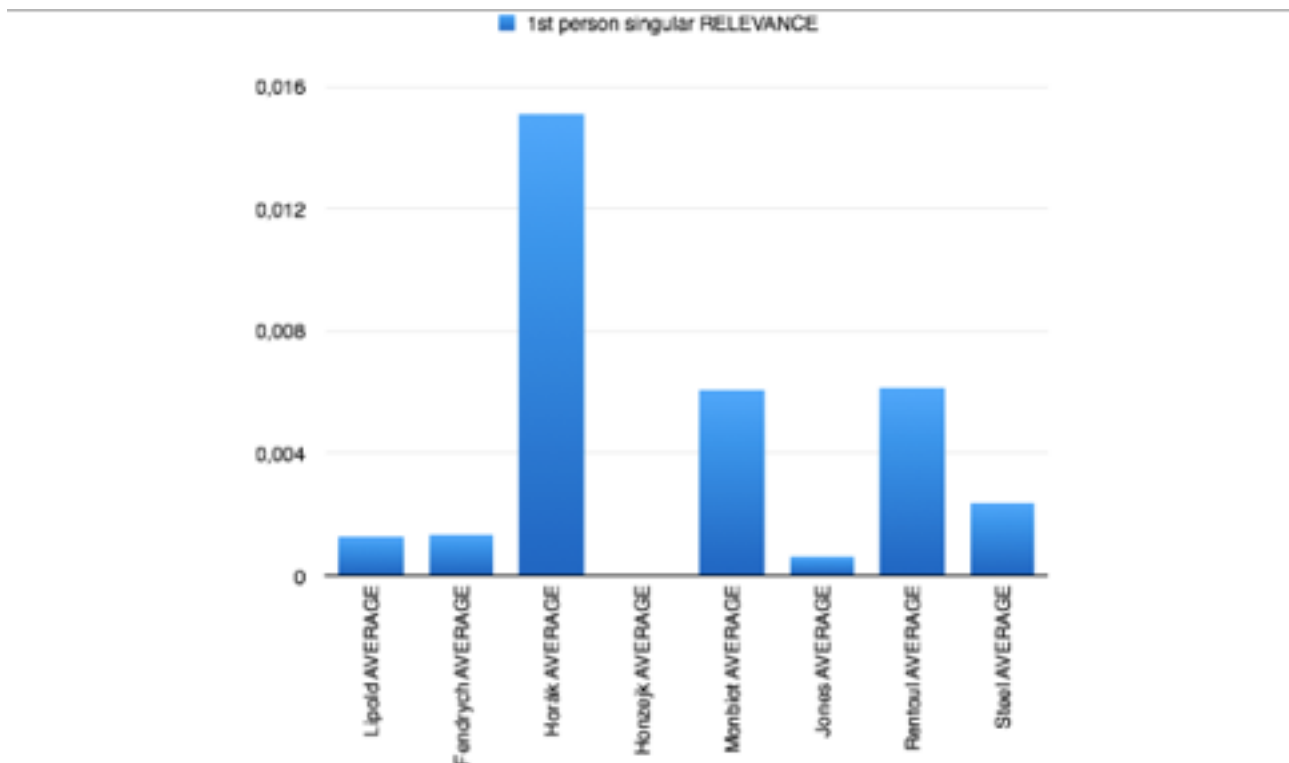
One of the main interests in of the analysis was the focus on person, i.e. how the author of the opinion piece communicates with the reader using personal pronouns, both by themselves or connected to a verb.

#### 5.3.1. First person singular

As was mentioned earlier in the theoretical part, the basic position of the text in online form allows for a prominent level of intertextuality and a significant connection to other media – in particular the social media. This link to the personalized tool of communication with the readers adds to the personal effect of the **first person singular** in an opinion text. Even without the conditions of the online environment, the use of *I* creates a relatable narrative, a personal story with which the readers can identify. Such texts are highly engaging and more palatable for the readers than a mere listing of facts which a news story would offer. Even in the news discourse there is high demand for so-called *human interest stories* which show a chosen topic through a personal narrative.

It is not surprising that in the Czech context, the most frequent use of the first person singular was in the texts written by Jakub Horák, a journalist and PR specialist, whose

Facebook profile popular and widely followed. Since his online persona is well-known, his views on the events of the day are in high demand. His personal style is consistent on social networks as well as in his texts for *iHNed.cz* – while more stylized and less personal in case of the texts.



Nevertheless, the connection between social-network activity and the usage of first person singular is not applicable generally. In the English discourse Owen Jones has a prominent presence on social networks, nevertheless, his opinion texts do not display the same phenomenon as Horák's. However, Owen Jones's personal style defies the set criteria of this analysis and instead displays dominant features of topical duality, which will be addressed later in a separate chapter.

On average, the phenomenon was more prominent in the Czech texts.

There are three uses that I wish to highlight in the examples:

- 1. The author uses his experience as a narrative, which leads the reader to the conclusion**
- 2. The author expresses his/her opinion**
- 3. The author attributes the opinion/claim to a known/unknown source, other than him/her or the reader**

## Examples: First person singular

<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	-
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	<p>1. ...jednou <b>jsem byl</b> na mši... Málem <b>jsem</b> z té atmosféry <b>omdlel</b>.</p> <p>2. ...<b>líbí se mi</b> označení “magor Konvička”, které použil premiér... <b>Vážím si</b> moc vegetariánů...</p> <p>3. ...pak přijde <b>moje</b> velká chvíle... ...<b>já sáhnu</b> do té pravé kapsy... ...<b>vyndám</b> šroubovák... ...<b>spravím</b> to. ...bude lepší si trochu posunout židli, kdyby skočil <b>mým</b> směrem... Proč bych tady totiž jinak byl, <b>já</b> s kočičkou.</p>
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	<p>1. ...masivní infokampaň v duchu „prosíme o strpení, děkujeme za pochopení a omlouváme se za případné zdržení“ <b>jsem nezaznamenal</b></p> <p>2. Dnes, <b>myslím</b>, by to solidní médium nezveřejnilo</p>
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	<p>1. <b>Bydlím</b> v Praze 6 Z toho <b>jsem</b> vždycky <b>měl</b> největší strach.</p> <p>2. <b>Já</b> to ještě <b>stihnu</b>... <b>Jsem jen já, já, já.</b> (Trump) (<b>Nejedu autem zbytečně?</b>)</p>
<b>John Rentoul</b>	<p>1. <b>I was</b> a Remainer <b>myself</b>, although a reluctant Remainer...</p> <p>2. ... <b>I don't think</b> it is Johnson's colourful language that is the problem.</p>
<b>Mark Steel</b>	<p>1. <b>I feel like</b> the establishment has really been given a kicking... <b>I'm glad</b> well known fact-checker Donald Trump has come out against 'fake news'</p> <p>2. ...when <b>I see</b> Farage celebrating... It reminds <b>me</b> of <b>my</b> Auntie Joyce's do when she retired...</p>
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<p>1. <b>I've converted</b> to veganism to reduce <b>my</b> impact on the living world</p> <p>2. <b>I do not see</b> the European Union as a lost Avalon.</p>

