

***Brex and the city.* Cultural references in British, Polish and German Newspaper Articles on the British EU Referendum**

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Abstract: Socially produced ideas can be tracked in individual texts or groups of texts, especially media texts commonly regarded as “[...] moments when the larger social and political structures within the culture are exposed to analysis” (Turner 1996: 88). This inextricable connection between media and culture in modern societies is reflected in the interdisciplinary field of research known as the study of media culture (cf. Kellner 1995), *Medienkulturwissenschaft* (cf. Schmidt 2003) or *kulturoznawcze medioznawstwo* (Gwóźdź 2008). Following this, the focus of attention of this study are examples of intra- and cross-cultural intertextuality in British, German and Polish Brexit-related newspaper articles.

Key words: cultural references, intertextuality, Brexit, mass media

***Brex and the City.* Kulturowe odwołania do brytyjskiego referendum w sprawie wyjścia z UE w prasie brytyjskiej, polskiej i niemieckiej**

Abstrakt: Idee wytwarzane przez społeczeństwo można prześledzić w poszczególnych tekstach lub grupach tekstów, zwłaszcza w tekstach medialnych powszechnie uznawanych za „[...] momenty, w których większe struktury społeczne i polityczne w kulturze są poddane analizie” (Turner 1996: 88). Ten nierozzerwalny związek między mediami i kulturą we współczesnych społeczeństwach znajduje odzwierciedlenie na interdyscyplinarnym polu badań, znanym jako studium kultury medialnej (por. Kellner 1995), *Medienkulturwissenschaft* (por. Schmidt 2003) czy *kulturoznawcze medioznawstwo* (Gwóźdź 2008). Następnie na pierwszy plan wysuwają się przykłady wewnątrz kulturowej i międzykulturowej intertekstualności w brytyjskich, niemieckich i polskich artykułach prasowych związanych z Brexitem.

Słowa kluczowe: odniesienia kulturowe, intertekstualność, Brexit, mass media

1. Introduction

Reading and interpreting texts always involve tracing relations to other texts or, to put it differently, “[...] moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations” (Allen 2011: 1). To describe and explain

this issue several theories have been developed, the most prominent of them using the concept of *intertextuality*. *Intertextuality* appears to be a highly flexible term ranging from parody to plagiarism, from intentional allusions to the idea of a text dissolving in the universe of textual relations. The underlying research material is likewise highly complex: current analyses concentrate not only on advertisements, media and literary arts but also on scientific works as well as students' writings. *Intertextuality* also encompasses cross-semiotic interdependences between different codes and is often discussed in terms of New Media relying on computational technology. Furthermore, the term emerges in numerous discussions of non-literary arts, e.g. cinema, painting or music. In various cultural and artistic productions, we rely on previous productions in order to adequately interpret a given work of art (cf. Allen 2011: 169–175). In this respect, Hutcheon's remark on “our postmodern age of cultural recycling” (2006: 3) is very apt and to the point.

Because of its complex and wide-ranging meaning *intertextuality* obviously requires explanation. The notion of the term and its possible categorisation(s) will be briefly addressed in the first part of this paper. Following this, various forms of culture-bound intertextual references will be analysed on the basis of British, Polish and German newspaper articles related to Brexit.

2. Intertextuality and the media

It is widely acknowledged that news language is seldom produced by a singular author, instead, it is a case of so-called ‘shared authorship’ (cf. Bell 1996: 40). Journalists draw on, quote or paraphrase already existing texts, both spoken and written, such as reports, press releases, interviews, proceedings, agendas etc. (cf. Bell 1996: 41). This inserting or incorporating of previously composed texts into own stories is referred to as ‘embedding’ and is one of the basic features of media communication (ibid.). Metaphorically speaking, “[...] the journalist gathers up scattered strands of information and weaves them into one text” (Bell 1996: 42).

This description resembles, to a great extent, the notion of *intertextuality* introduced by Julia Kristeva¹ (1980) and widely used in (text) linguistics, literary, cultural and media studies². Kristeva's concept of intertextuality,

¹ As Kristeva (1980: 66) states: “[...] any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another”.

² Different approaches and perspectives of the Anglo-American, German and Polish scholars can be found in Orr (2003), Allen (2011), de Beaugrande and Dressler (1994), Klein and Fix (1997), Holthuis (1993), Steyer (1997), Burger and Luginbühl (2014), Mazur, Małyska and Sobstyl (2010), Grochala (2002), Kacprzak (2002), Markiewicz (1988), Nycz (1995) and Opilowski (2006), to name just a few.

whose central insight is that each text exists in relation to other texts originally refers to a specific poetic language, but it can be applied to other texts of scientific, social and/or media discourse nevertheless. As far as media studies are concerned *intertextuality* occurs in the double sense of “[...] an interpretive practice unconsciously exercised by audiences living in a postmodern landscape and a textual strategy consciously incorporated by media producers that invites audiences to make specific lateral associations between texts” (Ott and Walter 2000: 430). In the former sense, special priority is given to the role of the addressee as the ultimate agent of creating intertextual references on the basis of their world and textual knowledge as well as their intertextual competence (cf. Holthuis 1993, Steyer 1997). This subjective factor means that readers may discover partially different intertextual relations within one text, overlook some implicit references or quite the contrary: generate references not intended by the author. In the latter sense, which is the main point of interest of this study, *intertextuality* is an inherent feature of texts or a stylistic device, such as quotation or allusion, amply used in media texts in order to attract the attention of the audience or to elicit their desired response.

