



THE POWER OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE: POPE FRANCIS
AND HIS PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

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DECLARATION

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I declare that this thesis is my independent work. All sources and literature are cited and included.

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Andrej Bartík

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ABSTRACT

The Power of Religious Language: Pope Francis and his Public Communication

by

Andrej Bartík

The religious language and Pope Francis' communication is the main focus of this thesis through which I attempt to explain the meaning of religious discourse in contemporary world. Since secular beliefs dominate in today's society, it is challenging to analyze religion and its unique language. This study aims to address the questions about religious language which is used to communicate religious content through a particular form, i.e. rhetoric devices such as metaphors, rhetorical questions or the rule of three. The material relevant for this research has been collected from the public communication of Pope Francis consisting of his speeches, sermons, audiences and virtual utterances. This communication makes the Catholic Church more liberal and accessible to young people. I examine Francis' religious language which contributes to these progressive changes and the silent revolution caused by his unconventional attitudes to the Church. Through the analysis of public communication of Pope Francis, it is possible to define the essence of religious language and its impact on believers as well as nonbelievers. This impact is analyzed through sociolinguistic frame which enables correlation of the language used and its social dynamics. In my thesis I show this correlation in ways that Pope Francis affects his audience through his tweets, prayers, preaching and speeches.

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INTRODUCTION

*“So it is with you.
Unless you speak **intelligible** words with your tongue,
how will anyone know what you are saying?
You will just be speaking into the air.
Assuredly, there are many different languages in the world,
yet none of them is without meaning.
If, then, I do not know **the meaning of someone’s language**,
I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me.”
(1 Cor, 14:9)*

Language is intelligible and meaningful on the one hand, while on the other hand, language is mysterious and powerful; the power of language can be studied in different domains of language usage, including religion. The introductory excerpt from the Bible is not to evoke a spiritual entrance into an academic text, but rather to direct one’s attention to the fact that language as such, including religious language has always been essential for the humanity as a tool to think, interconnect with others and spread ideas. The Bible offers an interpretation of certain word meanings to render them “intelligible” and emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding between the author and readers and the impact meaning has on the form of language and on communication. Even though the content of the Bible is not the crucial topic of this thesis, the quote introduces readers into the interrelation of religious discourse and linguistics, and especially sociolinguistics that is concerned with the interaction of language and society. One might question the relevance of religion to 21st century sociolinguistic studies; however, regardless of one’s personal belief, religion continues to be socially relevant and to shape everyday language.

Throughout this project, the term religious language refers to a particular register. Its purpose is to understand religious statements and their spiritual effect on the audience. The meaning behind religious language is not always transparent. I seek to uncover its specific features and significance it has for religious leaders. Religious language is not limited to the

religious jargon used in churches, monasteries, mosques and other worship places, but it is also naturally encountered in the cultural space where we live. Language is not only about speakers' communication, but also about speakers' presuppositions, cognition, word choices and poetic effects. In this thesis, I will discuss the meaning of spiritual language, the difference between religious language and language used in everyday communication, and enrichment that religious language brings to believers and nonbelievers.

I focus on the power of religious language, but mostly on the Catholic language, and examine it through Pope Francis' communication with the public. Pope Francis is currently one of the most important religious leaders in the entire world and, therefore, it is important to investigate his background, his views on the world's socio-cultural space, and his overall leadership. Pope Francis is an exceptional person. His openness in terms of communication about politics, social problems and motifs is often as influential for nonbelievers as it is to believers. Religious language of Pope Francis is rich in metaphors and unique in its rhetorical devices.

The main purpose of this thesis is to show that communication through religious language is a phenomenon different from everyday communication. This thesis aims to prove the existence of religious language as a crucial tool for communicating religious beliefs to secular society. I compare theoretical sources dealing with a critical analysis of the main features of religion, linguistics and leadership and use them to explain specific statements of Pope Francis. I write about religious language as a revolutionary instrument helping Pope Francis argue a new position of the Church in the 21st century.

This work seeks to acknowledge the power of Francis' language and its impact on making the Catholic Church more accessible to young people. I also want to analyze the resulting progress of papal rhetoric, systematic account of the cultural spaces in which his

statements occur and the media's new view on his language and position as the head of the Church.