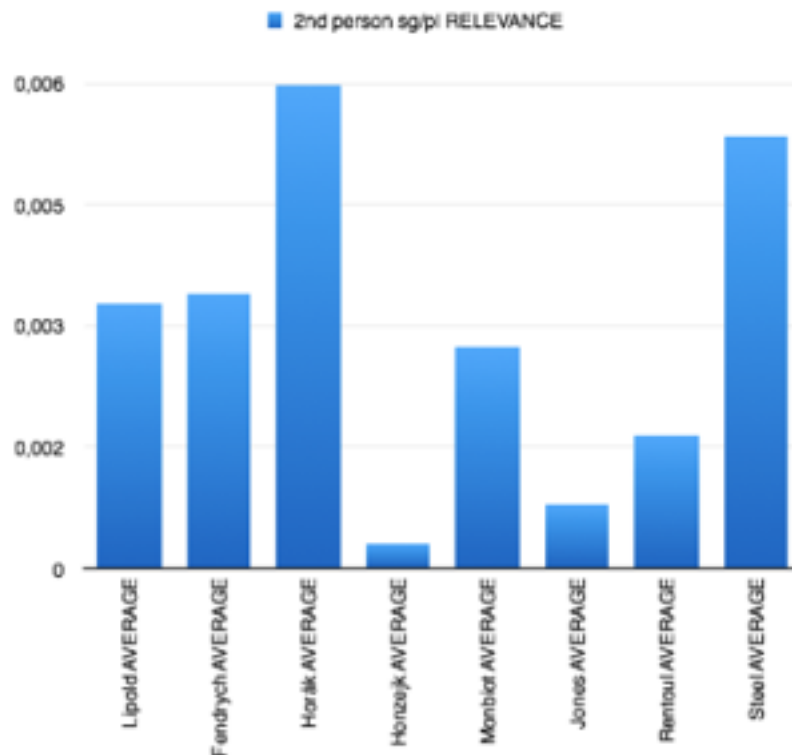
Owen Jones	<p>2. But who <b>do I mean</b> by “they”?</p> <p>3. <b>I’m a careerist</b>, secretly rightwing, motivated by money... ...it’s because <b>I want</b> a genuinely radical Labour leadership...</p>
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While the first person singular revolves predominantly around the persona of the author, the other two persons the analysis dealt with shift the focus on the readers and their perception of the text.

### 5.3.2. Second person plural/singular

The **second person plural/singular** functions as a conversational element, it allows the author to address the reader through the text and creates the illusion of direct contact. Unless it is a direct recommendation of an opinion or behavior, which fulfills the conative function of language, this textual element is rather phatic, it maintains the link between the author and the reader and supports the overall conversational tone. The usage of this person usually targets the readership, therefore the author presumably knows the type of group to which he/she directs the arguments. This presumption cannot be applied to the situation when the author decides to use the first person plural.

On average the usage was higher in the Czech texts, but the difference was not overly significant. The highest frequency was in the texts by Jakub Horák from *iHNed.cz*, followed closely by Mark Steel from *The Independent*.



I would like to highlight three uses of this person in the texts that were analyzed:

- 1. The author addresses the reader within the narrative. This use is mostly phatic.**
- 2. The author recommends the reader to do something, be it an actual activity or thought process.**
- 3. Similarly to the third use of the First person singular, the author attributes the opinion/claim to a known/unknown source, other than him/her or the reader**

## Examples: Second person

<b>Petr Honzejk</b>	3. Uprchlík? Terorista! Bijte ho!!! (SG) Babiš tady, Babiš tam, všude, kam se podíváš.
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	1. SG (...můžeš ho (ji) potkat kdekoli...) SG (...musíš je mít všechny...) K jejich honění vás ponouká nezvladatelný pud... Možná jste to zaznamenali sami... 2. ...když nemáte uprchlíky... ...dejte tam feťáky...
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	1. ...srocní davů na význačných místech najdete každý den celou řadu Kdybyste si zkusili přečíst normalizační Rudé právo... 2. Zastavte zprávy a tím seberete teroristům motiv Především zapomeňte na centimetry výšky
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	1. Přijedete třeba do renesančních Slavonic... 2. Nestřílejte si z policie. 3. Ozbrojte se, my vás odzbrojíme ?
<b>John Rentoul</b>	1. ...you can see why the British cannot be given anything that makes life outside the EU look good. If you look at the readership of British newspapers... 2. Forget about the Supreme Court case... But then you always, always have to apply judgement to them...
<b>Mark Steel</b>	1. So if you were picky... ...you might doubt the figure of 650 million... You can see why this would make him so angry...

<p><b>George Monbiot</b></p>	<p>1.  ...if you want a job...  ...you must be as unlike a machine as possible.  ...well, what did you expect?  Today you can no longer call out the yeomanry...  You use a corrupt and partisan media to hound them.</p> <p>2.  Call them out...  ...expose them to the light...  ...don't believe a word they say.</p>
<p><b>Owen Jones</b></p>	<p>1.  ...and if you don't define yourself, you will be defined</p> <p>2.  Take Sadiq Khan...  ...watch this space.</p> <p>3.  Sacrificing a hot meal so your children don't need to</p>

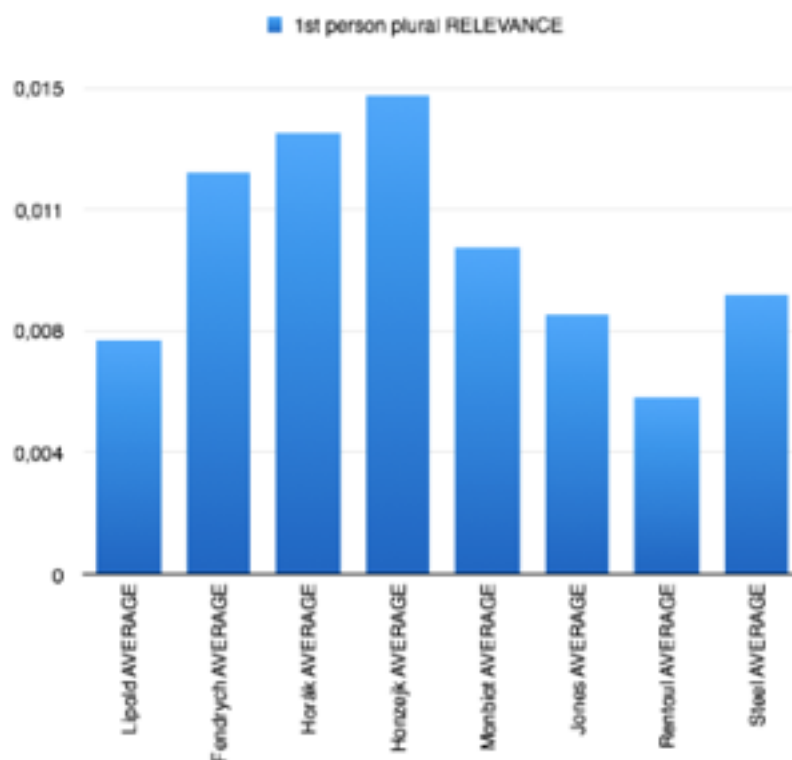
### **5.3.3. First person plural**

Returning to what was previously mentioned in the section about proximity, the usage of 1st person plural is again related to space, be it geographical or cultural, specifically in the author's attempt to convey that he/she and the reader are members of the same geographical or cultural space and therefore connected within the issue that is being described in the text. If we consider the fact, that readers still tend to be faithful to a limited number of media, regardless of the digital revolution, as mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, there is also a presumption, that the reader knows the opinions and leanings connected to the authors of the particular medium, therefore the author can - up to a certain extent - presume that the read is also in the same opinion space in terms of political leaning.