Another relevant point is the commonly known fact that not only do news media inform or evaluate but, first and foremost, aim to stand out from mass-produced news reporting in order to attract potential readership. This function is mostly fulfilled by catchy headlines: “They use common rhetorical devices such as alliteration, punning, and pseudo-direct quotes, especially in the popular press” (Bell 1996: 189). Direct quotations from popular literary works, songs or other products of high and popular culture are common examples of such a practice. This technique is widely used in media language where the emotional load of the pre-text is used and the decoding of the double meaning of the text (the reference to the pre-text and the meaning of the current text) turns into a play between the author and the readership.

Intertextuality also appears to be crucial within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) where the larger discursive unit of texts is regarded as a basic unit of communication (cf. Wodak 2001: 2) and texts themselves are perceived as “[...] extraordinarily sensitive indicators of sociocultural processes, relations and change” (Fairclough 1995: 4). By using the concept of *intertextuality* CDA investigates relationships with other texts in order to shed some light on the connection between language (in the form of texts) and social or historical context (cf. Fairclough 1995: 189). This seems particularly significant within media studies: “What intertextual analysis offers media reception studies is a textual basis for answering questions about what social resources and experiences are drawn upon in the reception and interpretation of media, and what other domains of life media messages are linked or assimilated to in interpretation” (Fairclough 1995: 200).

Quite recently, considerable attention has been paid to inter-semiotic relations in today's media where texts combined of (moving) pictures, (spoken and/or written) texts and graphic elements occur on a huge scale. The focal point of this new approach to intertextuality is the way that multise-miotic texts interact with each other to produce meanings, and specifically the complex intertextual relations between verbal and visual elements of texts (cf. Stöckl 2004, Zuschlag 2006, Opiłowski 2015).

Another point worth considering is the connection between *intertextuality* and New Media: modern computer-based (hyper)texts interconnected by hyperlinks which can be freely activated by the reader seem to embody Kristeva's concepts of the non-linearity of a text and the reader as an active participant in creating any given text.

As a final remark, mediatization as an important concept describing the interplay between media, culture and society (cf. Hepp, Hjarvard and Lundby 2015: 4) should be stressed. Mediatization as the way that media organize, shape and frame the recipients' perception and interpretation of people, events, ideas, discourses etc. in various social fields such as politics, economics, education, etc. is inherently intertextual (cf. Hiramoto and Park 2010: 179): “[...] the very nature of this process involves extracting the speech behavior of particular speakers or groups from a highly specific context and refracting and reshaping it to be inserted in another stream of representations” (ibid.).

3. Intertextuality and cultural references

There are, understandably, different ways in which texts rely on prior texts. Therefore, different categorisations of intertextuality are possible depending on the underlying criterion³ and the analysed text type. The most elaborate linguistic oriented taxonomies of intertextuality⁴ can be found within German linguistics (cf. Holthuis 1993, Opiłowski 2006, Janich 1999 and 2008), where intertextuality has been subject to very close scrutiny especially in terms of analysing the language of the media, science and advertisement. Among many classifications, which cannot be discussed further in this paper, the model put forward by Janich (1999, 2008) deserves particular attention and will be applied in the following study. Her definition

³ For example the importance of intertextual reference for the appropriate understanding of the text in question (obligatory vs. facultative intertextuality), the temporal relation between the reference text and the analysed text (synchronic vs. diachronic intertextuality), the language area that the reference text and the analysed text belong to (homolingual vs. heterolingual intertextuality), the explicitness of the reference (explicit vs. implicit intertextuality) and much else (for further details see Opiłowski 2006: 21-39).

⁴ Compared with this, *intertextuality* in Anglo-American language area is mostly applied in literary analyses.

of *intertextuality* highlights the key aspects of the term: “Intertextualität ist eine konkret belegbare Eigenschaft von einzelnen Texten und liegt dann vor, wenn vom Autor bewusst und mit einer bestimmten Absicht auf andere, vorliegende einzelne Texte oder ganze Textgattungen/Textsorten durch Anspielung oder Zitat Bezug genommen wird, und zwar unabhängig davon, ob er diese Bezüge ausdrücklich markiert und kenntlich macht oder nicht”⁵ (Janich 1999: 166).

