

The University of Michigan

**Perverting the Nationhood:
Sexuality Education Discourse in Printed Polish Media**

by

Arina Vlasova

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master's in International and Regional Studies
(Center for Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia)

2022

Master's Committee:

Professor Geneviève Zubrzycki, advisor

Professor Brian Porter-Szűcs, second reader

Acknowledgments

This thesis would not have been possible without the support, help, guidance, and care of many people. First of all, I would like to thank the International Institute, the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, the Masters in International and Regional Studies program, the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, and Copernicus Center for Polish Studies. Without their generosity, I would not have been able to pursue a master's degree in one of the best public universities in the world. Thank you for making me feel welcome and cared for every second of the time I spent at the University of Michigan.

I would also like to express my most sincere gratitude to Professor Geneviève Zubrzycki. Thank you for being so patient, empathetic, and endlessly supportive at every step that I took towards this achievement. Your example motivates me to reach higher on my academic journey, and I could not have dreamt of a better advisor. I am also thankful to Professor Brian Porter-Szűcs for being my second reader and providing me with his tremendous scholarship on Polish history. Dziękuję bardzo również Pani Ewie Małachowskiej-Pasek i Panu Piotrowi Westwalewiczowi za pomoc na mojej drodze do opanowania języka polskiego. I would also like to thank Professor Elizabeth King, Professor Benjamin Paloff, and Professor Michael Makin, their guidance and encouragement in both the academic and professional spheres of my life. Finally, I want to thank the 2020 MIRS cohort for being the way they are. I felt immensely proud to be among such bright, talented individuals, researchers, and scholars.

My warmest thank you goes to my dear friends for making sure that I stayed fed and surrounded with hugs, laughs, and compassion. Emma, Gwen, Izzie, Anna, Svetik, Polina, and Tonya—I am lucky to have you in my life.

Of course, I will be forever thankful to my family for raising me right. I would not be who I am without my *babulya* Galya—she is my first and forever teacher. Thank you, *mamochka*, for not keeping secrets from me. Thank you, *papochka*, for helping me stay brave no matter what. Thank you, *deda*, for supporting me in my endeavors—even when you did not always understand what exactly I am doing. Thank you, *babulya* Rita, for making me proud of my Polish roots. And thank you, Sophie, my baby sister, for just existing. Люблю вас, мои родные. It is a scary time, but I am forever with you.

My acknowledgments would be incomplete without thanking my trustworthy critic, my tireless advocate, and my favorite person ever. Thank you, Dom. Thank you for being with me on this journey through all the hardship, tears, sleepless nights, and self-doubt. Your patience, your kindness, your laugh, your book recommendations, and your endless love—everything helped me stand tall through all the madness of the past two years. Kocham Cię, милый. I believe that there are many good things to come our way.

Contents

Acknowledgments.....	2
Contents	4
Introduction.....	5
Research question	7
I. Sexuality Education: Concepts and Theoretical Orientations.....	9
Sexuality education in Poland: a brief history	14
II. Methods and sources.....	20
Data collection and sampling	21
III. Empirical Analysis	26
“Stop Pedophilia” bill as a battlefield for sexuality education: Essence and interpretation	26
Interpreting propaganda	29
Discursive practices: “Us vs. Them”	33
The discourse of a battle for the nation.....	33
Absurdity, manipulation, or lie? Discourses of (un)truth and reason	43
Conclusion	54
Bibliography	57
Appendix.....	62

Introduction

Throughout the entire existence of Poland as an independent, democratic state, its cultural, social, and political space was agitated by numerous debates. Together with the end of the total control of the communist party in 1989 through a free election, the new Republic had to start defining its course. Now part of the community of democratic societies, Poland found itself between a rock and a hard place: on one side, there was a capitalistic and fast-paced West, and on the other side—decades of regime resistance and ingrained mythology of innate Catholicism (Zubrzycki 2006, 34). The choice to join the European Union as one of the member states did not make Poland's journey as a nation easier. Now, debates arose with a force never seen before: with the requirements of the Union and other international treaties, keeping traditionalist, non-secular views became an even more complex task. Yet, many political and social actors in Poland, including the current conservative far-right party in power Law and Justice and the Polish Catholic Church, perceived such attempts of the West to integrate Poland as a challenge to Polish sovereignty and nationhood. Through many aspects, from implementing mandatory religious education in schools to almost fully restricting abortion, Polish powers strived to regain the meaning of what it means to be a nation.

However, there was one sphere where debates were especially acute and profound within all the layers of Polish society. Such sphere was sexuality education.¹ As control of the spheres

¹ This thesis intentionally adopts the use of the term *sexuality education* instead of *sex education*, which is more commonly used in the US. The terms are frequently used interchangeably with the colloquial *sex ed* dominating popular science publications. However, many sources—including the UNFPA, WHO, and the Guttmacher Institute—agree on the use of *sexuality education* as an umbrella term. The term *sex education* might be considered somewhat restrictive due to the focus on sex as a genetic trait or a purely biological act. *Sexual health education* adopts a risk management and reduction approach, thereby becoming more of a public

of sex and sexuality is among the most powerful political tools that have ever existed, the issue of who is controlling how, where, and by whom these matters are taught in new Poland, became truly pressing. The memory of the communist regime's attempts to introduce sexuality education into schools was still too fresh, which caused either denial of any sexuality education or aversion to purity, associating them with immorality and oppression.

Currently, Poland remains one of the few European Union countries without comprehensive sexuality education. Instead, the dominant form of sexuality education is abstinence-only, focused primarily on the replication of hetero-normative sexuality and nuclear family models promoted by the far-right Catholic Law and Justice government (Dziewanowska 2017). The European Union assesses sexuality education in Poland as "ineffective," with the European Parliament stating that "Poland has had the greatest difficulty in implementing sexuality education policy among the larger member states . . ." (Stull 2012). The results of such collaboration lead to an increase in rates of teenage pregnancies, unsafe and unofficial abortions, STIs, gender-based violence, and oppression of LGBTQ+ persons.

In the last decade, school-based sexuality education has been even more frequently questioned. One of Law and Justice's most controversial moves was its attempt to pass a bill that would criminalize sexuality education under the guise of promoting pedophilia. Even though this bill was condemned by the European Parliament and did not pass, another bill allowing for a near-total abortion ban was passed in October 2020. Such decisions caused a major public

health tool. *Sex and relationship education*, a UK attempt to connect the previous two definitions, is more inclusive but is quite lengthy and still bypasses human sexuality as an important part of the term. Therefore, for the purposes of covering the multitude of factors, aspects, and approaches, *sexuality education* is the most fitting term (Ponzetti 2016).

outcry, garnered widespread media coverage, and led to massive street protests. That opposition did not stop the government from pushing its agenda even further.

The ongoing conflict about sexuality education is facilitated by the mass media through the maintenance and replication of discourses tailored for their audiences. The Polish press thus presents a wide field for research and analysis. Among the most comprehensive methods to fulfill this task is critical discourse analysis, which allows exploring the relationship between the language, its social context, and sociopolitical reality. Despite the existence of studies on sexuality, gender, and feminist discourse, there have been very few comprehensive studies that analyze the discourse around sexuality education as a separate phenomenon both in Poland and globally. The only few that provide some insight into the issue are the study of sexuality education books by Cackowska (2011) or the study of newspaper discourse that is affiliated with a Catholic higher education institution (Barciński 2019). This research strives to fill that gap and add to the overall existing scholarship on sexuality education in Poland.

Research question

In my thesis, I seek to explore how school-based sexuality education is represented in the discourse of two major Polish newspapers with opposite political orientations, *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Nasz Dziennik*. With *Gazeta Wyborcza* representing the center-left and *Nasz Dziennik* representing the religious far-right, the former gets accused of promoting the agenda of the West, while the latter is blamed for being funded by the current political party in power. By using the “Stop Pedophilia” bill as a window into pervasive divisions existing in Polish society and highlighting historical, cultural, socio-political, and religious discursive links made by different camps to mobilize their support for their respective causes, I analyze the debates within the

newspapers for a period of 16 months (since October 2019 to December 2020). Additionally, I argue that debates around sexuality education serve as a battlefield for Polish nationhood within the far-right conservative discourse.

This thesis consists of three sections and a conclusion. In the first section, I explore the existing conceptual framework and provide theoretical foundations for sexuality education in Poland and globally. Additionally, I include a brief history of sexuality education in Poland and a review of the existing literature on the topic.

In the second section, I provide theoretical foundations for the concept of discourse and explore the benefits of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a method and as a framework. Furthermore, I cover the specific methodology of my research which is based on the three-tier CDA framework by Norman Fairclough. Finally, I describe the primary sources and selection procedures in detail.

The third section represents the main body of my analysis. First, I describe the essence and significance of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill to provide context for further analysis. Second, I provide a breakdown of certain linguistic and discursive practices that *Nasz Dziennik* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* use to create specific rhetoric. Within this part, I present discursive practices in two major sections.

Finally, in the conclusion, I provide a further discussion of the results, describe the significance of the bill, and suggest directions for future research. In the Appendix section, I attach tables with additional material for the main body of the text.

I. Sexuality Education: Concepts and Theoretical Orientations

Sexuality education exists in diverse forms, which vary depending on the extent of what and how much educators are permitted, encouraged, and forbidden to talk about. Stemming from Foucault’s definition of sexuality as a construct created by discourse, sexuality education can be viewed as an ambiguous concept that might imply both institutional education and knowledge casually obtained through socialization and daily experiences (Foucault 1976, Jones 2011a).

Due to the existing variety of sexuality education programs globally, it is best to talk about sexuality education as a spectrum or a range rather than a set dichotomy (see fig. 1). Provided below is the discussion of the “ideal types” of sexuality education on the opposite ends of the sexuality education spectrum.

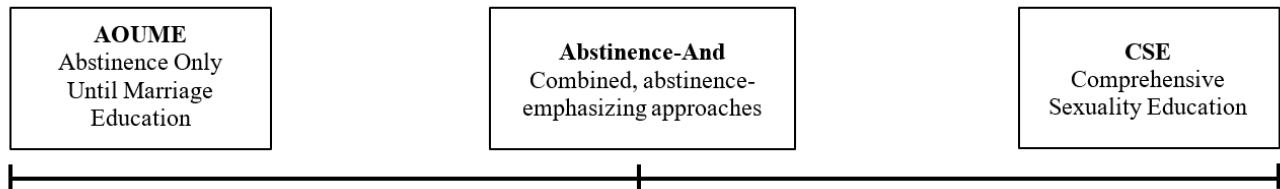


Figure 1. Sexuality education spectrum in accordance with WHO and UN frameworks.

One side of the spectrum of existing approaches is represented by comprehensive, or holistic sexuality education (CSE). This type of education adopts a sex-positive approach viewing it as a natural act and attempts to provide age-appropriate and scientifically proven information. It also focuses on teaching decision-making and covers not only biological topics but also emotional and social aspects of sex and sexuality. According to both short-term and longitudinal studies worldwide, comprehensive sexuality education increases the sexual initiation

age, decreases the levels of adolescent pregnancies and abortions, and lowers the STI transmission rates (Goldfarb and Lieberman 2021).

Usually, comprehensive sexuality education teaching strategies imply discussion of gender equality, gender identity, and sexual orientation in an open-minded, non-judgmental way, which provides positive outcomes, such as lower abuse rates and improved sexual and mental health among adolescents. Yet, these topics often become the reason for negative attitudes from conservatively oriented political parties, institutions, and individuals, who actively oppose holistic sexuality education. The LGBT community receives the majority of the blame for alleged propaganda and the “moral corruption” of adolescents as it is viewed as “unnatural” and “immoral.” Such opposition spawned a movement that some define as “heteroactivism,” which includes a variety of sub-movements, such as movements for traditional family values and gender roles, anti-adoption for gay couples, anti-abortion (pro-choice) movements, anti-LGBT and -gender “ideology,” freedom of speech, freedom of religion, etc. (Nash and Browne 2021). Under the guise of protecting the values that they support, the proponents of the heteroactivism movement also oppose comprehensive sexuality education.

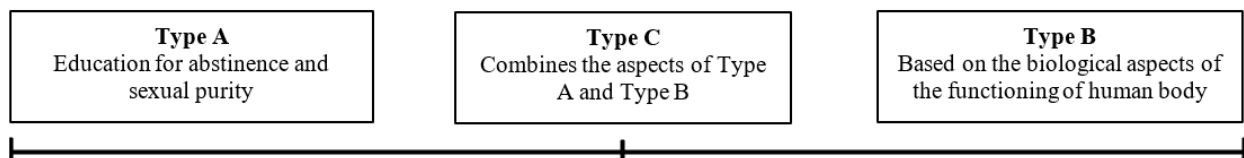
In response to some conservative voices linking LGBT themes and overall knowledge about sexuality with demoralization and grooming of vulnerable children for pedophilia, the holistic sexuality education proponents argue that the situation is the opposite of those claims. Knowledge and open attitudes about sexuality do not lead to heightened levels of children’s vulnerability to pedophilic abuse. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Proper comprehensive sexuality education with a focus on interpersonal relations, bodily autonomy, and definition of consent allows children to recognize abuse and when their autonomy is being violated (Bundezentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung 2016).