In terms of the meaning, however, the 1st person plural does not just encompass the author and th reader, i.e. the immediate members of the communication process, the *we* transcends the set consisting of the author and the readership to mean basically any vague group from society or nation to all of humanity – this use can be found for example



in George Monbiot's texts.



Similarly to the case of general groups, because the use of first person plural often strays to a very vague meaning, the claims which the author attributes to *us* can be very difficult to refute.

The usage in both Czech and English context is higher than the other observed phenomena - with the exception of proximity in the Czech context – with the the Czech share higher – similarly to previously described phenomena.

The presumption that the 1st person plural involves the reader, would intuitively suggest that meanings of the statements where it is being used, would be designated to lead to the readers agreement. However, this expectation can in certain cases be deceitful.

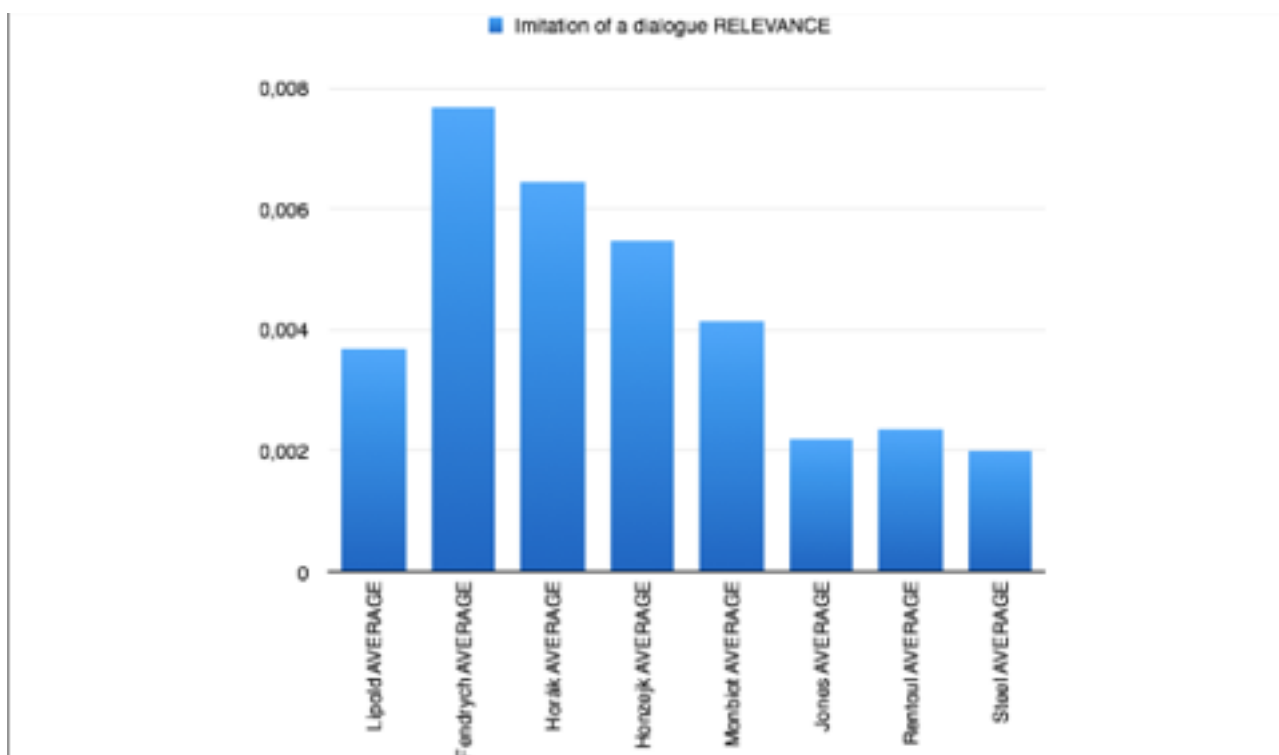
### Examples: First person plural

<b>Petr Honzejk</b>	Většinou <b>uvažujeme</b> dospěle... Ne že <b>bychom chtěli</b> válku, ve které <b>bychom umírali</b> . Možná ale <b>chceme</b> aspoň její náhražku. <b>Naučme se</b> hledat krásu... Zatím <b>se</b> jen zoufale <b>bojíme</b> všeho cizího <b>My</b> už totiž od politiků žádnou pravdu <b>nečekáme</b> .
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<b>Jakub Horák</b>	<p>Smějme se náboženství Ze samé korektnosti, <b>abychom</b> někoho <b>neurazili</b>...</p> <p>...se <b>bojíme</b> už i říkat, že islám skutečně je slušná konina.</p> <p><b>Naučme se</b> hledat krásu...</p> <p>Zatím <b>se</b> jen zoufale <b>bojíme</b> všeho cizího...</p> <p><b>My</b> už totiž od politiků žádnou pravdu <b>nečekáme</b>.</p>
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	<p><b>My</b> Češi <b>jsme</b> s ním ovšem <b>začali obcovat</b> ještě před vynálezem Facebooku.</p> <p>A <b>vystačili bychom si</b> dál bez sociální sítě...</p> <p><b>Zvykali jsme si</b>, že pravda – i historická pravda – je velmi relativní...</p> <p>...<b>my populisti</b> jinak vypadající cizince v ČR nechceme...</p>
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	<p><b>Nežijeme</b> v době husitských válek, <b>nejsme</b> husité</p> <p>Ale <b>my nežijeme</b> v patnáctém století</p> <p><b>Náš</b> život je organizován jinak, moderně</p> <p>Moc <b>svěřujeme</b> do rukou státu.</p> <p><b>Platíme</b> tajné služby, speciální policejní jednotky, aby <b>nás</b> chránily.</p> <p>Politika bez vize vede k tomu, že <b>se</b> hlavně <b>bojíme</b> a <b>nadáváme</b></p> <p><b>Strašíme</b> šaríou</p>
<b>John Rentoul</b>	<p><b>We all like</b> a good court case.</p> <p><b>We swoon</b> at the sensational clash of great minds.</p> <p>... <b>we ought to be trying to find</b> out what kind of deal the other 27 EU countries are prepared to give <b>us</b>.</p> <p>... <b>we ought to be trying to find out</b> what EU leaders and MEPs think about <b>our</b> future trading arrangements.</p> <p><b>We know</b> how that worked out.</p>
<b>Mark Steel</b>	<p>...<b>we all remember</b> the sermon of Jesus...</p> <p>When <b>we agreed</b> to let children in...</p> <p>...these weren't the ones <b>we ordered</b>.</p> <p><b>We were expecting</b> a cute four-year-old...</p> <p>Even the children <b>we've accepted</b> in the past have swindled <b>us</b>...</p> <p>How much longer <b>are we going to be taken</b> for mugs like this?</p> <p>But <b>we're</b> too politically correct these days...</p>
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<p>It's hard to see how <b>we can escape</b> the need for professional, full-time politicians.</p> <p>Perhaps...<b>we could learn</b> to love them.</p> <p>But <b>we should be aware</b> of the dangers.</p> <p><b>We have</b> an environment secretary whose ideology urges her to see the environment...</p> <p><b>We</b> no longer <b>have</b> a climate change secretary, of any description.</p> <p><b>We have</b> a government that treats the Earth's systems...</p>