Contrary to the broad, literary notion of *intertextuality* which considers every text a part of a universal intertext (cf. Pfister 1985: 25), the linguistic conceptualization of intertextuality concentrates on specific, intentional and marked references between a given text and other texts and concerns two basic types of relations between texts understood as language occurrences: the relation between texts of a certain text type, i.e. generic intertextuality and references to specific texts (cf. Tegtmeier 1997: 59). Here only the reference to particular pre-existing texts shall be discussed since generic intertextuality seems to be a side issue of cultural references that are subject of the following study.

According to Janich (2008: 189), there are four basic ways of referring to specific pre-texts ranging from explicit quotation to structural (using similar syntactic structure), lexical (based on key lexical elements) or visual allusion(s). Understandably, there is a fluent passage between quotation in the sense of complete and virtually unaltered representation and allusion in the sense of modified and/or partial reproduction (cf. Opilowski 2006, Holthuis 1993: 92).

Within the framework of this analysis it is essential to pinpoint the interrelation between intertextuality and culture. Following Meinhof and Smith (2010: 10) intertextuality can be thus conceptualized as a way of “[...] designating the [...] diffuse cultural space [...] within and by reference to which textual meanings are constructed” (Meinhof and Smith 2000: 10). Taking this into account, cultural references are widely discussed in the context of translation theory and practice. Nord, for example, draws upon the concept of *culturemes* and defines them as follows: “A cultureme is a social phenomenon of a culture X that is regarded as relevant by members of this culture and, when compared with a corresponding social phenomenon in a culture Y, is found to be specific to culture X” (1997: 34). Newmark, on the other hand, introduces the term *cultural words* to describe the reference to different cultural objects and classifies them as follows: (1) ecology, (2) material culture, (3) social culture, (4) gestures and habits and, finally, (4) organisations, customs, activities, procedures and concepts, where he further distinguishes between subcategories connected with political,

⁵ “Intertextuality is a clearly identifiable feature of particular texts and occurs when the author consciously and deliberately refers to other existing singular texts or whole text types by way of allusion or quotation, irrespective of the fact whether he explicitly indicates and marks the references or not” (translation – D.M.).

religious and artistic phenomena (1988: 96). Following Nord's and Newmark's findings, cultural references analysed in the following paper can be defined as a kind of verbal or visual intertextuality based on popular and high culture⁶ as well as historical and political events. Needless to say, two basic types of cultural intertextuality can be distinguished, depending its scope, namely intra- and cross-cultural intertextuality. The former one refers to texts originating in the same language and/or culture, the latter one can be understood as “[...] the creative assimilation of texts and ideas from another culture in new work” and is an explicit sign of cultural integration or transcending cultural boundaries (cf. Fokkema 2004: 8).

4. Material and method

The underlying research material consists of 31 press articles published directly before and shortly after the British EU referendum in June 2016. The analysed articles come from the weekly magazines THE ECONOMIST, POLITYKA and DER SPIEGEL, which count among to the most influential European news magazines and are leaders in terms of circulation among opinion weeklies in Great Britain, Poland and Germany.⁷ All three represent a similar, liberal alignment and pro-European attitude. All came out against Brexit either explicitly: “We believe that leaving would be a terrible error. It would weaken Europe and it would impoverish and diminish Britain. Our vote goes to Remain” (“Divided we fall”)⁸ or implicitly.

The analysed corpus is asymmetrical: among the 31 analysed articles there are 18 from THE ECONOMIST and only 7 and 6 from POLITYKA and DER SPIEGEL, respectively. This disproportion results from the fact, that the referendum primarily affects the British and is thus particularised in a number of articles. Apart from that, the British corpus comprises two regular and one special edition of THE ECONOMIST.⁹

⁶ Without further discussion of the distinction between *popular* and *high* culture in terms of taste and artistic value, but rather meaning the extent of their popularity.

⁷ Compare the description of the Polish (http://ejc.net/media_landscapes/poland) and German (http://ejc.net/media_landscapes/germany) media landscapes published by European Journalism Centre as well as the information released by THE ECONOMIST: “The Economist claims to have a worldwide print and digital edition circulation of more than 1.5m copies a week” (<http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/seriously-popular-economist-now-claims-reach-53m-readers-week-print-and-online/>, retrieved on: 22.03.2017).

⁸ Specific information concerning the issue in which the particular articles occur can be found in the Reference section.

⁹ Here the editor's comment preceding the special edition: “The result of Britain's vote on June 23rd will come too late for next week's issue. In Britain we will delay printing in order to produce a special edition. [...] For continuous coverage of the referendum and its results, visit our special website at economist.com/Brexit” (THE ECONOMIST June 18th – 24th 2016, p. 11).