The opposite end of the spectrum is represented by abstinence-only-until-marriage education (AOUME). AOUME most commonly focuses on moral and family values, condemns pre-marital sex, and prescribes abstinence as the only valid option for contraception. Various scientific sources prove that abstinence-only-until-marriage education is ineffective at preventing or lowering the risks of adolescent pregnancy, STIs, early sexual onset, and abortion. Furthermore, some studies show that besides being ineffective, abstinence-only education's restrictiveness, stigmatization, and reliance on fear in the process of sexual decision-making leads to harmful consequences within the aforementioned spheres (Santelli et al. 2017, Boyer 2018)

Even with corresponding legislation and established curriculums, abstinence-only and comprehensive sexuality education types rarely exist in their pure forms and vary greatly on local levels due to several factors such as cultural backgrounds, decisions of local governments, and even educators' personal attitudes. Despite the common association of comprehensive sexuality education with left-wing ideologies and abstinence-only approaches with right-wing and conservative ideologies, some researchers claim this is untrue. The debates around sexuality education are complex and cannot be reduced to an oversimplified, polar phenomenon. Moreover, there is no complete intersection of sexuality education strategies and political orientation (McKay 1998; Luker 2006; Kendall 2013, 9).

How does this framework work in the Polish context? When talking about sexuality education in Poland, it is necessary to highlight a very specific linguistic issue that reflects the cultural discourse around it. In Polish, the word "education" can be translated as both *edukacja* and *wychowanie*. Despite the intersections in meanings, there is a significant difference between those terms depending on the context in which they are used. While *edukacja* signifies the

transfer of factual knowledge and information, *wychowanie* can be translated as “upbringing,” implying the overall influence of pedagogues, parents, and other social and environmental factors beyond the sheer knowledge itself. Curiously, in application to sexuality education,



edukacja and *wychowanie* represent typologies based on differentiating criteria.

Figure 2. Sexuality education spectrum in Poland (*edukacja*).

Therefore, the sexuality education spectrum in Poland—or *edukacja seksualna*—somewhat differs from the one recognized and offered by the international health and human rights organizations such as WHO and UNFPA. Rather than using the terms CSE/AOUME, some Polish sources refer to the sexuality education types A, B, and C (Goraj 2011, Czerwiec 2015). Type A focuses on abstinence and sexual purity. Meanwhile, type B focuses on biological aspects and the overall functioning of the reproductive system. On this spectrum, biological is opposed to moral. In the Polish context, this refers to religious morals since Catholic ethics guide the teaching process. There is also type C, which combines the two “ideal” types (see fig. 2).

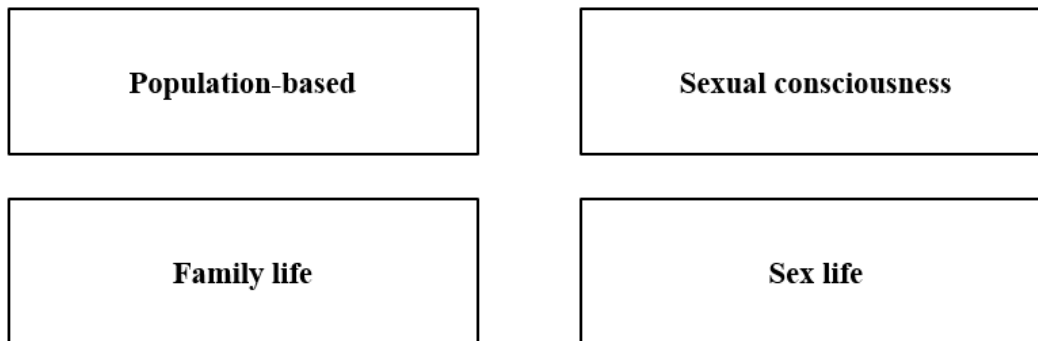


Figure 3. Sexuality education spectrum in Poland offered by Kozakiewicz (*wychowanie*).

Beyond *edukacja*, Polish sociologist, sexologist, and politician Mikołaj Kozakiewicz identifies 4 types of *wychowanie*, mainly referring to European approaches to sexuality education due to their relative abundance in comparison to Poland (see fig. 3). The first type focuses on demography through the lens of population growth and decline, where the goal of sexuality education is to engrain the importance of childbirth into the minds of adolescents. Such an approach does not necessarily exclude the topics of abortion and contraception, but it does represent them in a negative light. The second type is directed at preparation for family life with an emphasis on traditionally gendered parental roles and childbirth as the ultimate goal and parenthood as the ultimate value. The third type, which in brief terms can be defined as “sexual consciousness,” emphasizes human communication and interpersonal connections, simultaneously promoting the importance of contraception as means to prevent unplanned pregnancy and STIs. At the same time, this type of *wychowanie* does not focus on family and marriage as the only “culturally privileged” means of sexual activity and existence. Finally, the

fourth type implies sexuality education outside of the family/marriage model and is mostly directed at biological and mechanical factors of contraception and sexual pleasure (Kozakiewicz 1980).

As it is possible to conclude from the two typologies, they act within entirely different dimensions. For instance, abstinence-only-until-marriage education in Poland does not necessarily have to fully correspond to the Type A education and might contain elements of type B or type C. Even though typologies of *wychowanie* can roughly be split into two groups, with “sex life” and “sexual consciousness” types more frequent for comprehensive sexuality education and “family life” and “population-based” common for abstinence-only, there is no strict divide.

Sexuality education in Poland: a brief history

The studies and discussions around teaching about sexuality in Poland reach as far back as the early 1900s (Kościańska 2017, 3). Nevertheless, the foundation of institutionalized sexuality education in Poland was not laid until the mid-20th century. The Catholic Church, which did not want to allow the “corruption” of its parishioners, and the conservative communist regime that reigned in the country at that time restricted further development in this sphere. Because of the dominant influence of Stalinism, the state was not ready for the emancipation of society and the weakening of censorship.

Despite this, Poland refused to stay puritanical. The 1960s became a true peak for the Polish scientific community, which drew on inspiration from Alfred Kinsey's research. The world's first licensed sexologist, Kazimierz Imieliński, developed his concepts of sexuality education together with his team, in what became the “Polish school” of sexology. Even though

there was a clear biological focus in Imieliński's studies and publications, unlike their Western counterparts, the Polish school was distinguished by a greater focus on social and cultural factors.

The communist government did not approve of these ideas, which had been partially inspired by the West. In turn, advice on birth control and family planning did not fit the narrative of the Polish Catholic Church either. The Polish scholars found themselves between a rock and a hard place due to their acute awareness of the problem. Ordinary Poles were in dire need of knowledge and advice in a field that, despite its unique importance for human life, was completely unfamiliar to them.

Dr. Michalina Wisłocka—gynecologist, sexologist, and author—was a pioneer of sexuality education presented in a simple and accessible language in her famous book “The Art of Loving” (1978). While quite conservative by modern standards as it primarily explored sex and romance within marriage, “The Art of Loving” was revelatory, attracting an unseen level of public interest. Wisłocka not only educated the Poles about sex but also provided them with a language that allowed them to talk about sex lives without vulgarity. This language could have become a potential basis for comprehensive sexuality education to be taught on all levels—yet history had other plans.

Eventually, sexuality education found its way to schools. It was not until 1973 that sexuality education was officially included in the school curriculum, however, under the name “Preparation for Life in a Socialist family.” The introduction of the subject did not achieve the intended goal: due to the growing dissatisfaction with the regime and precarious socio-economic crises together with the growing influence of the Catholic Church, sexuality education gradually began to lose its attractiveness to the current government. The tendency to reject non-religious,

non-family-oriented sexuality education was especially pronounced after Poland regained its independence. Some experts argue that part of this situation was due to the association of sexuality education with the communist regime. The regime was seen as a promoter of promiscuity and emancipation in the worst sense of the word (Szwed and Zielinska 2017). As such, on Poland's way to democracy, the Polish Catholic Church served as a unifier, providing a moral dimension to fight a regime devoid of humanity and spirituality. Even though Solidarity (Solidarność)—the labor union that made the end of Communist rule in Poland possible—was trying to be independent, the Church played a major role by supporting the new values of freedom and democracy (Ramet 2016, 94). This association of religiosity with the liberation movement and the Polish nationhood led to the perception of the Church as a “quasi-political institution” that gained a de facto right to influence legislative processes (Zubrzycki 2001, 639, Ramet 2016, 227). These events and the sentiments they produced prompted the introduction of an abortion ban, although Poland was one of the first countries to legalize abortion in 1956. In the same year, 1993, the sexuality education curriculum in schools was also changed: the subject was now required to focus on family values and the “prenatal phase of life” (Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1993). The newly established name for the subject was *wychowanie² do życia w rodzinie*, or education for family life.

In 2004, Poland joined the European Union, signifying fulfillment of the Copenhagen criterion, which obliges EU member states to support democratic foundations and institutions, human rights, and adhere to the common goals of the EU. One of these goals is to provide comprehensive sexuality education as part of the school curriculum. Yet, the current sexuality

² The use of *wychowanie* in place of *edukacja [seksualna]* is remarkable. See “Types of sexuality education” above.

education curriculum—introduced by the Centre for Education Development, which is supported by the means of the EU and the Ministry of National Education—is more of a recommendation than a prescription in practice³. Even though Poland's official curriculum includes the *wychowanie do życia w rodzinie* from the 4th grade of elementary school until the senior year of high school, according to an assessment from the European Parliament, "Poland has had the greatest difficulty in implementing sexuality education policy among the larger member states . . ." (Beaumont and Maguire 2013). The three main factors that contribute to the state of sexuality education in Poland are the cultural taboo regarding sexuality, the politicization of sex education, and the lack of proper training for educators teaching sex education or "education for family life" (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz and Pęczkowska 2009). The current Polish government, represented by the right-wing conservative party Law and Justice has not only failed to improve the situation but also continues to aggravate it by trying to ban abortion and criminalize sex education (Pronczuk 2020; Savage 2020). Such attempts have created significant opposition, both social and political. At the moment, the main participants in the debate about sex education in Poland are teachers, doctors, sexologists, psychologists, and ethicists, including religious ones. The opinions of the participants in the debate are divided according to the *edukacja seksualna / wychowanie do życia w rodzinie* dichotomy. The statements and imaginaries around the topic, especially those in Polish mass media, led to the creation of discourses specific to each alignment.

There studies on sexuality and gender, including quantitative studies of sexuality education, exist in Poland in relative diversity. Yet, there are very few studies on the discourse of sexuality education and almost none on the discourse of sexuality education in media. For

³ For a detailed list of topics, see <https://www.ore.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/wychowanie-do-zycia-w-rodzinie.-pp-z-komentarzem.-szkola-podstawowa-1.pdf>

instance, one study looks at Polish political and cultural discourse in sexuality education picture books. According to the author's findings, the books serve as a medium for conservative discourse which, in turn, allows control of the social environment through the inclusion or exclusion of certain elements, posing certain issues for uncompromised education (Cackowska 2011). Nevertheless, printed media, due to its periodical nature, might provide a wider review of ideological practices. Claiming that journalism is a direct product of the regime would be an oversimplification and lack of consideration. Instead, it is a demonstration of compatibility or lack of direct confrontation with those in power that allows them to exist and reinforce the discourse (Richardson 2007, 134).

There is one major study that explicitly analyses sexuality education in Polish media—a doctoral dissertation by Zbigniew Barciński (2019), who explored the image of sexuality education in four weekly Polish Catholic and liberal magazines. Among the key findings of his analysis, Barciński demonstrates that Catholic magazines strive to enhance the presence and influence of the Church in the field of sexuality education by attempting to convince readers of the harmful impact of WHO sexuality education recommendations on the concept of the traditional Polish family (something the Church considers to be a fundamental value). However, since Barciński did not cover the newspaper segment of the media and did not go beyond the time period of 2013-2015, a broader assessment of daily periodicals would certainly build upon his findings. One of the proposed directions of research could be a study of secular (or allegedly secular) newspapers and how they refer to values highlighted in weekly Catholic magazines. It is also necessary to keep in mind any personal bias that the author might involuntarily introduce to their research. Since the author has submitted this dissertation as part of the doctoral degree from the Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin),

the Catholic origins of the university and its close ties with Pope John Paul II might have influenced the impartiality of the research. Therefore, both the lack of studies and precise research on the matter of sexuality education within media discourse presents a vast field for qualitative research.

II. Methods and sources

In various scientific paradigms, the concept of discourse can be interpreted very broadly, which allows for its versatility. For instance, analysis of certain discourses can be treated as less of a single research method and more of a complex theoretical model, structure, and framework that permits considering the issue from different points of view (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). Differences in analytical perspectives of discourse analysis include such criteria as the research focus, the type of knowledge on which the explanatory schemes of analysis are built, and the features of the data analysis procedure itself. Based on these criteria, it is customary to single out linguistic approaches; discourse analysis in social psychology, sociology, and cultural studies; and critical discourse analysis.