<b>Owen Jones</b>	<p>We should aspire to properly publicly funded NHS dentistry</p> <p>We should be ashamed of what we're doing to Britain's children</p> <p>And that's why we should all be alarmed by the crisis of mental health</p> <p>We need to stop calling it hard Brexit</p> <p>...let's not ignore challenges...</p> <p>...let's confront them and resolve to overcome them.</p> <p>We must make it clear to her that the UK cannot be used as a prop by a proto-fascist</p>
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## 5.4. Imitation of a dialogue



While the main purpose of a news story is to answer questions, mainly the basic five Ws<sup>39</sup>, an opinion piece asks them as well. Even if the questions are rhetorical, since there is presumably no expectation of the reader to answer them, they do create the effect of a prompt to participate in the communication process. Hicks argues that rhetoric, as a stylistic feature, “is a general term for the art of using language to persuade or impress

<sup>39</sup>“The five Ws stand for 5 main questions a news story should answer: Who, Where, What, When and Why. A broader news story usually provides the answer for the question How, as well.” (Harcup, keyword Ws)

others". (Hicks, 106)

Another tool to create the illusion that the reader is an active part of the communication, is to phrase certain claims as answer to unasked questions or as a reaction - agreement or disagreement - to an opinion, which could presumably be the reader's.

The imitation of a dialogue was used more frequently in the Czech texts, especially in the texts by Martin Fendrych from *Aktuálně.cz*. In the English context, the highest occurrence was in the texts by George Monbiot.

The two common uses were:

### 1. Imitations of responses to reader's presumed reactions/objections/arguments

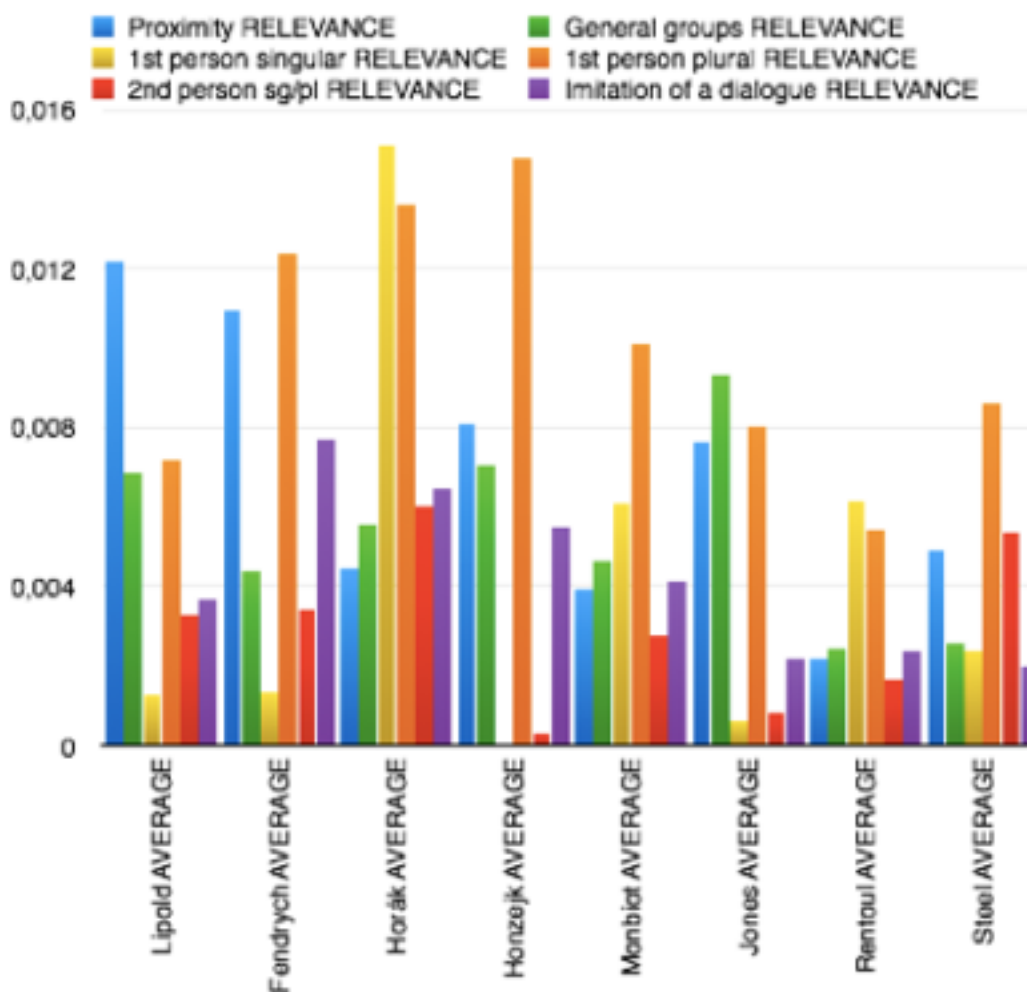
### 2. Rhetorical questions

#### Examples: Imitations of a dialogue

<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	1. Proč se všechny tyhle odezdikezdismy dějí v takové míře zrovna nám? 2. Ne, opravdu to není nic hezkého...
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	1. Jistě, z liberálního pohledu má právo každý koupat se, v čem chce. 2. Proboha, to už jsme ztratili smysl pro humor?
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	1. (To je konstatování faktu, ne postesknutí.) Ne, angličtina (ani němčina, ani ruština atd.) nás nesežere. 2. A není náhodou také starostí kraje, aby si s případnými problémy poradil, respektive jim úspěšně předcházel?
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	1. (Jasně...) 2. Mají se Češi změnit v kovboje, koupit kolty a vyhnat teroristy?