Unsurprisingly, each of the weekly magazines depicts the EU referendum, its outcome and consequences from a slightly different perspective. POLITYKA concentrates on the implications of Brexit for Poles who have migrated to the UK since the enlargement of the EU as well as the aftermath of the referendum for Poland as an EU member state in general.

Compared with this, DER SPIEGEL addresses directly the British electorate, especially in the issue from 11th June 2016, preceding the referendum and makes an impassionate plea for the UK to stay within the EU: “Wenn ihr für den Austritt stimmt, verlieren alle. Wenn ihr bleibt, werdet ihr gewinnen“ / “Vote leave, and we’ll all lose. If you remain, you will win“ (“Lasst uns nicht allein!“ / “Don’t leave us!”). For that reason all texts of this issue dealing with the EU referendum are published simultaneously in German and English: e.g. “Lasst uns nicht allein!“ / “Don’t leave us!“, “Wer klug ist, bleibt“ / “It’s smarter to stay“, “Großbritannien ist Führungsnation“ / “Britain is a leading nation“.

THE ECONOMIST addresses the readers who are about to participate in the referendum. This is shown in the collective ‘we’ on the cover of the issue preceding the referendum: *Divided we fall*, referring to the well-known proverb *United we stand, divided we fall*.

As far as the purpose of the study is concerned, the following research questions are to be addressed: the analysis starts by recognising both verbal and visual cultural references and identifying the parts of the analysed texts that are likely to include such intertextual connections. Finally, the function of the discovered intertextual references is to be addressed.

5. Results and discussion

Apart from allusions to idioms and proverbs, which are not discussed in this paper, there is a wide range of references to Anglo-American **popular culture**. One such example is the phrase *Brex and the City* preceding the headline *International banking in a London outside the European Union*. This is an obvious reference to the title of the American television series *Sex and the City* broadcast from 1998 until 2004. The article deals with the repercussions of Brexit for the United Kingdom’s trading and financial services industries, which are largely based in the City. The association and hybridisation of the title and the element *Brex(it)* grow out of similarly sounding and rhyming elements *Brex* and *Sex*. The phrase *Brex and the City* fulfils merely an emphatic and humorous function: there are no other references to the plot of the series in the body of the article.

A clear reference to the sphere of British and/or American pop culture can be also found in the headline *Article 50 ways to leave your lover*. Two elements are combined in this headline: *Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union* which allows a member state to withdraw from the EU and the

title of a well-known song by Paul Simon (*50 Ways to Leave Your Lover*). Further evidence of this connection can be found in one of the subheadings of the same article: *Make a new plan, Stan* which is a direct quotation from the song. This reference corresponds with the omnipresent metaphor of the EU as a family or romantic relationship. Seen from this perspective the withdrawal of the UK reminds of a divorce or leaving a partner.

The article headline *The Battle of Evermore* refers to the same-titled song by the British rock group Led Zeppelin which in turn relates to *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien and the Battle of the Pelennor Fields fought between the forces of Gondor with its allies and Lord Sauron. By way of comparison, the EU referendum appears as a final confrontation between the supporters of the Leave and Remain camps in the “battle” over the ultimate issue of the British EU membership.

Likewise, the caption *To fight the hordes, and sing and cry* accompanying the photo of Nigel Farage on his Brexit campaign in London (*The Battle of Evermore*) is an almost direct quotation from the *Immigrant Song* by Led Zeppelin and refers specifically to the line: “To fight the horde, and sing and cry”. The song and the line itself relate to the Viking conquest of the British Isles. By quoting it an ironic comparison is drawn between the Viking invasion and one of the arguments used by supporters of the Leave campaign: the immigrant wave from the EU member countries that is supposedly partly to blame for the low wages in the UK, as Boris Johnson, one of the leading figures of the Brexit movement, claims.

Uncertainty rules OK is one of the subheadings in the article *After the vote, chaos*. The phrase *X rules OK* that was initially used as a graffiti slogan by supporters of football clubs, becoming over the course of time a popular phrasal template¹⁰ and is nowadays used to express enthusiasm for a particular person or thing¹¹. Referring to it is an informal and sarcastic way of indicating the upcoming political and economic volatility after the Brexit vote that is signaled by the noun *uncertainty*.

Further references to popular songs, books or films can be found in the following subheadings from THE ECONOMIST:

- *Londonia calling* (in the article *Brexitland versus Londonia*) is an explicit reference to the popular song by The Clash (*London Calling*) and can be interpreted as an attempt to compare the Brexit referendum and the concerns of the British realised after the Brexit vote with the so-called Three Mile Island accident and its negative repercussions.
- *All or Nothing at all* (in the article *What if?*) is an allusion to the same-titled song by Frank Sinatra or, possibly, the album by Billie Holliday and

¹⁰ “Phrasal templates consist of idiomatic phrases containing one, several, or no empty slots. They are phrase-long collocations” (Smadja 1994: 149).