Turning to discourse analysis might allow for a deeper understanding of the social, political, and cultural contexts that influence how people, groups of people, and institutions talk about themselves and about “others,” form ideas about significant events, and interact online and offline. Discourse analysis allows one to look at the structure and process at the same time. It also enables tracing the connection between the rhetoric and actions of large social institutions and everyday interactions among people.

The paradigm of critical discourse analysis (CDA) offers an even more specific approach that differs from the classical sociological paradigm, which almost purely seeks understanding and explanation but not criticism or change. Through this, the term "critical" embodies the fundamental principles of the Frankfurt School. By being integrative and interdisciplinary, CDA serves as a way of understanding and changing society through a combination of opposing approaches and resources from different disciplines. The research program of critical discourse

analysis is problem-oriented, eclectic, and includes different approaches, from historical CDA to social actor analysis and socio-cognitive analysis. Differences in approaches and procedures of analysis depend on the problem field as well as the method of combining the ideas of critical theory, the theories of Karl Marx and Michel Foucault, symbolic interactionism, and social psychology. The listed approaches are united by the intent to problematize existing power and public discourses.

Among the main facilitators of these debates are the media, which assist in creating, maintaining, or affecting social norms surrounding sexuality education (World Health Organization 2009). In modern society, the media are still perceived as a means of reflecting reality. Each media source, regardless of its political orientation, is inclined to assert that its coverage reflects "the real picture of what is happening" (Orgad 2012).

This thesis utilizes a CDA inventory developed by Norman Fairclough as the model, most applicable for practical analysis. The Fairclough model offers three tiers of analysis that include (1) textual, (2) discursive, and (3) linguistic practices (Fairclough 1992). The narration provided in this thesis is built chronologically with the inclusion of the most prominent themes and examples chosen as the result of the three-tier analysis. As a supplemental tool, the framework also relies on specific recommendations for newspaper analysis by John E. Richardson (2007) with specific attention to four major themes of CDA. These themes include "the constituted and (re)creative character of discourse; power and social relations in discourse; ideology; and hegemony."

Data collection and sampling

For the purposes of conducting critical discourse analysis, this thesis reviews articles from two major Polish newspapers: *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Nasz Dziennik*. The newspapers were

chosen based on the criteria of (a) their ideological and/or political orientation to represent 2 major sectors of the existing ideological/political spectrum in Poland and (b) their daily publishing frequency.

Gazeta Wyborcza is a Polish daily socio-political newspaper and one of the most well-known contemporary Polish publications with a circulation of up to 600,000. The number of copies sold varies between 53,000 to 62,000 copies in print and 218,000-260,000 copies in digital format (Wirtualne Media 2021). *Gazeta Wyborcza* initially provided information support to the Solidarity (*Solidarność*) union in the election campaign, being the first legal newspaper presenting views opposed to the government. *Gazeta Wyborcza*'s current political profile can be defined as center-left, thus making it the largest liberal-leaning periodical. Due to a significant share of interest in *Gazeta Wyborcza* being held by a U.S.-based company Cox Communications, opponents of the political left often accuse the newspaper of being biased towards the West and Western values (Cox International Center 2010).

Nasz Dziennik ("Our Daily") is a Polish socio-political Catholic daily newspaper, with its political views evaluated as right-wing or far-right. Its circulation as of 2007 reached 150,000 with allegedly 100,000 sold printed copies⁴. According to the newspaper's website, even though it regularly publishes articles regarding the activity of the Catholic Church written by the "guest authors," it is not affiliated formally with any Church institutions. Along with the ultraconservative Radio Maryja, a religious and traditionalist Polish radio station, the newspaper is part of a Polish media group founded by a Catholic priest Tadeusz Rydzyk. According to the OKO Press investigative journalist group, besides enjoying ideological support from Law and

⁴ Unfortunately, the data on the circulation numbers is speculative as *Nasz Dziennik* is not controlled by the Polish Press Distribution Control Association. The numbers provided in the description reflect the publisher's claims.

Justice, Rydzyk's media empire requests and receives significant financial support from the party, estimated at up to 76.3 million dollars over the time that Law and Justice remains in power (Mikołajewska 2021).

Initial sampling involved an automated and manual search of the newspaper archives for the period from October 1, 2019, until December 31, 2021. This period includes a short period before the parliamentary elections in 2019 (October 13, 2019), discussion of the "Stop Pedophilia" bill (October 15-16, 2019), a period before the 2020 presidential elections, the first and second rounds of presidential elections (June 28 and July 12, 2020), and the further judicial prohibition of abortion on October 22, 2020, with the following protests.

The search was conducted via the Nexis Uni and Factiva databases as well as Google Search and embedded searches at the newspapers' official websites with the use of keywords (*edukacja seksualna, seksedukacja, wychowanie do życia w rodzinie, WDŻWR, WDŻR, WDŻ, WŻR*)⁵ and Boolean operators when applicable. For *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the search included local and regional issues of the newspaper. The search in *Nasz Dziennik* presented additional challenges due to the absence of its articles from major scientific search databases. Archival library copies of the newspapers for the given period were also not available, which resulted in the necessity to purchase electronic copies of the newspaper from its official website. In this case, the engine search was complemented by a manual check via the embedded browser search feature.

⁵ Including appropriate declension/conjugation of all used keywords

Table 1. Article search results in *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Nasz Dziennik* after each selection round.

	Total search results	Round 1	Round 2
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	257	104	33
<i>Nasz Dziennik</i>	339	111	30

Following the search, I reviewed all articles twice to eliminate specific articles based on the following criteria (see Table 1):

- Brief (less than 350 words) informational news reports or recent event coverage.
- Not centered on sexuality education or “education for family life”: for instance, articles discussing broader topics such as general educational reforms, LGBT-free zones, abortion protests, issues of pornography, or general discussions around human sexuality.
- Pieces discussing sexuality education outside of Poland.

In turn, articles selected for further analysis fell into 3 main categories:

- News reports over 350 words.
- Columns by editors, journalists, or regular external contributors.
- Commentary and opinion pieces, including letters from readers

The initial search from *Nasz Dziennik* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* resulted in numerous articles related to either current events, human sexuality, discussion of gender, or the LGBT community. Any such piece was eliminated if discussion was conducted outside the topic of school-based sexuality education. Despite the expectation that *Nasz Dziennik*, due to its smaller circulation rates, will provide fewer articles for the final selection round, the final pick for both *Nasz*

Dziennik and *Gazeta Wyborcza* included 30 and 33 articles for each newspaper correspondingly (see Appendix, Tables 2 and 3).

There was a significant difference in the types of articles that were chosen from *Nasz Dziennik* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The majority of picked *Gazeta Wyborcza* articles were news reports, while *Nasz Dziennik* preferred talking about sexuality education in interviews and recurring columns. Another distinguishable feature of *Nasz Dziennik* was the brevity of their headlines, rarely exceeding five words. At the same time *Gazeta Wyborcza*'s headlines were complex, consisting of at least two semantic parts—usually, a summary of the issue and a direct quote from the article (see Appendix, Tables 2 and 3).

III. Empirical Analysis

“Stop Pedophilia” bill as a battlefield for sexuality education: Essence and interpretation

On October 6, 2019, *Gazeta Wyborcza* published a lengthy article entitled “We already know who really sexualizes our children.” This article, an in-depth report on the state of sexuality education in Poland, was not accidental. The creation of the report was triggered by the upcoming session of Sejm, the lower house of the Polish parliament, to review a controversial bill known to the wider public as the “Stop Pedophilia” bill.

A project of the amendment to the Act of June 6, 1997, Penal Code, or the “Stop Pedophilia” bill, as the initiators of this bill nicknamed it, has become one of the most influential pieces of proposed legislation in the history of sexuality education in modern Poland. As evident from the name, the “Stop Pedophilia” bill implied amending Article 200 (b) of the Polish Penal Code. This article, adopted in 1997, provides for an administrative fine of up to two years in prison for publicly promoting materials about pedophilia. In addition, the article provides punishment only for sexual intercourse between adults and minors, but not for sex between minors.

The authors of “Stop Pedophilia” did not agree with that interpretation of what they consider to be an outdated article. In connection with the “sexualization” of society and the harmful effects of globalization and liberalization, the authors propose imprisonment of up to three years for those who promote or call sexual contact between minors normal and those who abuse their official position for these purposes. According to the authors of the project, promoting sexual contact between minors and encouraging them to express sexual needs makes teenagers ideal victims of pedophiles—hence the name of the project.

The campaign for the “Stop Pedophilia” bill goes back as far as the spring of 2014. With around 1,000 signatures at the time, four years later, the bill project gathered over 250,000 signatures—two times more than was needed to push the project to Sejm (*Niedziela.pl*, “Inauguracja kampanii i inicjatywy ustawodawczej ‘Stop pedofilii’,” March 19, 2014). With this number of signatures, the initiative for the draft document did not pass unnoticed by the far-right ruling party Law and Justice. Law and Justice, with its traditionalist view of Poland, policies based on the country’s historical past, and its strong association with Catholic identity, immediately implemented the narrative of the bill in the preparation for their election campaign by emphasizing the fight against pedophilia and LGBT community as well as highlighting the fact of rising civic initiatives such as “Stop Pedophilia” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, “Fundacja pro-life chce bardziej karać za pedofilię, ale tak naprawdę uderza w osoby LGBT. Jest wniosek do prokuratury,” May 14, 2019). With the approval of Law and Justice, Ordo Iuris Foundation Pro-Prawo do Życia (Pro-Right to Life), two prominent organizations behind the initiative, actively promoted the bill by publishing leaflets and using vans with promotional banners and messages broadcasted through speakers (*Advocate*, “Poland Considers Law Labeling Sex Educators, LGBTQ Folks as Pedophiles,” April 16, 2020). The messages mostly revolved around the connection between comprehensive sexuality education, nicknamed the negatively colored word *seksedukacja*, LGBTQ+ community, and pedophilia (see fig. 4, fig.5).



Figure 4. “Stop Pedophilia” promotional van on the streets of Warsaw. Photograph by Robert Obaz, *Wyborcza*.



Figure 5. “Stop Pedophilia”’s billboard “These kinds of people want to educate your children” in Wrocław. Photograph by Joanna Labuda, *Dziennik Bałtycki*.

The promotional campaign, as well as Law and Justice securing a historical maximum of support since Poland's return to democracy in the parliamentary election of 2019, evidently helped to make the final push for the bill. The first reading of the draft happened on October 15, 2019, with voting taking place the next day—but due to the end of the term of office of the Sejm, the bill had to be considered anew. The bill was frozen until April 16, 2020. It is then, with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sejm decided to refer the bill for further work in committee, and the prospect of the new legislation being accepted became even more real. As evident from further analysis, this prospect surely left no one indifferent.

Interpreting propaganda

Following the first reading, on the next day, October 16, 2019, while the conservatives celebrated the start of organized political action against the “depravation and demoralization” of Polish children, the left side of the political spectrum quickly mobilized, expressing disdain for the project. *Gazeta Wyborcza* was not an exception: its local and country-wide coverage of the emerging street protests to protest the proposed bill and reporting on the contents of the initiative was almost unprecedented. In their news reports, *Gazeta Wyborcza* made sure to explain the perceived danger of the bill that its initiators never talked about. For instance, in their report on the protest against the bill that took place in front of the Sejm building, *Gazeta Wyborcza* followed up the event coverage with their commentary:

According to critics [of the bill], the wording used in the bill is deliberately very broad and in practice will lead to the fact that imprisonment may threaten educators, as well as gynecologists that prescribe birth control, school psychologists, and even journalists and publishers that publish educational books and brochures on sexuality. (*Gazeta Wyborcza*,

"Jesień średniowiecza" przed Sejmem. Protestowali przeciwko karaniu za edukację seksualną," October 16, 2019)

The fears of the potential victims of the bill listed by *Gazeta Wyborcza* were not baseless when talking about the potential broadness of interpretation. One of the brightest examples from the official proposal for the "Stop Pedophilia" bill was the usage of the verb "propagate" (*propagować*) in its text. For instance, the paragraph 4 of the bill's text states:

Whoever promotes [propaguje] or approves of engaging in sexual intercourse or other sexual activity with minors, doing so in connection with their position, profession, or engaged in activities related to the upbringing, education, treatment, or care of minors, or by acting on the premises of a school, or other institution, or educational and care institution, is subject to punishment by imprisonment of up to 3 years.⁶

In the analyzed articles, *Nasz Dziennik* almost precisely echoed the official bill wording—however, not through the usage of quotes, like *Gazeta Wyborcza*, but the implementation of the idea of propaganda into their immediate discourse around sexuality education. Following the reaction of the liberal media to the event, *Nasz Dziennik* published an interview with the legal representative of the "Stop Pedophilia" Legislative Initiative Committee.