<b>John Rentoul</b>	<p>1. No, David Cameron's EU referendum wasn't a mistake</p> <p>2. Are referendums like the one we had on Brexit a tool of fascism – or the will of the people?</p>
<b>Mark Steel</b>	<p>1. Of course refugee children should face dental tests...</p> <p>2. What's the point in saving someone's life if they turn out to be 23 and wearing a hood?</p>
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<p>1. Of course farmers fear Brexit</p> <p>2. What lovers of the nation are these, who seem prepared to scrub its features from the map?</p>
<b>Owen Jones</b>	<p>1. Yes, we need investment in services</p> <p>2. Whingeing about media bias is one thing, but how do progressive movements deal with it?</p>

## 5.5. General results



The analysis allowed us to answer these questions:

**Which of the described phenomena are most frequently used by an author**

**Which of the described phenomena are most used in the particular discourse**

**Which author uses the particular phenomena most frequently**

**Which discourse on average uses more of the described phenomena on the whole**

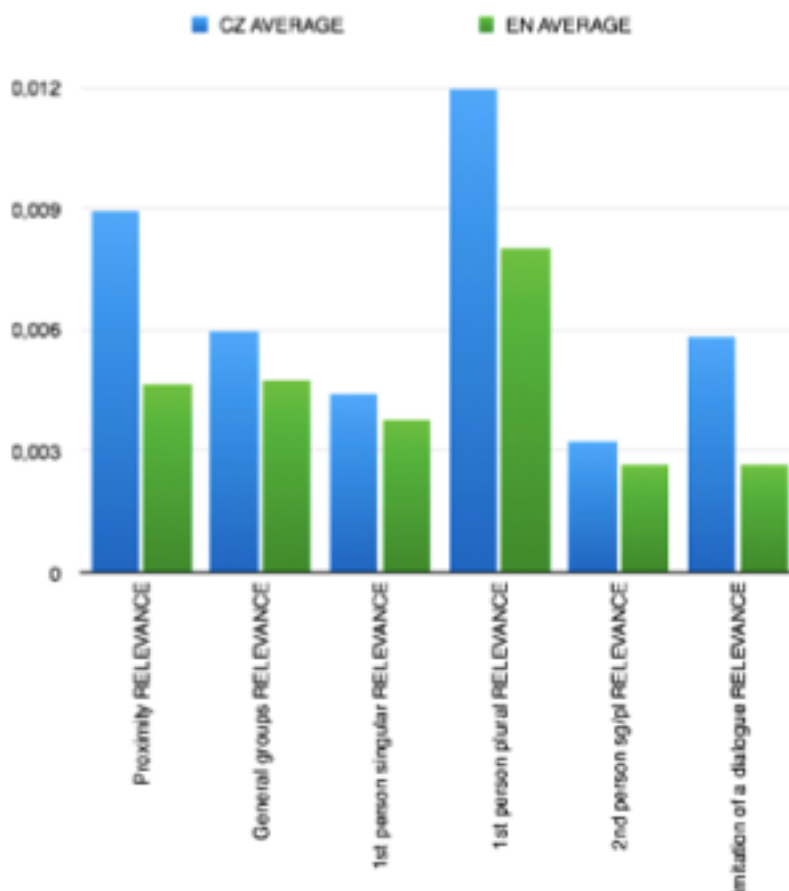
While the first and the third point were addressed in the previous section concerning the phenomena, the second and fourth questions are yet to be addressed. It is important to note again that this analysis can only be considered valid for the texts and media that were

analyzed. Addressing the whole discourse should in this case be considered as addressing the discourse within the boundaries of this thesis and the scope of text and context it refers to.

**Which of the described phenomena are most used in the particular discourse**

English discourse	Czech discourse
1. First person plural	1. First person plural
2. General groups	2. Proximity
3. Proximity	3. General groups
4. First person singular	4. Imitation of a dialogue
5. Imitation of a dialogue	5. First person singular
6. Second person plural/singular	6. Second person plural/singular

## Which discourse on average uses more of the described phenomena on the whole



The analysis revealed that on average the Czech authors used all of the described phenomena more frequently than the English authors. In terms of this thesis we could claim that they were more interpersonal with the reader. Explaining the reason for this difference would, of course, need to be a subject of further research. However, my personal theory (and proposal for further research) would be to take into consideration the fact that the British media context is more structured in terms of political leaning and the mere fact, that the readers choose the media they favor based on their political beliefs and this process is open on both side of the communication, could be creating a situation where the author and the reader are already linked beyond just a media author and a media consumer. By consciously sharing the politically or topically defined media space, both sides of the communication are bonded, I would argue.

I have mentioned topical as well as political element. While the Czech media that were chosen for this analysis produce opinions on various topics and their authors usually do not have one specialization, in the British context we could observe that some authors had a specific topic. George Monbiot's topics are environmentalism and society development,



Owen Jones is both professionally and personally interested in the affairs of the British left, in particular the Labour party, and John Rentoul comments frequently on the US affairs. Mark Steel's topic vary but his connection to the reader is also a matter of personal-style choice, which will be briefly discussed later.

## 5.6. Other phenomena

### 5.6.1. Cultural references

This element was not a part of the final analysis, but was observed in the texts of most of the writers and because it contributes to the interpersonal effect of the author-reader communication, it should be mentioned.

The use of cultural references is not only an element which makes the text more vivid and engaging, and adds another layer of meaning to it – it also frames the the cultural space which the author and the reader share. The references invoke reader's own experience, cultural knowledge and context. Presumably it also pleases the reader to be able to notice and understand the reference, which proves he/she shares the cultural knowledge of the particular social group which is connected to the publication.

There are numerous types of references that can occur in an opinion piece:

### Examples: Cultural references

<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	<i>Úvaha samozřejmě směřuje do současného Česka, ale dovolte ještě jeden literární příklad. V románu George Orwella 1984 byli lidé efektivně ovládáni skrze strach z Emanuela Goldsteina, jakéhosi prefabrikovaného démona, který hrozil zničit jejich domnělé štěstí.</i> (literary reference)
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	<i>A zatímco Michal David sbíral céčka nebo zpíval o tom, jak "pijeme colu u jednoho stolu", Elán vyprávěl o bitkách na diskotéce (Čo je? Čo je? Čo chceš?) a razil motiv kaskadéra, který se nějak životem protluče.</i> (past popculture reference)  <i>To zase sorry jako.</i> (current political and media reference)
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	<i>Zahraniční turisté o tom nejspíš nevědí, ale domácí publikum má ještě v paměti, jak se tu v nejtřeženějších zónách pohybovala delegace z Osvětiman, kontroly nula nic.</i> (close past reference to an event presented in the medium)  <i>Dokonce přirovnal atmosféru k tomu, co zažil Jesse Owens v Berlíně 1936.</i> (historical reference)

<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	<i>I tento její usilovný kritik tedy bude muset předvést "Wilkommekultur" (vítací kulturu).</i> (close past media and social network reference) <i>Nežijeme v době husitských válek, nejsme husité. Ti měli jasný cíl, pevnou víru (a cepy a sudlice).</i> (historical reference)
<b>John Rentoul</b>	<i>But remember the immortal words of Benjamin Zander, the conductor, who taught his musicians, when they made a mistake, to say, "How interesting!"</i> (historical anecdote)
<b>Mark Steel</b>	<i>It's the same reason we shouldn't take any notice of David Attenborough, with his misleading films about orangutans; the ones he shows are a far cry from the ones in The Jungle Book that want to kidnap a child and learn to make fire.</i> (current media reference, literary reference)
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<i>I do not see the European Union as a lost Avalon.</i> (folklor reference)
<b>Owen Jones</b>	<i>A proto-fascist will not be defeated by a few rousing renditions of Kumbaya.</i> (religious/pop-culture reference)

The possibilities to insert a cultural reference in an opinion piece are numerous and varied. Very often the reader can encounter an intertextual reference to an event/phrase that he/she knows if he/she follows the particular medium. Opinion pieces are in most cases referential by definition because they frequently react to current events, that are presented in the media, and in many cases there is a presumption that the reader knows the general story from the news or public space (social networks) and will therefore understand the references.