Even though my thesis describes the attitudes of perhaps the most famous Christian of our time and his beliefs, I do not aim to prove accuracy of his or any religious claims. Pope Francis holds a subjective view of the relationship between religion and language but my thesis elucidates the main elements of his religious language and its impact from an objective perspective.

The overall structure of the study takes the form of theoretical and empirical research. The thesis begins with a theoretical part which is divided into three main chapters. At first, it addresses the essence of religion with the focus on Roman Catholicism. This chapter examines the relations between reality, fiction and imagination resulting in the utterances of people who profess a religious belief. This view addresses the meaning of religion in today's secular society. This chapter works with the term of spirituality as an experience not necessarily linked to religion. As an introduction to the study of religious linguistics, I offer brief historical facts that affected the ways religion is conceived in today's world.

The second chapter of the theoretical part examines crucial but unconventional views on language as such and its association with religion. Through this relationship, I try to find out whether religious language exists and what features make it worthy of a particular focus. This chapter is more philosophical than other chapters and presents a metaphysical approach to an individual perception of religious language. This discussion of religion and language is about one's cultural and spiritual identity as presented in public and general dialogue related to religious beliefs. This chapter shows how religious language can influence the logic and overall behavior of individuals.

The third chapter of the theoretical part introduces the subject of leadership. Since I attempt to illuminate the power of religious language, I use Pope Francis as an example of

powerful leadership. This chapter describes the moments notable for Pope Francis' life and especially his Jesuit background. I also offer here the theoretical description of Pope Francis' language and its rhetorical design. The material I use for this description consists mainly of the interviews with Pope Francis and the literature dealing with the specifics of his rhetoric.

The approach to empirical research adopted for this study is a practical investigation consisting of the data gathered from the Pope's speeches, sermons, interviews, and online communication. I draw from Pope Francis' speeches from 2013 – 2018. These speeches can be found online on the official websites of *The Vatican Radio* and *The Holy See*. The empirical research is divided into three chapters which delineate Pope Francis' communication with the public and religious language from different angles. This part aims to show what kinds of rhetoric Pope Francis uses to make his communication effective.

The first chapter of the empirical part studies a specific religious language of Pope Francis and examines the background of his communication. I focus on the authenticity of Francis' statements and the similarities in structure and content that can be found in his utterances. These findings portray Francis' strategies of communicating his beliefs and relationships between reality and faith. The three subchapters in this section discuss the rhetorical devices of Pope Francis, his actions and body language and also criticism towards his papacy.

The next chapter consists of the analysis of Pope Francis' sermons, speeches and audiences. This analysis shows the main tools and topics through which Pope Francis communicates. Francis' communication with the public is here portrayed through his opinions on language and communication, religion, politics, ecology, philosophy and the power of young people. Pope Francis' public conduct can be recognized in these themes and, therefore, it is best to study his language usage right within these topics.

The last chapter of this thesis is dedicated to Pope Francis' online communication. It compares his online strategies to communicate with the public. I focus on the only two social media used by Pope Francis, i.e. *Twitter* and *Instagram*. I analyze the online activities of Pope Francis as well as the response of his audience between 2016 and 2017. Specifically, I analyze the number of posts and their content in regards to rhetorical devices and thematic, and communicative strategies. The results of this analysis are summarized in graphs.

This work is a detailed sociolinguistic account of language used in religious discourse and its social impact. There are several important areas where this study makes an original contribution to the understanding of religious language. It can be studied not only by linguists, sociolinguists, religious teachers or spiritualists, but also by those interested in social otherness and topics which might be considered taboo. In conclusion, I highlight the reasons why religious discourse is a powerful element in the dialogue between believers and the secular society of today's world.

I. THEORETICAL PART

1. RELIGION

Our contemporary society tends to interpret the world through a secular perspective. However, religion continues to be a powerful social force. In the same way as we study history through the perspective of religion, we can study language by taking a closer look at religious institutions and their representatives. According to Jonathan Z. Smith, religion is just an imagined category, because it exists as an intellectual or scholarly tool for analyzing complex data, but it does not exist outside of academia. Smith sees religion as a set of complex traditions, patterns of ritual behavior and belief-systems.¹ This means that it is difficult to come to some definitions of religion, because the concepts of religion are based on the beliefs and intuitions of believers, rather than facts that could be generally proven.