The Penal Code already prohibits the promotion of pedophilia itself, but there is a gap that needs to be filled: at the moment, it does not prohibit the encouragement of sexual intercourse between minors. . . . The connection of such propaganda with the subsequent pedophilic attacks is obvious to anyone who deals with those crimes, whether on the psychological or criminal law plane (*Nasz Dziennik*, "Kara za złe zachęty," October 18, 2019)

The reference to "such propaganda" relates to the content and essence of comprehensive sexuality education, implying its allegedly harmful nature for the adolescents' health and values

⁶ See the full text of the bill here: https://stronazycia.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/oiu-2019_projekt-ustawy.pdf

and, therefore, the Polish society in its entirety. Among one of the arguments for the propagandist nature of comprehensive sexuality education is the statement that existing sexuality education (*wychowanie do życia w rodzinie*) covers all the needs of Polish society. *Nasz Dziennik* also deemed this argument sufficient and supported it in its discourse:

[Ordo Iuris] reminded that Poland belongs to those European countries that implement a type A sexuality education program, which assumes educating children and young people in the spirit of responsibility, appreciation, and respect for human dignity. These goals are to be realized through the subject “education for family life.” Type C education in accordance with the guidelines of the World Health Organization is currently implemented in twenty European countries. If we have a good program in Poland, why should we change it for the worse? (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Permisyjna edukacja seksualna jest nieetyczna i nieskuteczna,” December 4, 2020)

This quote presents a clear opposition between the two types of sexuality education. The definition of the current sexuality program is “good,” sufficient, focuses on family, abstinence, and human dignity—all the things that “type C” education is allegedly not. Responding to the reaction of *Gazeta Wyborcza* and its audience to the “Stop Pedophilia” bill, *Nasz Dziennik* interviewed the driver of the promotional van that participated in the “Stop Pedophilia” campaign, who responded:

I perceive these attacks [on the bill] as evidence of the effective operation of the global media, which, having huge amounts of money at their disposal, make changes in the mentality of individual people. Unfortunately, we are all subjected to these attacks by anti-values that are being promoted in those media. (Deprawatorzy nas nie uciszą)

By “anti-values” (*antywartości*), the driver implied values that are antagonistic to those of Polish society and highlighted the role of non-Polish actors in them. Sexuality education represents a danger on a biological and symbolic level, implying teaching about murder and intent to murder, threatening demographic crisis as well as the dominance of alien, non-Christian

values⁷. In this case, the degradation of Christianity has also been perceived as a threat on a legislative level, as back in 1989, the Church provided a moral ground for building a new, anti-Communist Polish state. Therefore, sexuality education is dangerous for Poland’s existence as a nation—and the promotion of values undermining its existence constitutes destructive propaganda.

Yet, a question arises—what about other knowledge, such as basic knowledge about reproductive health and anatomy that does not fit the definition of endangering Polish nationhood? *Gazeta Wyborcza* and its intended audience noted the potential danger of the bill for those discussing such topics, the reason for this partially being how “Stop Pedophilia” supporters frame the issue linguistically. Despite the initial desire to interpret *propagować* as “propagate” or intuitively associate it with “spreading [harmful] propaganda,” the second meaning of this word implies “promotion” and “spread of knowledge” without the underlying negative connotation. By creating an initial impression that the bill fights the spread of allegedly harmful or false information that is being spread through comprehensive sexuality education, it is possible to justify the idea of a bill for the general public. At the same time, the breadth of interpretation also offers an opportunity for legal exploitation. In case the bill is passed, any information regarding sexuality education—not only propagandistic or objectively harmful—could potentially be treated as a reason to investigate and punish those who spread it.

Nasz Dziennik’s understanding and coverage of comprehensive sexuality education as propaganda is built upon several recurring themes, which, for the most part, stand in direct opposition to those in *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Within the context of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill and the general discourse around sexuality education, the most common categories revolve around

⁷ See Section I. Sexuality Education: Concepts.

fighting the perceived threat from the LGBTQ+ “lobby,” their “gender ideology,” influence of the West, and the danger of the so-called neo-Marxism. All of these themes are interconnected and in *Nasz Dziennik*’s interpretation, they serve towards the creation of certain discursive practices, which I will discuss in the following section.

Discursive practices: “Us vs. Them”

The discourse of a battle for the nation

The very nature of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill immediately provided fertile soil for seeking a party to blame. The narrative of assigning foes was especially prominent for *Nasz Dziennik*, which assigned several entities that it deems responsible for the compromised state of the Polish nation and the world. This specific discourse echoed that of Law and Justice—in the party’s official program for 2014, among the listed principles one can find a section entitled “The Enemies of Liberty and our Resistance” (Porter-Szűcs 2016). In the section, Law and Justice recalled the history of German and Soviet occupation and emphasized the significant role of the Polish Catholic Church in the liberation process. *Nasz Dziennik* maintains this narrative in the discussion of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill: in the interview with the newspaper, the lawyer of the “Stop Pedophilia” committee said:

“As it is forbidden to promote Nazism and fascism, it must be forbidden to propagate images in which a child or underage person is in sexual contact,” says the lawyer. “What is the relationship of this with pedophilia? In both criminology and psychotherapy, it is a recognized stimulus for individuals.” (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Kara za złe zachęty,” October 18, 2019)

This mention of stimulus, as well as the concrete comparison of comprehensive sexuality education to Nazi ideology, suggests that there are certain powers or actors that provide that stimulus for demoralization. The current party in power placing responsibility for spreading the sin from individual actors onto the aforementioned nation's assigned adversaries is a historical occurrence that also took place within the national discourse offered by the Polish Catholic Church (Porter-Szücs 2011, 64). The discourse around sexuality education follows this pattern: the theme of the common adversary was a repeated motif in *Nasz Dziennik* as well. Identifying itself with a Polish nation and its voice, *Nasz Dziennik* takes upon itself a responsibility to engage in a fight for the Polish future as Law and Justice sees it, frequently emphasizing that battle (*walka*) against various adversaries in its discursive and linguistic choices (Ramet 2017, 98).

With many dimensions to its definition of the battle, *Nasz Dziennik* generalizes all its sexuality education battles under the notion of a battle for the nation. This discourse is not novel—it calls upon deeply ingrained historical memory of Catholicism resisting the wicked totalitarianism of the communist regime (Zubrzycki 2001, 639). With “us” as a chosen Polish nation against diverse, sinister forces of “them,” the battle for the nation happens on the macro-level, and decisions around sexuality education should directly contribute to the generalized national well-being and sovereignty.

Since Law and Justice and its affiliated media outlets identify as “Poland,” their political opposition, including their vision of the world, is “non-Poland” and a major component of generalized “them.” Yet, in its narrative, *Gazeta Wyborcza* did not explicitly engage in the battles for Polish nationhood as they are defined by *Nasz Dziennik*. *Gazeta Wyborcza*'s narrative also revolves around how sexuality education is the future of Poland—but this future does not

focus on the well-being of the nation on the macro-level. For instance, in its coverage of the Wrocław protests dedicated to educational reforms, *Gazeta Wyborcza* provides the words of one of the participants—Agnieszka Dziemianowicz-Bąk, a left-wing activist and politician:

“What Poland will look like in 5, 10, or 15 years, depends on what education looks like,” said Agnieszka Dziemianowicz-Bąk. She pointed out that it was not only a fight for teachers but also a fight for parents and children. “I am appealing to solidarity. And I guarantee that as a deputy I will always be in solidarity with teachers,” she emphasized. (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, “Demonstracja "MEN do tablicy" we Wrocławiu. Nauczyciele: Nasza walka toczy się dalej,” October 14, 2019)

Dziemianowicz-Bąk’s expressive quote reflects the different nature of *Gazeta Wyborcza*’s battle. In accordance with the scientifically confirmed WHO guidelines on sexuality education, *Gazeta Wyborcza* both tries to communicate to their readers that sexual knowledge and well-being must be ensured on a micro-level. Rather than the dominance of nationhood and community, it is the value of an individual experience with exploring and learning about human sexuality. These values are not intrinsically Polish—they are positioned as universal and necessary for any society regardless of its national background.

With the European Union and organizations like World Health Organization sharing these values, it was only natural that the attempt to introduce the “Stop Pedophilia” bill drew close attention of those entities. Specifically, on November 14, 2019, the European Parliament expressed deep concern over such a decision, condemning “the recent developments in Poland that set out to misinform, stigmatize and ban sexuality education, and in particular the harsh, inappropriate and erroneous content of the justification provided for by the draft law” and calling to refrain from pushing the bill further (European Parliament 2019). *Nasz Dziennik* immediately reacted with three major statements of the members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who support the current party in power: that “the government is not working on tightening penalties

in regard to sexuality education,” that “Stop Pedophilia” is not a government-initiated project, and that “it would be good for the deputies who would be dealing with this proposal to know what the position of the European Parliament was” (*Nasz Dziennik*, “PE naciska na Sejm,” November 15, 2019).

While the previous two statements will find reflection in other discourses discussed in this thesis, the third statement on the state of the European Parliament is connected to the major discourse of a battle for nationhood. The implication is that the European Parliament is another corrupted enemy entity, trying to push the Western ideology into Poland. In this case, the vision of *Nasz Dziennik* sees Brussels as an “enemy on the other side,” geographically opposite, but by the level threat essentially analogous to Moscow (Porter-Szücs 2014). This ideology, according to *Nasz Dziennik*’s discourse, is another level of the battle for the nation—the battle against the West.

As part of their battle with the West against comprehensive sexuality education, *Nasz Dziennik* made a large emphasis on the international nature of their fight. While articles about foreign countries were not included in this analysis, their frequency and the overall references to other states in *Nasz Dziennik* were peculiar. These global examples roughly fall into two categories. The first category presents the narrative of “the depraved,” which includes vivid examples of the sexualization of society. *Nasz Dziennik* interviewed the president of the Parents Protect Children, a conservative pro-life and anti-vaccination organization, who shared the following:

In the UK, but also in other countries in the West, the transgender movement is very strong right now. The "fight against homophobia" has already been won there. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals have extorted unjust privileges. Nobody in public will dare to criticize homosexuality, as there are various penalties for doing so. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Perwersja w szkołach” August 29-30, 2020)

At the same time, *Nasz Dziennik* highlighted that there is still resistance among the victorious hordes of the “LGBT-lobby” representatives. This emphasizes the second approach that represents the nations as the “fighters,” engaged in the battle for their traditional values and a depravity-free future. In one of their many interviews with Barbara Nowak, Małopolska Region's curator of education infamous in leftist circles for her traditionalist views, *Nasz Dziennik* reported:

Nowak provides examples from Western Europe, where the threat was not noticed in time, and now parents are being repressed for any kind of thinking other than gender one. “The media report that parents are being sued, made to pay fines, and even imprisoned for refusing to sexualize their children. This is the case in Western Europe, Germany, Spain, and France. It is only now that people are opening their eyes to what is happening. Their attempts to oppose this ideology are extremely difficult since everything there has already begun to be dominated by gender,” says Małopolska Region's curator. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Pozew za prawdę,” February 21, 2020)

Therefore, the fight with the West that Poland is not only a national battle—it is a global battle, with Poland as a chosen nation to save the world. At the same time, both categories are used for the purpose of intimidating the audience, creating for them a picture of the morally depraved world, which is constituted by the nations of the collective West. This Western conspiracy tries to “spread its tentacles” to reach virgin corners of the world, untouched by comprehensive sexual education, and yet suffers from its lack of morals and destruction within its societies. Moreover, according to mentions in *Nasz Dziennik*, the West spreads immorality through *układy*, which could be roughly translated as “pacts” or “plots.” This narrative echoes the narrative of Law and Justice, the authors of the *układy* conspiracy. According to them, the “*układy* are the enemies of the true Poland, beholden to foreign powers and loyal to nothing but material gain” (Porter-Szűcs 2014, 355). Correspondingly, the party’s mission is to battle various

układy to stop actions that harm Poland in a multitude of ways and result in the creation of a Fourth Republic, since the Third Republic is corrupted by liberalism and the harmful influence of the West.

One might notice the frequent mention of the LGBTQ+ community in the quotes provided in this analysis—and will be right to guess that “LGBT-lobby,” according to the authors of conspiracy, constitutes one of such *układy* connected to sexuality education. For instance, in *Nasz Dziennik*, one of the comments on support for comprehensive sexuality education and resistance to “Stop Pedophilia” stated:

For several months, profanation has become a kind of "fuel" for LGBT activists. They cannot come to terms with calling homosexual acts a sin, so they want to intimidate priests and show Catholics who is in charge. They want to enforce so-called parades of equality that would make homosexual plots [*układy*] equal to married couples and enable them to adopt children. This destruction of the traditional structure on which our society is based is accomplished in small steps and through sophisticated manipulation. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Profanacja w rytmie disco,” October 18, 2019)

As if confirming *Nasz Dziennik*'s conspiracy, the “sophisticated manipulation of the LGBT lobby” found its way to Warsaw, the very heart of Poland. On February 1 of 2020, Rafał Trzaskowski, mayor of Warsaw and second major presidential candidate in the 2020 election, signed the document nicknamed “LGBT+ Declaration,” which obliged to change the perception of LGBTQ+ people and is to provide them with maximum security. The essence of the declaration was based on the recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO) and assumed every school in Warsaw must put more emphasis on sexual and anti-discrimination education. In addition, every institution must have at least one person from the teaching staff to help persecuted LGBT students—a so-called *latarnik*, which could be translated as “lamplighter” or “lighthouse keeper.” This decision immediately spawned panic in *Nasz Dziennik*:

He [Rafał Trzakowski] also initiated the introduction of the WHO sexuality education matrix to schools. This is an example of an attempt to sexualize our children, which was done behind our backs, outside the parliamentary forum. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Zatrzymać deprawatorów,” July 6, 2020)

Trzakowski’s initiative of assigning “lighthouse keepers” to Polish schools immediately entered the lexicon of the right and was dubbed another *układ*. A similar fate has befallen the descriptor *seksedukatorzy* (sex educators). With its emphasis on sex, it also became a referential predicative strategy that contributed to the creation of the enemy in the face of educators that do not fit the conservative criteria. In *Nasz Dziennik*, the term *edukacja seksualna* (sexuality education) was opposed to *wychowanie do życia w rodzinie*, repeating the aforementioned opinion of right-wing actors, for whom *edukacja seksualna* is foreign, un-Polish, and soulless.