### **5.6.2. Personal style**

As was mentioned earlier, the opinion piece is a journalistic text that is tightly linked with the persona of the author, therefore the personal style is not discouraged – it is expected and called for. The author can distinguish himself/herself in many ways – we have mentioned the public persona on social networks or the presence of a particular topic, which the author makes “his/her own”, either by being on an expert level in the field or by covering the topic extensively.

It is presumably of personal choice, that the authors decide to approach the subject of the text somewhere on the scale:

factual - - - - - opinionated - - - - - satirical - - - - - literary

Since the English and Czech stylistic discourse differ in their approaches to definitions of journalistic genres, let us use the Czech definitions of genres as described in Jílek (2009), with an excursion to Harcup (2014), to better illustrate the scale.

### **Factual - Analysis**

Jílek (2009) defines *analysis* (analýza/rozbor) as a text between the news and views. Its objective is to present the facts but also include a persuasive element to lead the reader to a conclusion, by developing a logical pattern of information, which is subjective. Jílek stresses that the intent of this genre is not to present the authors own opinion or directly provide a conclusion, merely to present the facts to the reader and put them into context. (89)

### **Opinionated - Commentary**

Jílek presents three genres that correspond with the opinion part of the scale:

An *essay* (úvaha) has a basis in a fact/facts and elaborates on it, evaluates it and uses arguments to support the chosen view. (90)

A *polemic* is a reaction to a thesis/thought that the author disagrees with, it is a disputation which can be using both factual and non-factual arguments. (92)

A *commentary* (komentář) is an immediate reaction to news, it provides a factual introduction and proceeds with interpretation of the facts. It can contain subjective argumentation, manipulation. Often the text can include humor, vulgar expressions, rhetorical questions and answers etc. (92)

### **Satirical**

According to Harcup satirical journalism aims to “mock or ridicule its targets, which are often powerful individuals or institutions.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Harcup, keyword Satirical journalism

## Literary

Jílek mentions several definitions of *feuilleton* (fejeton), which he differentiates from *column* (sloupek), from various authors (Bečka, Čechová a kol., Hrabák, Mistrik) but stresses the element of narration as a key feature of the *feuilleton*. In this type of text the author uses an original form, an unusual narrative to convey his/her opinion on the discussed matter. (99-100)

Using this scale we can argue that most of the analyzed author oscillate between two stages.

**Jan Lipold** and **Martin Fendrych** from *Aktuálně.cz* mostly register in between the factual and opinionated level, mostly being closer to opinionated and in some cases reaching towards satirical, but mostly not on the level of the whole text, rather as humorous interjections amidst facts and opinions. Three exceptions would be Martin Fendrych's text "*Nestřílejte si z policie! Kdo si plete kombajn s traktorem, na toho vletí ušaté torpédo*", which is a mockery aimed at the former police chief, and Jan Lipold's "*Děti do 150 centimetrů vstup zdarma? Diskriminace vysokých, šikana dlouhánů. Netrpme to!*", which develops an ad-absurdum narrative about random discrimination based on body characteristics. The third is Jan Lipold's text "*Politikář: Hrad plesá s Trumpem a zahrává si s jeho žárlivostí*", which presents a satirical and partly literary possible future of the next election.

**Petr Honzejek** from *iHNed.cz* presents stylistically consistent texts, which are mostly combining the factual and opinionated level, partially reaching to satirical, but again – not in the scope of the whole text.

**Jakub Horák** from *iHNed.cz* mostly oscillates between the opinionated and satirical part of the scale, with his personal narratives. In two cases he reaches towards literary – on the whole text level in "*Pokémoni jako zbraň islámu*", where he presents the popular game as a part of muslim invasion, and in "*Domobrana - když nemáte uprchlíky, dejte tam feťáky*", in which he assumes the point of view of the characters he satirizes and uses them for parts of the narrative.

**George Mobiot** from *The Guardian* is steadily between the factual and opinionated parts of the scale. He presents facts and provides his opinions, interpretations and recommendations. While critical, in the analyzed text he did not stray into satirical.

**Owen Jones** – similarly to his colleague in *The Guardian* George Monbiot – maintains a stable position between the factual and the opinionated, presenting facts and opinions, often in accordance to his political leaning and focus on the social politics.

**John Rentoul** of *The Independent*, chooses the style not unlike the authors of *The Guardian* – he oscillates between the factual and the opinionated, he mainly presents interpretations of the facts and adds opinions at times.

**Mark Steel** of *The Independent* is nearly a pure satirist on the scale. While presenting his opinions, his main style is irony and sarcasm.

### **5.6.3. Duality**

There is a principle of proportionality used in the news to ensure the highest possible level balance and objectivity. Harcup's account of media balance is probably the closest that relates to practice:

“Even-handedness and fairness in assessing and presenting different sides of an issue, argument or conflict. The notion of balance does not necessarily require a strict stopwatch-measured evenness between the time devoted to different sources, nor does it imply that all viewpoints be treated equally. Rather, balance within journalism requires that journalists approach stories with open mind and report matters fairly, having regard to the evidence, and acknowledging the existence of different explanations and interpretations. (28)

A news article should ideally not focus of one side of the argument, it should provide the reader with the opposing view and balancing facts. In case of the purposely subjective opinion pieces we can find such principle used to achieve the complete opposite.

O’Keefe talks about *centering* and *othering*, which is precisely the strategy that is applied here:

## **Natural enemies**

In the British context, a natural pair of opposing entities on the political and social scene is the distinction of “the Left” and “the Right”, which is in the media often simplified to the opposition the two most prominent political parties, the Labour party, which represents the political left and the Conservative party, which represents the right. The reason to call this approach a simplification of the reality is that the Labour party is not the only representative of the left-leaning part of the political spectrum (there is also the Green party and other political bodies) and the Conservative party is not the only example of the right (this part of the spectrum is also represented by UKIP and other political bodies). Positioning the Labour and “Tories” against one another in a text is a prominent tool for example in Owen Jones’s text.

*“Political language matters. The Tories understand this: that’s why they repeat the same messages over and over again. We’re clearing up Labour’s mess; we’re balancing the nation’s books; long-term economic plan, all repeated ad infinitum. Opponents mock this message discipline, play Tory bingo or are driven to distraction by it: meanwhile, voters can repeat back Tory attack lines verbatim on the doorstep.”*

“However, if Labour loses terribly in an election, the left gets blamed, the party shifts off to the right in response, and the country is even more consumed with rightwing populism, then those things will (to put it bluntly) not happen.”