¹¹ *The Free Dictionary*: <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/rules+ok> [Retrieved on: 01.03.2018].

reflects the thorny issue of the new trading arrangement between the UK and the EU after Brexit.

- *Will the French let her?* (in the article *An aggravating absence*) can be seen as an allusion to the song *The French let her* by Fischer-Z and to Marine Le Pen starting in the French presidential election in 2017 with the aim of leading to the French withdrawal from the EU.
- *How to make friends and irritate people* (in the article *Divided we fall*) is an allusion either to *How to make enemies and irritate people* (an album by the punk rock band Screeching Weasel) or *How to lose friends and irritate people* (a book by Justin Pearson) and reflects the author's advice to seek political alliances in Europe instead of withdrawing from it.
- *Back to the future* (in the article *The politics of anger*), finally, refers to the title of the American science-fiction comedy starring Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd and is a plea to maintain values such as tolerance, compromise and liberty that are the basis of the liberal international order.

The analysed weekly magazines also contain intertextual references to the artefacts of **high culture**, mostly works of literature. An example of such an allusion can be found in the article *Koniec świata i co dalej*: “I prezes [Kaczyński] natychmiast zabrał głos, choć mógł skorzystać z okazji, żeby choć chwilę *pomilczeć nad urną* z popiołami własnych politycznych urojeń”.¹² The highlighted expression refers directly to the oft-cited words by Stanisław Stroiński: “Ciszej nad tą trumną!”¹³ that suggest a momentary hiatus in the search for the truth.

“Jeśli się słucha i czyta, co pisowskiej braci *gra w duszy*, to nie ulega wątpliwości, że zazdroszczą Anglikom możliwości Brexitu”¹⁴ (*Dwa końce kija*) is another explicit reference to the Polish literary tradition, namely to Stanisław Wyspiański's *Wesele* and specifically to the line “Co się w duszy komu gra, Co kto w swoich widzi snach”.¹⁵ In this way the author alludes to the secret wish of the Law and Justice party members to leave the EU.

An example of a similar allusion can be found in the cover line *Brexit a sprawa polska*¹⁶ which obviously refers to the popular phrase “Słoń a sprawa polska” where the noun *słoń* (*‘elephant’*) is replaced with the key word *Brexit*. The original phrase “Słoń a sprawa polska” was popularised by Stefan Żerom-

¹² “And Kaczyński immediately commented, although he could have taken the opportunity to remain silent for a while over the urn with the ashes of his own political illusions” (translation – D.M.).

¹³ “Be quiet over that coffin!” (translation – D.M.).

¹⁴ “When you listen and read what’s in the hearts of the Law and Justice party’s comrades, there is no doubt that they envy the British the possibility of Brexit” (translation – D.M.).

¹⁵ “What’s in one’s heart, what’s in one’s dreams” (translation – D.M.).

¹⁶ “Brexit and the Polish national issue” (translation – D.M.).

ski in his novel *Przedwiośnie* and is used in a humorous way when trying to connect any subject matter with the Polish national issue as was customary at the beginning of the 20th century. *Brexit a sprawa polska* on the cover of POLITYKA suggests, that the potential British withdrawal from the EU will be considered from the point of view of advantages and disadvantages for Poland and Poles living in the United Kingdom.

An explicit reference to Anglo-American literature is represented by the subheading *The kindness of soon-to-be strangers* (in the article *What if?*). This is undoubtedly an intertextual reference to the famous sentence “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers” from Tennessee Williams’ play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. This modified quotation, with the additional adjective *soon-to-be*, refers to the imminent withdrawal of the UK from the EU and the hopes of the British to sustain friendly relationships with the EU nonetheless.

The Rest of History, which is a subheading of the article *The politics of anger*, brings to mind the essay by Francis Fukuyama on the end of history (*The End of History?*, 1989), where he considers liberal democracy and free market as the last phase of a long-lasting struggle between ideologies and hence the final form of human government. The author of the article *The politics of anger* points out, however, that the British decision to quit the EU questions the idea put forward by Fukuyama and thus depreciates the values of liberalism.

One of the scarce examples of direct quotations can be found in the interview with Wolfgang Schäuble, Germany’s finance minister at the time of the Brexit referendum (*Großbritannien ist Führungsnation / Britain is a leading nation*). The first line of the Polish national anthem quoted in the article (“Noch ist Polen nicht verloren” / “Poland is not lost yet”) acquires a new meaning in the context of the debate on the future of the EU and the wave of Eurocepticism in the EU member states. What Schäuble implies by citing it, is the hope that Poland still shares European values and has not yet lost interest in membership of the European Union.