In the same manner, the word *seksedukatorzy* stood in stark contrast to *rodzice* (parents)—and through the “LGBT-lobby, “[they] engage in a fight with parents” (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Pozew za prawdę,” February 21, 2020). It emphasized the fact that upbringing, *wychowanie*, even when introduced in schools, is the parents’ responsibility and privilege. *Nasz Dziennik* also argues that if teachers do not share family values, then they will be supplanted by LGBT-affiliated sex educators:

It is obvious that the lack of teaching staff, training, and teachers promoting family values will result in the so-called “lighthouse keepers” [latarnicy], sex educators [seksedukatorzy], and others who will spread content that sexualizes young people. Finally, we need to recall the gospel principle of “overcome evil with good” and put it into practice, that is, in Polish schools, starting from the new school year. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Zatrzymać deprawatorów,” July 6, 2020)

The “direct connection” between the LGBTQ+ community and pedophilia is not the only one, but also contains a connection to the concept of gender. This connection spawns yet another

battle—a *battle with gender*, or, as the right describes it, “gender ideology.” The ongoing antagonism among LGBT, gender, and religion—and, by extension, Law, and Justice—became even more polarized after the disappearance of the communist regime (Ramet 2016, 125). Even though the nationalistic potential of anti-gay notions was already there due to religion being one of the most important nation-defining factors for Poland, queer community, recognition of gender as a cultural phenomenon, and corresponding activism began to be viewed as another danger to traditional Polish values and Polish nationhood with the country’s admission to the European Union. This polarization has also led to a split within the Catholic community itself. The Catholic “intelligentsia” has aligned more with the liberal movements and the conservative Catholics have moved closer to the right (Porter-Szücs 2011). In the following paragraph, *Nasz Dziennik* quoted Barbara Nowak yet again:

This [a fight for sexuality education] is a ruthless fight. Gender ideologues want to gag our mouths so that we cannot raise our children according to our faith. We must counteract this and not succumb to this censorship (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Pozew za prawdę,” February 21, 2020).

It is possible to explain the active adherence to “gender ideology” through the official statements of the Polish Roman Catholic Church. According to them, *pleć*—the term used for both sex and gender—is innate and already includes pre-defined spirituality of human nature (KAI. 28 August 2020. The position of the Polish Bishops' Conference on the LGBT + issue. Serwis Agencyjny Katolickiej Agencji Informacyjnej). Compliance of biologically male persons with their manhood and biologically female with their womanhood, as well as differences between sexes, constitute natural duality, complementing each other. Therefore, gender as a separate, cultural phenomenon must be impossible and does not exist, except in the form of “dysfunction,” as Reverent Bortkiewicz stated in his quote. Moreover, the attempts to introduce

and “teach” gender are perceived as foreign, an attempt to ruin the natural order of things, and, therefore, the integrity of the Polish nation (Ramet 2016, 121). In February 2020, *Nasz Dziennik* posted an interview with the opposition to “gender ideology:”

The Italian communist Antonio Gramsci defined the way to take over the world through the so-called march through institutions. Thus, the gender ideology is introduced into schools in order to create a new person there. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Młodzi mówią nie,” February 24, 2020)

In this quote, the mention of a communist when talking about gender is far from accidental, as the battle with Marxism holds a significant place in the battle for the nation. The historical continuity that Law and Justice and *Nasz Dziennik* are trying to evoke through placing Marxism among their current adversaries has been an ongoing strategy since the creation of the Third Republic, independent Poland. By carrying on Solidarity’s mission of resisting the alleged offspring of the regime that took Polish values from Poland, the far-right parties create the successors and executors of the national mission. More so, by explaining how current comprehensive sexuality education strives towards a genderless society, where the Catholic family and teachings about love are not a value, the right presents its battle against another destruction of Poland. Yet this time, in the right-wingers’ opinion, Marxism is not only a threat from the side of Russia. In another interview with an expert on the topics of sexuality education, *Nasz Dziennik* continued the theme of the Marxist ideologies that are being implemented to destroy the nation:

Doctor Artur Dąbrowski, president of the Catholic Action of the Archdiocese of Częstochowa, points out that we are currently dealing with an invasion of cultural Marxism. “As part of the ‘march through the institutions,’ all possible instruments are used: repressive tolerance, the dictate of political correctness, stigmatization of persons with different views by fascists. And all of this [is done] to break the pillars of Latin civilization,” explains our interlocutor. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Wymuszona dymisja?”, August 24, 2020)

The Latin civilization—a definition of how some Polish conservatives relate to Poland’s deep historical origins—recalls another trope used by *Nasz Dziennik*, which is the definition of “civilization of death and civilization of life”. On November 27, 2020, Przemysław Czarnek, Polish minister of education and science, soon after his appointment commented on the “civilization of death” in application to the situation around sexuality education:

The civilization of death is possible because these Europeans are [self-proclaimed] non-Marxists that have exactly the same Marxist roots as Bolshevik communism and German national socialism. These people do not know the concept of truth, for them, truth is not a criterion of judgment in any relationship. (*Dziennik.pl*, “Czarnek: UE to obraz cywilizacji śmierci. Przed tym przestrzegaj Jan Paweł II,” November, 2020)

Being a relatively common theme in the arguments of the far right and radical Catholics, this narrative echoes a well-known encyclical *Evangelium vitae* by Pope John Paul II (John Paul II 1995). In his letter, the Pope warned about the drastic decline in the morality of the existing society that constitutes a threat against life, or “a culture of death.” Among threats like human-made climate crisis and disparity in resource distribution, the Pope mentions sexual activity and abortion. Expectedly, he explicitly condemns abortion, considering it murder, along with other types of murder, such as euthanasia and genocide. Sexual activity in the modern “civilization of death” especially implies sexual activity with the use of contraception—that is, a sexual activity not directed at procreation. By getting involved in this kind of sexual activity, a person prepares for murder by intentionally not allowing a new life to be conceived or by being prepared to abort. This argument also includes sexual acts with persons of the same gender and masturbation. Under this logic, teaching preparation for murder—which is what comprehensive sexuality constitutes within this narrative— becomes an even bigger sin.

Still, the left does not see this yet another battle of the right as legitimate. In fact, one of *Gazeta Wyborcza*'s readers addressed his imaginary far-right Catholic peer in his letter:

The People's Republic of Poland was a country of "people's democracy," ruled in the name of the idea of "Marxism," which is so hated today and which the right-wing transforms in all cases, throwing thunder at "leftism" with scandalous and dangerous results, especially for innocent children, "ideologies worse than Bolsheviks." But remember, my Friend, how prudish this "Marxist" state was! It could even appeal to today's Law and Justice, the bishops, and all ultra-conservative right-wingers! (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, "Drogi Przyjacielu z lat młodości, katoliku i wyborco PiS-u, pamiętasz „sex-education” w marksistowskim PRL-u?" August 13, 2020)

Indeed, for the Marxist regime, controlling sexuality was one of the means to control and its expressions, which *Nasz Dziennik*'s and the party's conservative course might fight appealing. With this statement, the reader calls the right-wing public to pay attention to the irony and absurdity of their statement. Such calls were not an individual phenomenon, with *Gazeta Wyborcza* trying to call upon solid reason, and *Nasz Dziennik* trying to establish legitimacy through other means. The next subsection uncovers such discourse in more detail.

Absurdity, manipulation, or lie? Discourses of (un)truth and reason

Another common linguistic and discursive themes that appeared in the sources with remarkable intensity were the themes of absurdity (*absurd*) and lie (*klamstwo*). In the discussion around the "Stop Pedophilia" bill and comprehensive sexuality education, *Nasz Dziennik* framed the position of the left and *Gazeta Wyborcza* as "lie" and "untrue," while positioning itself as the carrier of truth. In turn, *Gazeta Wyborcza* reframed *Nasz Dziennik*'s and Law and Justice's narrative as "absurd" and "devoid of logic."

The Great Dictionary of Polish Language defines *klamstwo* as “a statement that is inconsistent with reality, which is intended to cause someone to believe or reason incorrectly about a given topic.” Ignoring present scientific evidence that justifies the outcomes of comprehensive sexuality education, *Nasz Dziennik* contributes to the creation of subjective reality for its readers, contributing to the efforts to do so by the current political regime. By describing anything that does not fit their vision of Polish nationhood, the discourse establishes that the ultimate truth is spoken only by those who care about Poland’s future—that is, *Nasz Dziennik* and the current party in power. The discourse of lies and untruths was especially prevalent in the period between February 2020 and July 2020, during the presidential election campaign, the election itself, and shortly after. Soon after the win of Law and Justice’s candidate Andrzej Duda, *Nasz Dziennik* responded to another wave of indignation connected to the lack of comprehensive sexuality education:

We have sexuality education in Poland, we have the subject of education for family life. *It is a lie* if someone says that there is no such education and that there is a need for additional education. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Wymuszona dymisja?”, August 24, 2020)

Yet, in blaming their leftist nemeses for faking the information, *Nasz Dziennik* did not adhere to the concept of “truth,” if taken objectively. For example, in the article provided to the newspaper by a German sociologist Gabriele Kuby, famous for her traditionalist Catholic views, she describes the “technical guidance to sexuality education” allegedly offered by the WHO:

9-12-year-olds are instructed in class to describe male and female responses to sexual stimulation. They are meant to explain why pornography is “unrealistic” without any mention of its risks. They are taught all possible methods of contraception in theory and practice and are sold *the lie* that condoms will protect them from sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. Pregnancy is discussed solely within the term “unwanted” and in the context of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Kłamstwo gender,” February 22-23, 2020)

Beyond providing factually incorrect information about contraception (for instance, claiming that condoms do not protect against pregnancy and STIs due to the pores in the material being large enough to let through a spermatozoid or a virus), *Nasz Dziennik* entirely twists the facts to support their ideological views. Besides the false statement, there also seems to be a lack of general agreement between individual Law and Justice party members, journalists, experts of *Nasz Dziennik*, and the initiative group of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill on whether the bill intends to prohibit sexuality education or not.

In turn, despite relying on scientific facts for their evidence on sexuality education and having a reason to claim their statements as true, *Gazeta Wyborcza* does not build their discourse entirely around the dichotomy of “truth” and “lie,” choosing to operate within definitions of “logic” and “reason.” The Great Dictionary of Polish Language defines absurd as “lack of sense; a situation devoid of logic”. By defining *Nasz Dziennik*’s and the right’s statements through the framework of absurdity, *Gazeta Wyborcza* defines comprehensive sexuality education as the norm and the adequate, logical solution, though without accusing the opponents of lying, even when using emotionally charged statements like “absurd statements,” “nonsense,” or “[arguments] made out of cardboard.” Commenting on the words of Mikołaj Małecki, J.S.D., *Gazeta Wyborcza* provided one of many examples of defining the bill as an absurdity:

According to Małecki, the bill should be rejected by the Sejm because it is defective for another reason. "It forbids promoting or praising things that are legal!" describes the absurdity that is enshrined in the bill. In Poland, it is permitted to have sex with people over the age of 15. Promoting or praising—in the case of people under the age of 18—will be punishable by imprisonment. (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, „Karnista: ‘Ta ustawa to pułapka’. 17-latek za rozmowy z kolegami o seksie pójdzie do więzienia,” October 16, 2019)

In this case, *Gazeta Wyborcza* provided a valid argument on the illogical nature of the bill and the comments by *Nasz Dziennik*. Sexual contact between consenting adolescents over 15 years old or even a simple conversation with a peer about sex might potentially become a punishable offense. *Gazeta Wyborcza* communicated such a possibility not only through the text of the article but also through the article's headline "A 17-year-old might go to prison for talking with friends about sex" explicitly. Yet, *Nasz Dziennik* made a different linguistic choice:

I have read that Ponton⁸ has declared that they will be determined to lead sexualization classes wherever they can. That a 15-year-old child [*dziecko*] may already have sex, and they will convey their message to these children. (*Nasz Dziennik*, "Zablokujmy deprawację dzieci," October 19-20, 2019)

Taking into account the statement by *Gazeta Wyborcza* and the potential intention of the bill, the use of the descriptor "child" (*dziecko*) for a 15-year-old adolescent, legally eligible for sexual consent, in this context is surprising. Cognitively, the word *dziecko* in Poland carries a meaning of a very young child of prepubescent age—up to 10 years old. *Nasz Dziennik* confirms that observation in their interview with one of the youth activists, protesting against extracurricular sexuality education in Polish schools:

Let me give you a few examples [of comprehensive sexuality education]: a child at the age of 4 should enjoy touching intimate parts. A 6-year-old child is to know the concept of "intercourse with the consent of both parties." These are two examples. I believe that they exceed the cognitive norms of children who, at the age of 4 and 6, should lead a normal family life and not be attacked by intrusive sexual education. (*Nasz Dziennik*, "Młodzi mówią nie," February 24, 2020)

⁸ The Ponton Group (*Grupa Ponton*) is a Polish volunteer organization that provides extracurricular comprehensive sexuality education and counseling on the matters of sexuality. Ponton volunteers conduct workshops in schools, appear in the media, publish articles, reports and reviews. More at <https://ponton.org.pl>.