When studying *Rationality and Religious Beliefs*, I have found out that people can be affected by the beliefs of their parents whether they followed a religious tradition or not. Religiosity can also positively influence people's language usage, emotions, and behavior. However, religion is not only the matter of intuition, but also is a result of rational thinking.² It is difficult for some scientists to perceive religion as a relevant tool to examine history or language, but society finds religion meaningful. Religion continues to be relevant for many people, and therefore it is crucial to deal with its essence.

One of the most problematic facets of religion is its relation to science. According to William Downes, science regards religion as something that is not a result of a natural process and it has no insights into reality, even reality of moral obligation.³ Therefore, accuracy about

¹ Daniel Patte. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 2010). 1063.

² Andrej Bartík. *Rationality and Religious Beliefs*. Unpublished manuscript. (Anglo-American University: Prague, 2016).

³ William Downes,. *Language and religion: a journey into the human mind*. (New York: Cambridge Univ Press, 2013). 4-5.

religion depends on one's philosophy and attitudes to science. Downes also sees science as something that should be analyzed metaphysically⁴ and thus enable a better understanding of religion. This means that there should be a reciprocal interaction between religious and scientific studies.

1.1. Christianity and Roman Catholicism

The terms critical to my analysis are also Christianity and Catholicism because Christianity is a crucial term for the study of religious linguistics. Most people consider Christianity a type of religious practice; however, one should not reduce it to a set of certain beliefs, an orthodoxy, or even a set of practices and orthopraxy.⁵ Christianity might be a set of religious rules, but it can also represent an inspiration and philosophical sphere for believers, as well as, nonbelievers. Christians are the followers of Jesus Christ and their beliefs are based on the content of the Old and New Testaments. We can distinguish between Catholics, Protestants, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, Anglicans, but also independent or Charismatic Christians.⁶ Even though there is more than one group of Christians, these religions differ not so much in their beliefs but rather in their traditions.

Roman Catholicism connects the majority of Christians. The Roman Catholic Church is the most widespread and oldest church, whose members have different opinions on its substance.⁷ There are believers, who call themselves Catholics, but they do not participate in the Church at all and people who follow all the rules of the Catholic Church. In both ways, this Church is represented by a belief in Holy Trinity and the Bible. The Roman Catholic

⁴ William Downes,. *Language and religion: a journey into the human mind*. (New York: Cambridge Univ Press, 2013). 4-5.

⁵ Daniel Patte. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 2010). xiv.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Michael Walsh. *Roman Catholicism*. 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016). 8.

Church is led by priests, bishops and cardinals hierarchically, but the most respected authority is the pope, the bishop of Rome. The term ‘catholic’ comes from Greek ‘universal’ that represents the one Church or worldwide, but also ‘true’ or ‘authentic’ and it is known because of the writings of Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch.⁸ The Catholic population is over 1,253 billion, and according to several researches, the number of Catholics in the world is expected to increase to 1,64 billion. Catholics constitute over 17,5 per cent of the total world’s population and the biggest Catholic population is found in Latin America and Mexico.⁹ It is difficult to believe that in this quite secular society, the amount of believers might increase. However, due to the liberal views of many religious leaders and new communities, Church has become a different place open to people of diverse backgrounds.

1.2. Paradigm shifts in religious traditions

It has commonly been assumed that the role of religion in society is gradually changing and that its today’s position differs from that of previous centuries. This is true especially for Christianity. While Christianity’s essence is unchanging, various attitudes of believers cause paradigm shifts in its traditions, because Christianity consists of still more Churches and therefore more different views. As noted by Thomas S. Kuhn, paradigm shift represents a scientific revolutionary theory which forces us to see science differently.¹⁰ When exploring the world through science and even religion, we need to follow a certain new pattern which has to be adapted to society. Kuhn sees paradigm shift as a revolution representing a crucial element for the development of science and society. This might be undoubtedly applied to religion, whose position in secular society changes according to the

⁸ Michael Walsh. *Roman Catholicism*. 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016). 13.

⁹ Ibid. 19-24.

¹⁰ John Naughton. “Thomas Kuhn: the man who changed the way the world looked at science.” (*The Observer*, Guardian News and Media, 18 Aug. 2012).

revolutionary theories of religious leaders and communities. In other words, the authoritative actions of people defending the roles of religion are as important as religion's natural development.