An obvious allusion to the sphere of high culture occurs in the following passage: “Er [David Cameron – D.M.] ist ein Taktiker, kein Stratege, und versprach das Referendum, weil er wiedergewählt werden wollte. Er wurde zu Europas *Zauberlehrling*.” / “He is a tactician, not a strategist, and he promised to hold the referendum because he wanted to be re-elected”¹⁷ (*Lasst uns nicht allein! / Don’t leave us!*). The highlighted keyword is an explicit reference to the ballad *Der Zauberlehrling* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe. *Der Zauberlehrling* is a keyword often used as an example of a thoughtless behaviour (especially in politics) when one summons help from forces that cannot be controlled. That is precisely what happened to

¹⁷ Interestingly enough, the sentence containing the key word *Zauberlehrling* has been omitted in the English version of the article.

David Cameron's plan to propose the Brexit-referendum which, as is well known, eventually backfired.

The allusion *Europa ist tot. Es lebe Europa*¹⁸ refers to the widely used phrase "The King is dead. Long live the King!" announcing the death of the current monarch and instantly proclaiming the heir to the throne. This famous phrase signifies the continuity of sovereignty and is nowadays used to express a quick change of plans after a failure.¹⁹ By substituting *the King* with *Europe* the author announces an upheaval in the history of the EU caused by Brexit. The question mark at the end of the sentence is not coincidental: DER SPIEGEL suggests that the idea of united Europe is dead and at the same time raises the issue of the uncertain future of the EU after British withdrawal. The phrase "X is dead, long live X!" occurs regularly in newspaper headlines and advertisements, mostly in a modified version, i.e. containing different keywords and is thus considered to be a popular phrasal template.

Apart from references to various artefacts of popular and high culture such as TV and radio programmes, films, songs and books there are numerous examples of cultural references including **political and/or historical references** based on the UK, USA and Germany.

Worth mentioning is, for example, the intertextual reference in the article headline *Schwarzer Donnerstag* ('Black Thursday') that directly alludes to the 24th of October 1929, the Wall Street Crash in the United States. In the context of the article, the key phrase *schwarzer Donnerstag* refers to the day of the EU referendum (Thursday, 23rd June 2016). By means of alluding to the negative connotations around the Great Depression, it reveals the negative attitude of the author towards the outcome of the EU Referendum.

An intertextual reference based on a historical keyword can be found in the following passage from DER SPIEGEL: "Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung ist eine 'splendid isolation' keine kluge Option" / "In the era of globalisation, 'splendid isolation' is not a smart option" ("*Großbritannien ist Führungsnation*" / "*Britain is a leading nation*"). The term *splendid isolation*, describing Britain's minimal involvement in European political affairs, is used ironically and/or critically by the supporters of the Remain campaign to describe one of the basic arguments put forward by the Leave camp, that is reducing the influence of the EU and thus "winning back" sovereignty.

Likewise, *Stunde null* occurring in DER SPIEGEL is a key phrase which the following lexical allusion builds upon: "Der Brexit [...] ist eine Stunde null für Europa" (*Willige und Fähige*). In this case, Brexit appears to be

¹⁸ "Europe is dead. Long live Europe?" (translation – D.M.).

¹⁹ Wikisłownik: https://pl.wiktionary.org/wiki/umar%C5%82_kr%C3%B3l,_niech_%C5%BCyje_kr%C3%B3l [Retrieved on: 16.6. 2017].

a chance for a new beginning, a fresh start as was the case in Germany after World War II.

Another example of lexical allusion is the label *sick man of Europe* usually given to European countries experiencing economic difficulties or impoverishment: “Jej [Margaret Thatcher] reformy plus otwarty europejski rynek zamieniły kraj, uważany za „chorego człowieka Europy”, w jedną z szybciej rozwijających się gospodarek”²⁰ (*Musi zboleć*). Incidentally, its structural modification *The sick man of nowhere*, highlighting the United Kingdom’s exit from the EU, is one of the subheadings in the article *Adrift*.

The phrase *Little Europe* seems to be a modified version of the term *Little England* with all its pejorative overtones. Little England – as the opposite of Great Britain – refers to the recent anti-immigrant and nationalist moods in the UK, and to the questioning of the idea of a supranational Europe: “It would be bad for everyone if Great Britain shrivelled into Little England and be worse still if this led to Little Europe” (*A tragic split*). *Little England* can be, alternatively, interpreted as a distant reference to the popular BBC radio show *Little Britain* and same-titled television series involving parodies of the British.

The references discussed above are based on verbal texts whilst others have incorporated **visual elements** from British, German and Polish culture. There are numerous cases of using British, Polish and European flags, mostly on the covers of the analysed issues. An example of such a visual allusion showing the British and the European flag tied together into a big knot being pulled in opposite directions by invisible agents, which greatly resembles tug of war (THE ECONOMIST, 18th June 2016). In the same issue of THE ECONOMIST, a picture showing flags of the EU member states blowing in the wind can be seen. The European flag appears in the foreground whereas the British flag is, remarkably, flying at half-mast as if symbolising grief or mourning.