The statement of the activist presents an explicit distortion of the fact. While existing sexuality education, *wychowanie do życia w rodzinie*, is taught since fourth grade, extracurricular comprehensive sexuality education is offered only starting from the 7th grade at the earliest. Through this, the manipulative intent of infantilizing the adolescents who are the target audience for comprehensive sexuality education becomes extremely evident. With this discourse, the “Stop Pedophilia bill is meant to protect the child, who is portrayed as an innocent, non-sexual being, which can be “corrupted” with sexuality. Right after the first session of Sejm dedicated to the “Stop Pedophilia” bill, *Nasz Dziennik* published an interview with Barbara Nowak, where the curator was talking about comprehensive education guidelines:

If a child over the age of 9 is persuaded to experiment, it may end up in experiments on an adult. Looking at it rationally and logically, there is no doubt, as I said before, and I maintain this opinion that [recommendations of the WHO] is a pro-pedophile document. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Zablokujmy deprawację dzieci,” October 19-20, 2019)

Nasz Dziennik stated: eventually, after being exposed to sexual knowledge, the child will follow the path of either moral depravity or becoming a victim of pedophilia. Such an outlook appears hypocritical: instead of focusing on the potential or actual perpetrators, this narrative shifts the blame to a child for being sexualized. Yet, *Gazeta Wyborcza* called out this hypocrisy. Among one of their October articles, *Gazeta Wyborcza* posted an opinion piece from one of its journalists:

The only real topic that should be pushed aside where it belongs, is the insolent inclinations of bigots and hypocrites, who, while themselves creating unimaginable disturbances, including sexual ones, want to dictate how we should live our lives. Among other things, [they ignore sexuality education] so as not to deal with real problems, such as the impending economic crisis, threats to the rule of law, bureaucracy, workers’ rights, and [Poland’s] position in Europe, because then it would be obvious that they don’t have any idea about anything. (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, “Bigoci i hipokrycy zakażą edukacji seksualnej?” October 22, 2019)

Such predicational choice as referring to the opponents of sexuality education as “bigots” and “hypocrites” is meant to explicitly criticize and undermine the legitimacy of their opinion. The proposed bigotry of the far-right implies that their denial of sexuality education is a consequence of their blind, fanatic commitment to religion, politics, or ideology.

The suggested trait of hypocrisy refers to moral values. Preaching and prescribing morals might be permitted—but only to those who practice what they preach. This accusation of duplicity mostly refers to the issue of pedophilia within the Catholic Church. During the protests right after the Sejm’s session of October 15, a teacher shared their concerns regarding hypocrisy with *Gazeta Wyborcza*:

I'm afraid that if a girl comes to me and confesses that a condom broke during sex with her boyfriend, if I advise her what to do, I will go to jail. The Church does not see its mistakes, does not see pedophile priests in its ranks, whom it transfers from parish to parish. (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, “PiS chce 5 lat więzienia za edukację seksualną. Wrocław protestował pod hasłem ‘Jesień Średniowiecza’,” October 16, 2019)

The theme of pedophilia within the Church frequently arose in the articles by *Gazeta Wyborcza* but almost never appeared in *Nasz Dziennik*. For instance, the former quoted the words of Robert Biedroń, a member of the European Parliament and LGBTQ+ activist: “You get the impression that this is a project written at the dictation of the pedophile lobby, because it actually creates hell for the victims, and opens heaven for pedophiles.” With this statement, Biedroń and *Gazeta Wyborcza* offered an opinion echoing classic comprehensive sexuality education claims—the “Stop Pedophilia” project itself was nothing more than a measure that endangered the safety of children and their vulnerability to pedophiles.

Among other discursive practices manipulating the facts and creating the “new truth” within the debates around sexuality education is a so-called *battle from below*, or battle through civic initiative—specifically, the initiative of parents. In the context of sexuality education, this discourse could be described as an attempt to maintain the vision of immense public and civic support for the party’s course. In July of 2020, right before the final round of presidential elections and as part of his campaign, President Andrzej Duda gave several interviews on his proposition for the logical extension of the “Stop Pedophilia” bill—a project “Parents Decide,” directed at enabling parents to make educational choices, including those regarding sexuality education (Prezydencka inicjatywa: „Rodzice decydują.” July 3, 2020). The week of the announcement, *Nasz Dziennik* published material about parental choices regarding sexuality education and immediately commented on the president’s words:

. . . every parent must have a right to comment on that matter. It may happen that in the parents' council or in the positions of school principals there are people who are subversive to ideologization, so it is not difficult to guess which organizations and which educators will be introduced [to teach classes] or invited to meetings with children. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Zatrzymać deprawatorów,” July 6, 2020)

This statement contributes to the creation of the illusion of control—in this representation of the bill, there is no emphasis on the nature of this proposal as coming from above. While not strictly fitting the definition of an astroturfing phenomenon, “Parents Decide” creates an impression of popular support with the state almost removing itself from this equation and allegedly transferring power into the hands of parents. There is certainly a danger in such discourse, as it leaves an enormous opportunity for political manipulation—specifically, increasing influence on the mass political consciousness and electoral behavior of Polish society. With the close results of the latest presidential election (51.03% for Andrzej Duda, candidate by

Law and Justice, and 48.97% for Rafał Trzaskowski, candidate by Civic Platform⁹), such actions could define Poland's future.

In line with *Nasz Dziennik's* and Law and Justice's lack of adherence to the discourse of maintaining the truth, the emphasis on the civic and public power that the far-right is trying to create in its narrative appears to be situational at best. In February, the "Responsible Gdansk" association requested that Gdansk schools withdraw themselves from the "Zdrovve Love" ["Healthy Love," also used the spelling "Zdrowe Love"] sexuality education program. In 2017-2020, the "Zdrovve Love" offered optional comprehensive sexuality education to secondary school students and provided educational brochures that were produced with funding from the city budget. Besides the optional nature of the program, parents can refuse to allow their children to be taught certain topics.¹⁰ Despite that, the "Responsible Gdansk" with a group of activists considered "Zdrovve Love" to be a threat to the educational process and a corrupting influence, especially that of LGBT and gender "ideology," and organized a series of protests numbering several dozen participants. *Nasz Dziennik* actively covered the event, trying to create the image of a popular action:

The attitude of young people who fight for normality is absolutely commendable and worthy of every support. . . . This protest highlights the remarkable maturity of these young people. They show the city that they do not agree with the ideologization of the intimate spheres of their lives and that they want real education (*Nasz Dziennik*, "Młodzi mówią nie," February 24. 2020)

As one might remember from the previous section, the statement on the "remarkable maturity" contradicts the predicate about vulnerable children, affected by exposure to knowledge

⁹ <https://prezydent20200628.pkw.gov.pl/prezydent20200628/en/wyniki/2/pl>

¹⁰ See the detailed list of the topics at https://nauka.trojmiasto.pl/Zdrovve-Love-bierzemy-program-pod-lupe-n142626.html?id_zdjecia=453519&type=2#fb_id:p0:453519,pozycja:1.

about sex. Not noticing the contradiction, *Nasz Dziennik* continued the coverage and invited more experts to support its discourse. One of such experts, Mikołaj Pawlak, Ombudsman for Children's Rights selected in 2018 by the voices of PiS and appointed to his position by Sejm, was especially vocal on this issue. Pawlak supported the activists' position to prohibit sexuality education, simultaneously expressing his disdain for certain kinds of initiatives and encouraging the use of a statement against them. In his comment on "Zdrovve Love" to *Nasz Dziennik*, Pawlak stated:

I made suggestions on the statement content for the parents who do not agree with this type of activity [sexuality education in schools]. This [opinion] has to be respected. Should anyone not respect that statement, they will carry the liability. Such situations must be reported to the ombudsman for children's rights, the probation officer, or the school principal because even he [the school principal] is obliged to respect it. I am wondering whether in the near future I will make an inspection visit to one of such classes. I'll take a look at what kind of things they are presenting to the children, and what kind of panic will then arise. For such events, the activity of self-governance is illegal. (*Nasz Dziennik*, "Rzecznik w szkołach," February 14, 2020)

From Pawlak's threat, one can get an impression that proponents of comprehensive sexuality education, both teachers and external organizations, are involved in something illegal and are about to be caught red-handed. This image is helpful in contributing to the perception. Considering that Pawlak's position enjoyed the popular support of the sexuality education opponents, it is possible to denote the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate civil movements within the worldview of *Nasz Dziennik* and its audience. Maintaining this discourse within conservative circles, Law and Justice gains an opportunity to exercise control in its own political favor.

Furthermore, this conservative discourse of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" grassroots actors in sexuality education exists within the paradigm of democracy. Despite common

associations of conservatism with right-wing authoritarianism, no correlation was found between the two (Crowson, Thoma, and Hestevold 2005). The discourse within *Nasz Dziennik* reflects that—the journalists, the experts, and the readers do not seem to outright deny democracy. Instead, they provide their own vision of what a democratic system should look like and where decisions regarding sexuality education belong within that system. In her interview with *Nasz Dziennik*, invited expert and psychologist Agnieszka Jackowska stated:

My opinion is that democracy is a good system. However, there are some absolutely fundamental values that do not fall under the democratic vote. There should be no dispute over the human right to life. This is a primary question that should not be a subject of voting. Educational areas and schools are a unique battlefield of the civilization of death and the civilization of life. (*Nasz Dziennik*, “Zatrzymać deprawatorów,” July 6, 2020)

Through statements, similar to the one made by Jackowska, *Nasz Dziennik* broadcasts the ideological pattern of describing democracy as a system of not complete freedom but rather, “the democracy of the nation” (Krzemiński 2016, 95). This definition gained popularity in the 1990s as one of the ideas for Polish rebirth. The “democracy of the nation” implies that in proper, truly Polish democracy, the free society would be constructed based on Polish values and definitions of nationhood, with a component of belonging based on ethnicity and the resulting alienation of ethnic minorities. In the not-so-distant past, both *Nasz Dziennik* and Radio Maryja were known for their anti-Semitic views and an extensive record of reinforcing corresponding discourses. Due to this fact, this study expected to find direct cases of ethnic nationalism—specifically, anti-Semitism—within *Nasz Dziennik*’s narratives on sexuality education.

Surprising at the first glance, notions of anti-Semitism did not explicitly occur within *Nasz Dziennik*’s discourses around sexuality education in any of the sources that were picked for analysis. Beyond the implicit notions of nationhood and ethnical homogeneity, the newspaper

did not assign the Jewish population as one of the adversaries. Yet, there might be an explanation for the perceived lack of anti-Semitism. The Law and Justice party, despite its reliance on the view of Poland as a “national” democracy in its political course, somewhat tried to distance itself from explicit anti-Semitism (Porter-Szűcs 2014, 356). Gradually, *Nasz Dziennik* with other media outlets supporting the party and supported by it adopted this view. As a result, anti-Semitism did not disappear but transformed itself into a bizarre medley of other entities, with the imagery of Jews fleeing west and becoming foreign capital holders to assist the corruption of national democracies (ibid; Krzemiński 2016, 95). Now in the pages of *Nasz Dziennik*, the reader can see a reality where, through collaboration with global liberals, the LGBTQ+ “lobby,” and the leftist media like *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the newly defined enemy strives to destroy Poland—and Law and Justice, together with the voices like *Nasz Dziennik*, is there to save them.

Conclusion

Without a doubt, sexuality education is a complex phenomenon that spreads far beyond the sexual and educational spheres, acquiring more of a political and symbolic character. In this thesis, I have demonstrated that for nationalist far-right media discourses such as *Nasz Dziennik*, the fight against comprehensive sexuality education is bigger than just a battle for educational choice. It is a battle for nationhood and the future of Poland as a nation, with all the constituent parts. From the maintenance of the birth rate through denouncing contraception to independence from the West. For *Nasz Dziennik*, for its benefactor Law and Justice, and for fundamentalist Catholic circles, comprehensive sexuality education presents a major threat of being maybe even worse than abortion or activity of LGBTQ+ on its own. This threat might shake the core foundations of Polish society—and this is why *Nasz Dziennik*'s fight is so furious and, at the first glance, absurd and excessive. Yet, the true essence of this fight must not be ignored.