As has been mentioned previously, the Czech context does not offer such a clear distinction and historical opposition. By large the duality used in the text stems from current political climate and events. We can find general counterpart, such as the common man vs. the elite, or institutions/system vs. the people.

## **Far or close to home**

Another common use of duality is connected to proximity. Be it geographical or cultural, the authors often use the comparison of places/cultures that are close – “us” – and far away – “the others”. This can be found either on the whole text level, this distinction therefore functions as the main basis of the presented arguments, or it can merely be a part of an argument within the text, alternatively there can be several dualities used in several arguments/paragraphs.

## Examples:

<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	<p>Střední Asie je bohužel na mentální mapě blíže, než se zdá. Když slyšíme zdůvodnění, proč se mají v Praze stavět nejrůznější monstrózní hejblata, těžko se ubránit pocitu, že je přináší vítr z východních hor a stepí. Třeba ruské kolo na Smíchově.</p>
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	<p>Funguje to takhle v Izraeli. Všichni, kluci i holky, jdou po škole na povinnou vojnu. Když po dvou či třech letech vojnu dokončí, dostanou od státu peníze, neboť vojna je placená. A každý se sebere a na půl roku cestuje. Potkal jsem v Indii spoustu Izraelců, i v Nepálu. Cestují, sbírají zkušenosti a kontakty, pozorují svět. Tohle vás žádná škola nenaučí. Pokud by Češi a Češky dělali totéž, nikdy by se ve světě neztratili. Povinná vojna i pro holky taky není špatný nápad.</p> <p>A někde v budoucnosti nás snad čeká nový národ, musíme si tím projít, stejně jako si tím prošli Slováci, kterým jsme se v devadesátých letech smáli, jak po rozdělení federace dopadnou špatně. A vida - teď jsme dopadli špatně my.</p>
<b>Jan Lipold</b>	<p>Protože, jak víme z blahopřejného dopisu, my political opponents have called me the „Czech Donald Trump“ &amp; I am proud of such a label, je pochopitelné, že inaugurační plesy se v pátek nekonají jen ve Washingtonu D. C., ale paralelně se plesá také na Pražském hradě. Jenže hrozí, že leskem vystoupivších celebrit – Vondráčková, Neckář, Gott či moderátor Libor Bouček – Ameriku zastíníme.</p> <p>Make ROP Severozápad Great Again! #realcssd2017</p>
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	<p>Česko prožívá inauguraci amerického prezidenta, jako by byl prezidentem zde. Neobyčejný zájem o Donalda Trumpa, o to, co se děje v USA. Znovu nám nemůže uniknout, v jak globalizovaném, spojitém světě žijeme, jak jsme navzájem provázáni. Mnozí čeští občané sledovali Trumpův inaugurační projev i reakce na něj. Jako by USA byly součástí Česka a Česko jejich.</p> <p>Jakmile lež prohlásíte za faktum, všechno se stává relativním, neplatí nic, jistota mizí. Po nástupu Donalda Trumpa do prezidentského úřadu (i před ním) se to odehrává v Americe. U nás jsme si už zvykli; Česko v té relativitě, kde je jedno, co kdo plácne, vězí několik let.</p>
<b>John Rentoul</b>	–
<b>Mark Steel</b>	Of course the US should ban Syrians – remember how all the Jews fleeing Germany were a bit Nazi?
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<p>The first multi-racial school in South Africa, Woodmead, developed a fully democratic method of teaching, whose rules and discipline were overseen by a student council. Its integrated studies programme, like the new system in Finland, junked traditional subjects in favour of the students' explorations of themes, such as gold, or relationships, or the ocean. Among its alumni are some of South Africa's foremost thinkers, politicians and businesspeople.</p> <p><i>In countries such as Britain and the United States, such programmes succeed despite the system, not because of it.</i></p>
<b>Owen Jones</b>	–

## Britain vs. EU, Remainers vs. Leavers

In the years 2015-2017 the topic of Brexit has been a prominent part of the British, but also European and – slightly less – the global media discourse. The duality between the European Union and the UK is used in many of the analyzed texts and is a logical result of the process of the UK possibly (and later surely) leaving the EU, the duality is a consequence of the topic itself. However, the sense of distinction between the state and the union of states has been in the European public discussion even before Brexit became a newsworthy topic. (pod caru - as proven in (and by the mere existence of) Attila Griszán's book "The Eu Is Not Them, But Us!": The First Person Plural and the Articulation of Collective Identities in European Political Discourse" which was published in 2011)

## Examples

<b>John Rentoul</b>	What is harder to grasp is why she hasn't tried harder to hold out the hand of friendship – not so much to Europe's leaders, who are understandably bruised by the rejection of their Euro-idealism – but to the peoples of the EU. Our national interest outside the EU depends on their friendship.
<b>Mark Steel</b>	Typical Europeans coming over here to steal the benefits of owning our railways
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<i>It brought us much that is good, such as directives that enable us to hold our governments to account for their environmental failures.ited States, such programmes succeed despite the system, not because of it.</i>
<b>Owen Jones</b>	–

Within the scope of this topical setting, there is also the duality between the supporters of the Leave and the Remain campaign. This distinction does not correlate entirely with the political distinction, for both the major parties had representatives endorsing both decisions, with the Conservative party being more closely split and the Labour party mostly, but not entirely for the decision to Remain.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-35616946>



## Examples:

<b>John Rentoul</b>	The Labour candidates in Copeland and Stoke both supported remaining in the EU, but are now aligned with their leader's policy of supporting the start of the Article 50 procedure.  The only reason his successor turned out to be a Remainer – a reluctant Remainer – was that the country had already voted to Leave.
<b>Mark Steel</b>	Part of the problem may be the attitude towards Brexit, which seems a little hazy, because Labour have to please the 65 per cent of their supporters who voted to remain, along with the 35 per cent who voted to leave.
<b>George Monbiot</b>	–
<b>Owen Jones</b>	Labour's electoral coalition includes both ardent remainers and ardent leavers. The party has already lost four times as many leave voters as remain voters.

## The people vs. the system/the government

It is considered the traditional role of the press to function as a control force on behalf of the citizens, acting in the public interest and the democratic structure. This concept is referred to as the *watchdog role* (Harcup, 327) or, in the British context, the *fourth estate* (pod caru - alongside the House of Lords, House of Commons and the Church. This concept was originally introduced by Edmund Burke in the 18th century and later used by the writer Thomas Carlyle, who linked the press and democracy, 109). Harcup points out that this function of the press is usually associated with investigative journalism (327), however, we can observe authors taking this position even when writing opinion texts. It is not the aim of this thesis to judge whether the author chosen for the analysis actually do fulfill the *watchdog role* or merely position themselves on the side of “the people”, the readers against the system in power to achieve more persuasive effect.