One more remarkable visual allusion is a drawing showing a hand waving the EU flag in a very poor condition: frayed, threadbare and worn-out. Similarly, a shabby British flag symbolising the fact that the idea of European unity is worn out accompanies the article *Nie tak miało być* published shortly after the referendum.

On the cover of THE ECONOMIST from the 25th June 2016 again the Union Jack can be found, this time, however, torn apart in the middle as if to symbolise the fact that the decision about the future of the UK has led to a split not only in the EU but, first and foremost, among British citizens. This interpretation is supported by the cover line *A tragic split* and the content of

²⁰ “Her reforms and the open European market have turned the country considered to be ‘the sick man of Europe’ into one of the fastest growing economies” (translation – D.M.).

the issue: “The division between London, which voted strongly for Remain, and the north, which did the reverse, reveals a sharply polarised country, with a metropolitan elite that likes globalisation on one side and an angry working class that does not on the other side” (*After the vote, chaos*), “Managing the aftermath, which saw the country split by age, class and geography, will need political dexterity in the short run [...]” (*A tragic split*).

Finally, a humorous way of applying the Union Flag is to be mentioned: the cover of *THE ECONOMIST* from the 2nd July 2016 showing a mast with a pair of flag-like men’s underpants and numerous safety pins symbolising anarchy, which corresponds with the cover line *Anarchy in the UK* announcing the political turmoil in the UK after Brexit.

In the article *Brexitland versus Londonia* a montage showing two halves of a man can be seen: one disguised as a supporter of the Leave campaign and the other as a supporter of the Remain camp. Both parts are connected with a zipper indicating that Britain increasingly looks like two countries divided over the issue of its status in or outside the EU. On the cover of *POLITYKA*, a partly similar image occurs: two halves of an angry looking, frowning man’s face: one painted in national Polish colours the other in British like a face of a football fan. Both the picture and the corresponding cover line *Brexit a sprawa polska* (“Brexit vs. the Polish national issue”) are a clear indication of a conflict-laden situation and clashing interests.

“Brexit: referendum głupich kroków” appearing in the contents of the issue No. 26/2016 directly alludes to the widely-quoted sketch “Ministerstwo głupich kroków” (‘Ministry of Silly Walks’) by the famous British comedian group Monty Python. By means of depicting John Cleese performing his peculiar way of walking against the background of the British flag the image indirectly declares the Brexit referendum a misstep.

British and European symbols are also utilised in many applications in German subcorpus: for example on the covers of the two analysed issues of *DER SPIEGEL*. The cover of the issue published shortly before the referendum shows the British flag and the plea “Bitte geht nicht!” / “Please don’t go!” placed in front of it. On the cover of the following issue, a montage can be seen: Queen Elisabeth II metonymically representing the UK with her husband, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, leaving a circle of twelve stars symbolising the EU. They both turn their backs on the reader who seems to be watching the whole scene from the perspective of the EU. Both the Queen and her spouse depart in an uncertain, unknown direction represented by the thick fog swirling around them.

As mentioned above intertextual references predominantly occur in exposed positions, such as cover lines, article headlines and/or subheadings (especially in *THE ECONOMIST*, where most subheadings contain intertextual references) as well as photo and/or infographic captions. They seem to be less common in the main body of the analysed texts. This implies that one of their primary functions is to attract and sustain the attention of the reader. On top of that, they convey complex subject matters in a relatively compact way by

referring to well-known pre-texts and their interpretations and by projecting them onto current texts. This way they fulfil an important cognitive role, i.e. they contribute to a considerable extension of the meaning of the current text (cf. Janich 2008: 178, Jakobs 1999: 9). Last but not least, they produce humoristic effects and activate the playful function of language that consists in using and manipulating language for fun. The intertextual references activate and satisfy the play instinct of the reader and guarantee intellectual pleasure similar to the satisfaction derived from solving riddles. This constant winking at the reader, who is supposed to detect and decode intertextual signals of the current text is especially typical of THE ECONOMIST.

6. Conclusions

Summing up the results, it can be generally concluded that newspapers are apt to employ various forms of cultural intertextuality in order to elicit additional meanings of a given text. They constantly encourage the reader to absorb and transform pre-existing texts and to initiate a dialogue between reference texts and current texts. Occasionally they open a wide range of interpretations since they are not explained explicitly in the body text. This playfulness and postmodern word game are typical of today's mass media communication.

As may be seen above, two basic intertextual strategies have a predominant role in all three corpora: (1) applying the same form in a new context and (2) structural allusions with particular lexical elements modified, substituted, inserted or reduced. Such cultural references occur mostly in places where they can capture the interest of the readership, i.e. in the cover lines, article headlines, subheadings and picture captions of the analysed articles.