This goes against the beliefs of *Gazeta Wyborcza* and the left-wing political opposition, which shapes the second half of the sexuality discourse in media, where comprehensive sexuality education is necessary to establish a democratic society in accordance with Western values and a focus on individual well-being, crucial for the health of that democratic society. In order not to lose control and maintain the narrative of the adversary in the face of the West and its derivatives, such as the “LGBT lobby,” “gender ideology,” and “cultural Marxism,” *Nasz Dziennik* with its advocates and associates is ready to twist factual evidence and ambiguity. Through linguistic manipulations, it tries to create its own version of “truth,” using the strategies of gaslighting, half-truths, and direct lies. Furthermore, following Law and Justice's statutes and

narratives, *Nasz Dziennik* battles and questions everything that does not fit the current party's official line—again, as it perceives, in an attempt to protect Polish nationhood.

Despite that, since the past century and the end of the communist regime, political understanding of nationalism among Poles changed significantly, following more generalized world patterns rather than ethnic and religious definitions of nationhood. Despite the attempts of the far right to create common enemies of Poland, existing prejudices and concerns about foreign influence have somewhat subsided (Porter-Szücs 2014). The adopted strategy of *Nasz Dziennik* directed at the collective effort and magnification of both the significance of the threat and the scale of the battle for nationhood might be effective in the intended audience due to the appeal of Poland's historical past. Yet, the newer generation of Poles was born somewhat detached from the memory of Solidarity and the liberalization movement. For post-modern Polish youth, these explicit, almost exaggerated attempts to maintain stigma and fear around sexuality education might lead to consequences undesired by the ruling ideologues, such as the emergence of foci of ideological resistance. This process is already happening—and it was evident from the anti-abortion and anti-“Stop Pedophilia” protests. Without the illusion of grassroots initiatives, the resistance continues to speak out.

In such a case, what is then the danger of *Nasz Dziennik*'s fight? The answer is simple—even though the newspaper could not be louder in its narratives, the importance and seriousness of those statements are dramatically understated. *Nasz Dziennik*'s emotionally charged, deeply conservative postulates mostly become entertainment within the liberal sphere, rarely causing any serious reaction. At the same time, it is worth remembering that back in the 1990s, Father Rydzyk's media empire joined in during a key moment in Polish history. Without dominating the Polish media universe through numbers, it managed to affect constitutional debates and to

contribute to the nationhood discourse. Currently, there are existing studies that show that Radio Maryja discourse doesn't strongly or directly affect the Polish majority, Catholic or not (Krzemiński 2016, 106). Without having research results on hand, we can only hypothesize that this might be the case with *Nasz Dziennik*. However, even if it might have a small following, *Nasz Dziennik's* influence on the process of *indirectly* shaping the public discourse around sexuality education, as well as its capability for mobilization, requires closer attention. By bringing far-right media discourse to academic attention, the situation can be put under control. The discursive discoveries of this thesis can provide an additional dimension to the discussions around gender, women's rights, and reproductive and sexual health in Poland. Additionally, qualitative analysis could become a basis for building comprehensive qualitative and quantitative large-n studies on the image of sexuality education and the attitudes of its providers and recipients. An especially fascinating direction could be the visual analysis of pictures used by left- and right-wing media in their coverage of major events connected to sexuality education.

Finally, the results of this research can be used for the development of potential intervention sexuality education programs in the region with consideration of the local media discourse. Trying to prevent the danger of the minority silently becoming a "moral majority" might be the right course of action. This is true even more so during the current times of horrific Russia's war against Ukraine. Seemingly ridiculous Russian propaganda, once laughed at for its bizarre strategies, is now reigning over the minds of people and contributing to the continuation of the catastrophe within a once emerging democracy. It is necessary to go beyond the sheer surface judgments of the harmful actions, ensuring the understanding of the essential narrative and the world picture of the entity or ideology in question. There is too much at stake—and *Nasz Dziennik* as a government's voice must not keep perverting the nationhood.

Bibliography

- Barciński, Zbigniew. 2019. "Spór o edukację seksualną w Polsce w latach 2013-2015. Studium z edukacji medialnej w świetle wybranych polskich tygodników opiniotwórczych." PhD diss. Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II.
- Beaumont, Karolina, and Marcia Maguire. 2013. *Policies for Sexuality Education in the European Union*. European Parliament. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/studies>.
- Boyer, Jesseca. 2018. "New Name, Same Harm: Rebranding of Federal Abstinence-Only Programs." *Guttmacher Policy Review 21. Reproductive Health in Crisis: A Special Series*.
- Bulawka, Hanna Maria. 2012. "Gender representations in the Polish press: a feminist critical discourse study." University of Birmingham. Ph.D.
- Bundezentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung. 2016. *Sexuality Education Policy Brief No.1*. BZgA. Cologne, Germany.
- Cackowska, Małgorzata. 2011. "Książka obrazkowa o edukacji seksualnej dla dzieci jako medium kulturowe i polityczne." *Forum Oświatowe* 23, no. 2 (45), pp. 93-110.
- Ciobanu, Claudia. 2021. "Polish Ruling Party's Education Reforms: God and Country." *Balkan Insight: Reporting Democracy*. June 10. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/06/10/polish-ruling-partys-education-reforms-god-country/>
- Cox International Center. 2010. "Cox executives speak on successful investment in Polish newspaper." University of Georgia website. http://grady.uga.edu/coxcenter/Activities/Act_1997_to_1998/Act9798_3.php
- Crowson, H. M., S. J. Thoma, and N. Hestevold. 2005. "Is political conservatism synonymous with authoritarianism?" *The Journal of social psychology* 145, no.5, 571-592. <https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.145.5.571-592>
- Czerwiec K., 2015. *Problemy biologii człowieka - implikacje społeczne i edukacyjne*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UP.
- Dziewanowska, Małgorzata. 2017. "Edukacja seksualna po polsku – aspekty prawnoporównawcze". *Societas/Communitas* 23, no.1: 59-74.
- European Parliament. 2019. "MEPs condemn criminalisation of sex education in Poland." Press release, November 14. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20191111IPR66217/meps-condemn-criminalisation-of-sex-education-in-poland>
- Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. 1997. "Critical Discourse Analysis." In *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. Edited by T. van Dijk. London: Sage.
- Filas, Ryszard, and Paweł Płaneta. 2009. "Media in Poland and Public Discourse." In *Press Freedom and Pluralism in Europe: Concepts and Conditions*. Edited by Andrea Czepek, Melanie Hellwig, and Eva Nowak, 141–63. European Communication Research and Education Association Series. Chicago: Intellect.
- Goldfarb, Eva S., and Lisa D. Lieberman. 2021. "Three decades of research: The case for comprehensive sex education." *Journal of Adolescent Health* 68, no. 1: 13-27.
- Goraj, Jakub. 2011. "Dobre wyniki 'wychowania do życia w rodzinie': Typ A edukacji seksualnej w polskiej oświacie." *Wychowawca* 5: 10-11.
- Graff, Agnieszka. 2014. "Report from the gender trenches: War against 'genderism' in Poland." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 21, no. 4: 431-435.
- Grupa Ponton. N.d. "Sex Education in Poland." <https://ponton.org.pl/en/sex-education-in-poland/>.
- John Paul II, Pope. "Evangelium vitae." *Origins* 24, no. 42 (1995): 689-691.
- Jones, Tiffany. 2011a "Saving rhetorical children: sexuality education discourses from conservative to post-modern." *Sex Education: sexuality, society and learning* 11, no. 4: 369-387.
- _____. 2011b. "A Sexuality Education Discourses Framework: Conservative, Liberal, Critical, and Postmodern." *American Journal of Sexuality Education* 6, no.2, 133-175. doi: [10.1080/15546128.2011.571935](https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2011.571935)
- Kendall, Nancy. 2013. *The Sex Education Debates*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ketting, Evert, and Olena Ivanova. 2018. *Sexuality Education in Europe and Central Asia. State of the Art and Recent Developments*. Assessment Report of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. https://www.ippfen.org/sites/ippfen/files/201805/Comprehensive%20Country%20Report%20on%20CSE%20in%20Europe%20and%20Central%20Asia_0.pdf.
- Kingori, P., K. Wellings, R. French, R. Kane, M. Gerressu, and J. Stephenson. 2004. "Sex and relationship education and the media: an analysis of national and regional newspaper coverage in England." *Sex Education* 4, no. 2: 111-124.
- Kościańska, Agnieszka. 2017. *Zobaczyc losia. Historia polskiej edukacji seksualnej od pierwszej lekcji do internetu*. Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne.
- Kozakiewicz, M. 1977. „Moralne aspekty wychowania seksualnego.” In *Seksuologia społeczna. Zagadnienia psychospołeczne*. Edited by K. Imieliński. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PWN

- _____. 1980. „Kulturowe modele wychowania seksualnego.” In: *Seksuologia kulturowa*. Edited by K. Imieliński. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PWN.
- Krzemiński, I. 2017. “Radio Maryja and Fr. Rydzyk as a Creator of the National-Catholic Ideology.” In: Ramet, S., Borowik, I. (eds) *Religion, Politics, and Values in Poland. Palgrave Studies in Religion, Politics, and Policy*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-43751-8_5
- Kuźma-Markowska, Sylwia. 2020. “Marx or Malthus? Population Debates and the Reproductive Politics of State-Socialist Poland in the 1950s and 1960s.” *The History of the Family* 25, no. 4: 576–98. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/1081602X.2019.1702889>.
- Luker, K. 2006. *When sex goes to school: Warring views on sex—and sex education—since the sixties*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Matlak, Małgorzata. 2011. "Kryzys męskości na przykładach wybranych postaci prezentowanych w polskich mediach." *Zeszyty Naukowe Towarzystwa Doktorantów UJ – NAUKI SPOŁECZNE* 2: 61-75.
- McKay, A. 1998. *Sexual ideology and schooling: Towards democratic sexuality education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Meredith, Philip. 1989. “Chapter 6.4. Poland: The Survival of State Sex Education under the Impact of National Politics.” In *Sex Education: Political Issues in Britain and Europe*.
- Mikołajewska, Bianka. 2021. “325 milionów złotych z publicznej kasy na „dzieła” Tadeusza Rydzyka”. *OKO.press*, March 31, 2021. <https://oko.press/325-milionow-rydzyka/>
- Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej. 2017. *Podstawa programowa - wychowanie do życia w rodzinie, szkoła podstawowa - klasy IV-VIII*. Archiwum Ministerstwa Edukacji Narodowej. <https://archiwum.men.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/wdz-ok.pdf>
- Nash, Catherine J, and Kath Browne. 2021. “Resisting the Mainstreaming of LGBT Equalities in Canadian and British Schools: Sex Education and Trans School Friends.” *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 39, no. 1: 74–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654419887970>.
- Nowak, Martyna. 2015. "Mass media a seksualność". *Pisma Humanistyczne* 13: 493-510.
- Odrowąż-Coates, A. 2015. Gender Crisis in Poland, Catholic Ideology and the Media. *Sociology Mind* 5: 27-34. doi: 10.4236/sm.2015.51004.
- Orgad, Shani. 2012. *Media Representation and the Global Imagination*. Polity.
- Ponzetti, James J. 2016. “Evidence-Based Approaches to Sexuality Education: A Global Perspective.” In *Evidence-Based Approaches to Sexuality Education: A Global Perspective*: 2–4. Textbooks in Family Studies. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