<b>Petr Honzejek</b>	Prezident není prognostikem rizik, stejně jako jím nebyl, když hrozil, že se letos převalí přes Česko migrační vlna. Prezident jen předvádí management strachu.
<b>Jakub Horák</b>	Vláda Bohuslava Sobotky si dala za úkol ve svém posledním roce zvýšit nemocenskou pro dlouhodobě nemocné, zavádět sociální bydlení a postarat se o svobodné matky ohledně výživného. Je hezké podporovat ty slabé. Ale měli bychom především myslet na to, jak vybudovat stát plný odvážných a chytrých lidí.

<b>Jan Lipold</b>	Typické uvažování: místo toho, aby se radnice při pohledu na řeku zasekanou turistickými parničky zamyslela, jestli toho není příliš a neměla by nastoupit restrikce, zamyslí se nad tím, že investuje peníze (zčásti evropské), aby turistický ruch a byznys pumpovala.
<b>Martin Fendrych</b>	Sám [Zeman] však řekl, že útoky, pokud by přišly, hrozí „v hlavním městě, v metru, na nádraží“ nebo na Hradě. Chrání tedy nejdřív sebe. Když se podíváte na nedávné teroristické útoky v Evropě, neodehrály se na střežených místech, ale vždycky tam, kde se houfují lidé.
<b>John Rentoul</b>	They don't want to punish us, but it is in their interest to make sure that leaving the EU does not look like an attractive option for their peoples.
<b>Mark Steel</b>	It's time to put America in the hands of people who aren't afraid to be utterly irrational, such as Trump's chief strategist Stephen Bannon, whose wife swore he wouldn't let his daughter go to a school as there were "too many whiny brat Jews".  [Trump] can act like this because he's anti-establishment which is why he's such good friends with Farage. And there's no greater sign of two mates bravely fighting against the symbols of wealth and power, than being photographed smiling in a solid gold lift that one of them owns so he can go up and down his tower. Jeremy Corbyn, look and learn.
<b>George Monbiot</b>	<i>What does it mean to defend its sovereignty? For some of the leaders of the Brexit campaign, it means reducing the United Kingdom to a franchise of corporate capital, governed from head offices overseas. They will take us out of Europe to deliver us into the arms of other powers.</i>
<b>Owen Jones</b>	What's the cure? The government will undoubtedly point to a rising minimum wage, but tax and benefit changes are projected to leave many workers worse off regardless in the coming years.

## Examples:

### 5.6.4. Positioning

Having defined the space and set the roles in it for him/herself and the reader, the author is capable of implementing several strategies that directly benefit from the set positions – with regard to the position of the author, the reader and the topic.

The safest, meaning the least “offensive” to the reader is the positioning in which the author usually presents two sides and creates the duality of right and wrong. The two sides may stay the same throughout the whole text or change in the paragraphs. The important feature of this type of text is that neither the author or the reader are one of the parties in question, they both stand outside of the problem, looking at it from the distance, uninvolved.

A strategy which can create some resentment on the part of the reader is when he/she is being included in the described issue at hand. This we can see in the texts about issues of the society, nation, like-minded political group etc. Since the usage of the interpersonal tools does not always convey the same meaning and the same division of roles. This approach usually appears when the topic is a social/political situation/issue and the author

defines himself/herself , the reader or both either explicitly or implicitly as a part of the issue and positions them on the different sides of it - either on the right or the wrong side. This can also change and evolve throughout the text.

I have noted this possible effect during my analysis and cannot claim it proven, but it is one of the possible elements I would like to address in my future research.

## Conclusion

This paper aimed to approach a specific media text type, an opinion, first briefly a genre point of view to see its conventionalised form and subsequently view it from a functional perspective, using the theoretical background of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Fairclough's view of Critical Discourse Analysis, which urges to not only follow the textual layer of language, but to look at the political and production circumstances, the nature of communicators and the relationship between/among them. While Halliday introduces three metafunctions, the main focus of this paper was the interpersonal metafunction, which is concerned with the choices the speaker makes to enact his/her personal and social relationships with other people.

Following the account of media discourse, a production perspective was introduced, to account for the specific channel that was chosen for the analysis – the digital media. Unlike the traditional media, such as print, TV, or radio, digital media allow for a very high level of speed, intertextuality, interactivity and feedback. It was, however, pointed out, that these circumstances do not change the behaviour of the recipient as much as it might be expected. The selected publications were introduced as decidedly left-leaning in the British discourse (*The Independent* and *The Guardian*), pointing out that in the Czech discourse, publications rarely hold an open, clear-cut opinion that would correspond with a specific position on the political spectrum. That, of course, does not mean that the publication do not take positions on individual issues, for example through editorials or opinion texts. In case of the chosen publications (*Aktuálně.cz* and *iHNed.cz*), these positions on issues are comparable to their chosen British counterparts (for example anti-Trump sentiment, urge for social tolerance and solidarity or refusal of anti-immigration mood).

Since the focus was on the interpersonal aspect, short bios of the authors were introduced, stressing the variety of authors who are selected to write opinion texts, spanning from professional journalists (Lipold, Honzejek, Fendrych, Rentoul) to journalists-activists (Jones, Monbiot) to comedic political satirists (Steel, Horák).

In the practical part, I have introduced a method of analysis based on pre-reading and some of the authors mentioned in the theoretical part. The elements of text chosen for the analysis were either those that the author uses to pseudo-directly communicate with the reader or those that he uses to define common cultural space. The chosen phenomena were: **proximity, general groups, pronouns (first person singular, first person plural, and second person plural/singular)** and **imitations of a dialogue** (rhetorical and non-

rhetorical questions, imitation of a response). Cultural references were not involved in the formula of the analysis but they were accounted for in the interpretation of the results.

The analysis allowed me to answer these questions:

**Which of the described phenomena are most frequently used by an author**

**Which of the described phenomena are most used in the particular discourse**

**Which author uses the particular phenomena most frequently**

**Which discourse on average uses more of the described phenomena on the whole**

The validity of these results is very specific. Since the analysis does not involve measured audience response, this opens a possibility to further research, involving a sample of audience to confirm the effects of the chosen phenomena.

Also the texts were chosen from publications and authors that are fairly unified in the political leaning or supported values, for future research it would be interesting to compare with publications of a different political and social affiliation.

Another direction worth pursuing would be to compare news stories and opinions in terms of the usage of proximity and duality.

## Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá interpersonální metafunkcí v názorových člancích v britském a českém diskurzu. Názorové články jsou krátce zadefinovány v termínech žánru, teoretická část ale rozvíjí perspektivu funkce a analýzy diskurzu, bere tedy v úvahu specifika mediálního diskurzu, kontextu, intertextuality a produkčních specifik digitálních médií a vybraných publikací – *The Guardian* a *The Independent* v britském diskurzu a *Aktuálně.cz* a *iHNed.cz* v českém diskurzu. Jelikož se praktická analýza soustředí na interpersonální prvky, jsou představeni vybraní autoři z vybraných periodik.

Praktická část se zaměřuje na vybrané prvky v textu (například použití zájmen či imitace dialogu s čtenářem), porovnává, kteří autoři používají které prvky nejčastěji nebo který diskurz používá které prvky. S přihlédnutím k teoretické části je nabídnuta interpretace výsledných dat a některé další aspekty textu, které vycházejí z analýzy.

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