As far as the purpose of intertextual references is concerned, the following points can be mentioned: catching and sustaining the reader's attention, accepting and/or sharing valuations communicated by text authors, conveying complex subject matters in a highly compressed way and – last but not least – playfulness. The latter case can be defined as inviting the audience to decipher, investigate, interpret, and therefore to create intertextual relations independently. This way the gap between the intertextuality as a text feature and intertextuality as an activity of the readership is bridged.

The conducted analysis indicates significant differences between the analysed subcorpora both in terms of quantity and quality. As far as specific results are concerned, the following conclusions can be made: Both the British and Polish corpora are particularly rich in cultural references, whereas in German texts they are, surprisingly, far less frequent and appear mostly in the form of direct quotations or lexical allusions adapting a new meaning in the current context. A possible explanation for this phenomenon could be the solemn, earnest tone of the articles in DER SPIEGEL which

does not seem to be compatible with jocular adaptations and/or allusions. The prevailing pathos, a vivid illustration of which is the following passage, leaves virtually no room for playfulness: “Haben diejenigen, die gerade für den Brexit kämpfen, eigentlich vergessen, was im 20. Jahrhundert passiert ist? Zwei Weltkriege, Millionen Tote, der Kontinent ein Schlachtfeld? Großbritannien stand an vorderster Stelle, als es darum ging, Hitler zu besiegen“ / “Have those who are campaigning for Brexit forgotten the events of the 20th century? Two world wars, millions of dead and a continent turned into a battlefield. The UK took the lead when it came to defeating Adolf Hitler” (“Lasst uns nicht allein!” / “Don’t leave us!”).

In Polish and British Brexit-related articles there are also several examples of visual intertextuality based on partially modified, e.g. frayed, torn or otherwise altered national flags and symbols. This technique resembles the so-called appropriation art aimed at creative adopting and recontextualizing recognizable images (cf. Zuschlag 2012).

Polish and British articles contain many references to the sphere of high culture (S. Żeromski *Przedwiośnie*, St. Wyspiański *Wesele*, T. Williams *A Streetcar Named Desire*, F. Fukuyama *The End of History?*). By contrast, references based on popular culture play a predominant role in the analysed British articles: numerous quotations and/or allusions refer to pop songs (*London Calling*, *Immigrant Song*, *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover*, *All or Nothing at all*, *Battle of Evermore*, *The French let her*) or films (*Back to the Future*, *Sex and the City*, *Little Britain*) with the aim of raising interest of the audience and accepting or sharing valuations expressed in the newspaper articles.

As Fokkema (2004: 8) observes “[...] there is more cross-cultural intertextuality now than ever before”. Compared with this, the vast majority of cultural references found in the analysed material are culture-specific. On some rare occasions, they cross cultural boundaries (for example in cases such as *Schwarzer Donnerstag*, *Referendum głupich kroków*, *splendid isolation*, *chory człowiek Europy*). These cross-cultural references require undoubtedly more intertextual competence of the audiences. On the other hand, they result in the intensified perception of the readership.

The results obtained suggest that things left unsaid and only implied by means of cultural references force the audiences to involve themselves in the process of deciphering and increase the attractiveness of a magazine by providing the reader with a combination of information and entertainment.

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Research material

„DER SPIEGEL“

- Dann geht doch! / Then leave! (24/2016)
Großbritannien ist Führungsnation / Britain is a leading nation (24/2016)
Lasst uns nicht allein! / Don't leave us! (24/2016)
Schwarzer Donnerstag (26/2016)
Wer klug ist, bleibt / It's smarter to stay (24/2016)
Willige und Fähige (26/2016)

„POLITYKA“

- Dwa końce kija (26/2016)
Koniec świata i co dalej (27/2016)
Mgła nad kanałem (26/2016)
Musi zboleć (27/2016)
Nie tak miało być (27/2016)
Planeta Brytania (27/2016)
Wybór prezesa (27/2016)

“THE ECONOMIST”

- A tragic split (25.06.–1.07.2016)
Adrift (2.06.–8.07.2016)
After the vote, chaos (25.06.–1.07.2016)
An aggravating absence (2.06.–8.07.2016)
And shut the door behind you (2.06.–8.07.2016)
Article 50 ways to leave your lover (2.06.–8.07.2016)
Brexitland versus Londonia (2.06.–8.07.2016)
Divided we fall (18.06.–24.06.2016)
I owe EU (2.06.–8.07.2016)
International banking in a London outside the European Union (25.06.–1.07.2016)
Managing chaos (2.06.–8.07.2016)
Shifting sands (2.06.–8.07.2016)
The Battle of Evermore (18.06.–24.06.2016)

The improbable revolutionaries (25.06.–1.07.2016)

The Nigel Farage Show (18.06.–24.06.2016)

The politics of anger (2.06.–8.07.2016)

The sleep of union (18.06.–24.06.2016)

What if? (18.06.–24.06.2016)

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