- Porter-Szücs, Brian. 2011. *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland*. DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195399059.001.0001
- _____. 2014. "Politics of the Third Republic." In *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom*. Wiley-Blackwell
- _____. 2016. "PiS in their own words." Brian Porter-Szücs. February 16. <http://porterszucs.pl/2016/02/05/pis-in-their-own-words/>
- Pronczuk, Monika. 2020. "Why Are There Protests in Poland?" *The New York Times*. The New York Times, October 27, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/world/europe/poland-abortion-ruling-protests.html>.
- Richardson, John E. 2007. *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Salkind, Neil J. 2010. *Encyclopedia of Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412961288.
- Santelli, John S., Leslie M. Kantor, Stephanie A. Grilo, Ilene S. Speizer, Laura D. Lindberg, Jennifer Heitel, Amy T. Schalet et al. 2007. "Abstinence-only-until-marriage: An updated review of US policies and programs and their impact." *Journal of Adolescent Health* 61, no. 3: 273-280.
- Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. 1993. *Ustawa z dnia 7 stycznia 1993 r. o planowaniu rodziny, ochronie płodu ludzkiego i warunkach dopuszczalności przerywania ciąży*. Kancelaria Sejmu. <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU19930170078/U/D19930078Lj.pdf>
- Simey, Piers, and Kaye Wellings. 2008. "How do national newspapers report on sex and relationship education in England?" *Sex Education* 8 (3): 357-370.
- Stull, Graham. 2012. "Sexuality Education in the EU - 'Sex education' in a broader social context." Library briefing from the Library of the European Parliament.
- Superková, Marianna, Gabriel Bianchi, Miroslav Popper, Ivan Lukšík, and Roger Ingham. 2005. "Chapter 13. The Subjective Meanings of Sex and Sexual Satisfaction Among More Active Adults in Slovakia." Essay. In *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia*. Edited by Štulhofer Aleksandar and Theo Sandfort: 263–296. Binghamton, New York: The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Szwed, Anna, and Katarzyna Zielińska. 2017. "Chapter 6. A War on Gender? The Roman Catholic Church's Discourse on Gender in Poland." In *Religion, Politics, and Values in Poland: Continuity and Change since 1989*. Edited by Sabrina P. Ramet and Irena Borowik: 113–36. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Waszyńska, Katarzyna, Jarosław Groth, and Robert Kowalczyk. 2013. "Kontrowersje wokół współczesnej edukacji seksualnej. Teoria i (nie) rzeczywistość." *Studia Edukacyjne* 24: 165-179.
- Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, Ewelina, and Elżbieta Pęczkowska. 2009. "Problemy edukacji seksualnej w Polsce". *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 3:173-192
- Wirtualne Media. 2021. " 'Gazeta Wyborcza' najbardziej straciła wśród dzienników w sierpniu, 'Puls Biznesu' zyskał najwięcej." *Wirtualne Media*, October 6, 2021. <https://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/arttykul/wyniki-sprzedazy-dziennikow-sierpien-2021-fakt-gazeta-wyborcza>
- World Health Organization. 2009. *Generating demand and community support for sexual and reproductive health services for young people: A review of the literature and programmes*. WHO. Geneva, Switzerland
- Woźniak, Maria. 2017. "Rola mediów i innych agend socjalizacji jako źródła wiedzy młodzieży o seksualności." *Adeptus* 10: 1-15.
- Wróblewski, Zbigniew, and Andrzej Lipczyński. 2010. "Seksualność i erotyzm w mediach." In *Médiá á text 3. Mediálny text: variácie mediálneho diskurzu – popkultúra*. Edited by Michal Bočák and Juraj Rusnák: 193-99. Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove.
- Zimmerman, Jonathan. 2015. *Too Hot to Handle: A Global History of Sex Education*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Zubrzycki, Geneviève. 2001. "'We, the Polish nation:' Ethnic and civic visions of nationhood in post-communist constitutional debates." *Theory and Society* 30: 629–668. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1013024707150>
- _____. 2006. *The Crosses of Auschwitz*. University of Chicago Press.

Appendix

Table 2. List of selected articles from *Nasz Dziennik*.

Date	Headline (Polish)	Headline (translation)	Type
2 Oct 2019	Rodzicielski sprzeciw	Parental objection	Commentary/ opinion
18 Oct 2019	Profanacja w rytmie disko	Profanation to a disco beat	Commentary/ opinion
18 Oct 2019	Kara za złe zachęty	Punishment for bad incentives	Column
19-20 Oct 2019	Zablokujmy deprawację dzieci	Let's block the depravation of children	Interview
29 Oct 2019	Naciski liberałów	Pressure from the liberals	News report
30 Oct 2019	NIE dla demoralizacji	NO to demoralization	Column
14 Nov 2019	Bruksela wtrąca się w kwestię edukacji seksualnej w Polsce	Brussels interferes with the issue of sexuality education in Poland	News report
15 Nov 2019	PE naciska na Sejm	The EP is putting pressure on the Sejm	Column
20 Nov 2019	Ingerencja w kompetencje państw członkowskich	Interference with the competences of the Member States	Interview
29 Jan 2020	Groźny list Bodnara	Bodnar's menacing letter	Column
6 Feb 2020	Niebezpieczna seksualizacja	Dangerous sexualization	Column
14 Feb 2020	Rzecznik w szkołach	Spokesman in schools	Column
21 Feb 2020	Pozew za prawdę	Lawsuit for the truth	Column
22-23 Feb 2020	Kłamstwo gender	A gender lie	Commentary/ opinion
24 Feb 2020	Młodzi mówią nie	Young people say “no”	Column

25 Feb 2020	Ten program demoralizuje	This program demoralizes	Interview
27 Feb 2020	Miasto deprawuje dzieci	The city corrupts children	Column
28 Feb 2020	Nie zabijaj Polaków!	Don't kill Poles!	Commentary/ opinion
29 Feb-1 Mar 2020	Powrót do wychowania	Return to upbringing	Interview
2-3 May 2020	Agresja nas nie powstrzyma	Aggression will not stop us	Column
7 May 2020	Deprawatorzy nas nie uciszą	Depravers will not silence us	Interview
27-28 June 2020	NIE dla demoralizacji	NO to demoralization	Column
6 July 2020	Zatrzymać deprawatorów	Stop the depravers	Interview
8 July 2020	Prorodzinne samorządy	Pro-family self-governing	Commentary/ opinion
24 Aug 2020	Wymuszona dymisja?	Forced resignation?	Column
29-30 Aug 2020	Perwersja w szkołach	Perversion in schools	Interview
16 Sept 2020	Zagrożone prawa dziecka	Children's rights at risk	Interview
3-4 Oct 2020	Krótką rozprawą	A short thesis	Column
17-18 Oct 2020	Groźny kurs na lgbt	A dangerous course towards LGBT	Column
4 Dec 2020	Permisywna edukacja seksualna jest nieetyczna i nieskuteczna	Permissive sexuality education is unethical and ineffective	News report

Table 3. List of selected articles from *Gazeta Wyborcza*

Date	Headline (Polish)	Headline (translation)	Type
6 Oct 2019	Już wiemy, kto naprawdę seksualizuje dzieci [raport „Wyborczej”]	We already know who really sexualizes children [report by Wyborcza]	Editorial
15 Oct 2019	PiS chce kary 5 lat więzienia za edukację seksualną i propagowanie antykoncepcji. „To jest chory pomysł”	PiS wants a 5-year prison sentence for sexuality education and promoting contraception. "This is a sick idea"	News report
16 Oct 2019	Protest w Łodzi przeciwko projektowi ustawy „Stop pedofilii”. Prawnik: „Chodzi o to, żeby ludzi zastraszyć”	A protest in Łódź against the draft law "Stop pedophilia." A lawyer: "The point is to intimidate people"	News report
16 Oct 2019	Kilkaset osób przed biurem PiS protestowało przeciw ustawie „Stop pedofilii”. Nauczycielka: Będę was prosić o paczki do więzienia	Several hundred people in front of the PiS office protested against the "Stop pedophilia" bill. A teacher: I will be asking you to send me parcels to prison	News report
16 Oct 2019	Projekt „Stop pedofilii” skierowany do dalszych prac. „Zrównanie edukacji seksualnej z pedofilią”	The project "Stop pedophilia" directed to further works. "Equating sex education with pedophilia"	News report
16 Oct 2019	„Jesień średniowiecza” przed Sejmem. Protestowali przeciwko karaniu za edukację seksualną	"The Autumn of the Middle Ages" in front of the Sejm. Protests against punishment for sex education	News report
16 Oct 2019	Więzienie za edukację seksualną: Posłowie skierowali ustawę „Stop pedofilii” do dalszych prac	Prison for sex education: MPs referred the "Stop pedophilia" law for further work	News report
16 Oct 2019	PiS chce 5 lat więzienia za edukację seksualną.	PiS wants 5 years in prison for sex education. Wrocław	News report

	Wrocław protestował pod hasłem „Jesień Średniowiecza”	protested under the slogan "The Autumn of the Middle Ages"	
16 Oct 2019	Karnista: “Ta ustawa to pułapka”. 17-latek za rozmowy z kolegami o seksie pójdzie do więzienia	Karnista: "This law is a trap." A 17-year-old might go to prison for talking with friends about sex	News report
16 Oct 2019	Bydgoszcz przeciwko karaniu więzieniem za edukację seksualną: „To jesień średniowiecza”	Bydgoszcz against imprisonment for sexual education: “This is the autumn of the Middle Ages"	News report
16 Oct 2019	Zatańczyli pod kurią przeciwko ustawie „Stop pedofilii”. Naprzeciwko stanął ksiądz z różańcem w ręku	They danced in front of the curia against the "Stop pedophilia" law. The priest stood in front of him, with a rosary in his hand	News report
17 Oct 2019	Pedagożka z Łodzi: Edukacja seksualna w szkołach jest niezbędna. To nasz obowiązek	An educator from Łódź: Sex education in schools is essential. This is our duty	News report
17 Oct 2019	Rzecznik Episkopatu: Kościół katolicki nie jest przeciwny odpowiedzialnej edukacji seksualnej	An episcopal spokesman: The Catholic Church is not against adequate sex education	News report
17 Oct 2019	Biskup Dec znów o „krzywdzących programach seksedukacji w szkołach” i „ideologii gender”. Cytują go zagraniczne media	Bishop Dec again talks about "harmful sex education programs in schools" and "gender ideology." He is cited by foreign media	News report
21 Oct 2019	Debate w PE, Kempa, Jaki i Zalewska o edukacji seksualnej. „Czy jest pan za propagowaniem pedofilii?”	Debate in EP, Kempa, Jaki and Zalewska on sexuality education. "Are you in favor of promoting pedophilia?"	News report

21 Oct 2019	Parlament Europejski o edukacji seksualnej w Polsce	The European Parliament on sexuality education in Poland	Column
22 Oct 2019	Bigoci i hipokryci zakazą edukacji seksualnej?	Bigots and hypocrites will ban sexuality education?	Column
28 Nov 2019	Masturbacja to zdrada, a ginekolog to nie dentysta. Edukacja seksualna w szkołach	Masturbation is cheating, and the gynecologist is not a dentist. Sexuality education in schools	Column
18 Feb 2020	Brak zgody na edukację seksualną, RPD publikuje wzory oświadczeń dla rodziców	No consent to sexuality education, RPD publishes model statements for parents	News report
15 Apr 2020	Skandaliczna debata nad zakazem aborcji i edukacji seksualnej. Godek o Hitlerze, Braun o ćwiartowaniu posłanek	A scandalous debate over the prohibition of abortion and sexuality education. Godek on Hitler, Braun on the dismembering of MPs	News report
5 May 2020	Nastołatki na podryw i całowaniu	Teenagers on flirting and making out	Column
19 May 2020	Pierwszy członek komisji ds. pedofilii. Chcemy zniszczyć pedofilię w Kościele, czy raczej Kościół?	First member of the commission for pedophilia. Do we want to destroy pedophilia in the Church, or rather [destroy] the Church?	News report
8 July 2020	Andrzej Duda chce referendum rodziców w sprawie zajęć pozalekcyjnych. „To kwestia polityczna”	Andrzej Duda wants parents' referenda on extracurricular activities. "It's a political question"	Column
14 July 2020	Długa przed nami droga. Czy kiedyś będzie normalnie?	There is a long road ahead of us. Will it ever be normal?	Commentary/opinion
17 July 2020	Dezinformacja obecna w przestrzeni publicznej może skłaniać do nieracjonalnych decyzji politycznych	Disinformation present in the public space may lead to irrational political decisions	Commentary/opinion

13 Aug 2020	Drogi Przyjacielu z lat młodości, katoliku i wyborco PiS-u, pamiętasz „sex-education” w marksistowskim PRL-u?	Dear Friend from my youth, a Catholic and a PiS voter, do you remember the "sex-education" in the Marxist PRL?	Letter from a reader
18 Aug 2020	Tuchów z nagrodą od Ziobry za „ochronę rodziny”. A co jest w uchwale? „Homopropaganda” i „seksualizacja”	Tuchów with the award from Ziobro for "protecting the family". What is in the resolution? "Homopropaganda" and "sexualization"	News report
25 Aug 2020	Sejm wyjął z zamrażarki projekt ustawy zakazującej edukacji seksualnej. Kolejny manewr Soldarnej Polski?	The Sejm thawed a draft law banning sexuality education. Another maneuver of United Poland?	News report
1 Sept 2020	Rzecznik Praw Dziecka: Edukatorzy seksualni podają dzieciom środki na zmianę płci. „On w to wierzy?”	Ombudsman for Children’s Rights: Sexuality educators give children drugs to change their sex. "He really believes it?"	Column
1 Sept 2020	Pandemia i polityczny klimat przenoszą edukację seksualną do sieci. Co na to Ordo Iuris?	The pandemic and the political climate are taking sexuality education online. What does Ordo Iuris say about that?	Based on the letter from readers
3 Sept 2020	Minister Piontkowski o słowach RPD: w szkołach nikt tabletek nie podawał	Minister Piontkowski on the words of the RPD: no one was giving out pills in schools	News report
13 Sept 2020	Autorzy ultrakonserwarywnego projektu ustawy „Stop pedofilii” szukają podstępnie sprzymierzeńców na YouTube	The authors of the ultra-conservative bill "Stop pedophilia" are insidiously looking for allies on YouTube	Based on a letter from readers

23 Sept 2020	Antykoncepcja zniknęła z podręcznika biologii. Czy pojawi się modlitwa o seksualną wstrzemięźliwość?	Contraception has disappeared from the biology textbook. Will there be a prayer for sexual continence?	Based on a letter from readers
--------------	--	--	--------------------------------

Figure 6. Distribution of selected *Nasz Dziennik* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* articles by month.