According to Hans Küng, we can distinguish five paradigm shifts in Christianity. It is early Christian apocalyptic paradigm that represents the beginning of these beliefs, followed by the early Church Hellenistic paradigm through the Roman Empire, the Mediaeval Roman Catholic Paradigm starting from the 11th century, the Reformation Protestant paradigm, the Enlightenment Modern paradigm characterized by modern philosophy, natural sciences (or theory of the state) and finally contemporary Postmodern ecumenical paradigm.¹¹ Since Christianity's origins, it has been transforming, and several historical events established the position of Christians in society; these events caused Orthodox traditionalism, Roman Catholic authoritarianism, Protestant fundamentalism and Liberal modernism.¹² Liberalism in modern society has a definite impact on the Church. Today's world lacks traditional boundaries of religious institutions and some believers do not need to respect them when attending religious communities, in contrast to the past. Many people seek freedom in religion and, therefore, have their own beliefs and do not follow an organized religion. The liberation of modern society, and especially religion could be viewed as an ideological shift seeking to overcome social discrimination, political powerlessness, and economic deprivation within society.¹³ Therefore, the unnecessary and forced differentiation of people according to their professed religious traditions is no longer a reflection of social class or economic segmentation. This global shift toward liberation compels people to participate in a discourse on paradigm shifts in the contemporary theological ethical doctrine that influences cultural

¹¹ Hans Küng. *Christianity: essence, history and future*. (New York: Continuum, 1995). 524.

¹² Ibid. 524.

¹³ Somen Das. *An Enquiry into the Paradigm Shifts in Contemporary Ethical Theological Thinking: A Religio-Cultural Critique*. (Indian Journal of Theology, Issue 36.2. 1994). 14.

and religious life.¹⁴ To put it another way, for this generation, religion needs to evoke a feeling of freedom and have an impact on ethics, philosophy and morality.

If one wants to look at contemporary religion from the philosophical, scientific or linguistic viewpoint, one needs to be aware of the public's lack of interest to be a part of religious institutions. Technological and scientific progress has caused an intense secularization and seems to have made "faith in God redundant."¹⁵ It is also important to point out that the current scientific research paradigm is characterized by the progress in the cognitive studies in the mind and brain interconnecting psychology, anthropology, philosophy, biology, computing and linguistics. This research influences the ways people contemplate about cultural forms and the social order. In regard to religion, new branches such as computational psychology or consciousness studies show how religion could have developed from the evolution of the mind and brain.¹⁶ On the one hand, religion becomes unnecessary for many people around the globe while on the other hand, the population tends to be more depressed and dissatisfied with hard conditions, and egocentrism among people. This means that many people have to rely on themselves and therefore tend to be looking for the relationship with the supernatural. This relationship has not only religious essence but also certain esoteric and mystic "search for the unknown."

The changes in the perception of religion can also be found within the process of dechristianization of Western society. This is associated with migrations of diverse communities, and hence with a religiously pluralistic and globalized world where Buddhists, Christians or Muslims communicate, work or live together. This mutual influence of different

¹⁴ Somen Das. *An Enquiry into the Paradigm Shifts in Contemporary Ethical Theological Thinking: A Religio-Cultural Critique*. (Indian Journal of Theology, Issue 36.2. 1994). 14.

¹⁵ David J. Bosch. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. (New York: Orbis Books, 2011). 23.

¹⁶ William Downes., *Language and religion: a journey into the human mind*. (New York: Cambridge Univ Press, 2013). 1.

religions made Christians reconsider their stereotypical views about others' beliefs.¹⁷ It is difficult to predict the future of religion, but its lasting importance should become a focus of public discourse. Interreligious dialogue will enable religion to exist.

2. RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

Even though it is not an easy task to define religion, most characterize it as a separate spiritual world of a fictitious nature which can be known only to certain individuals. However, it is more difficult to discover whether religious language exists. David Crystal claims that from the linguistic point of view, the studies of religious language will be always divided into two main parts: “[W]ithin an individual language, the formal identification of those features which distinguish this variety from all other varieties in that language; and the functional identification of the contexts in which the variety is used, and which promote diversity in its use.”¹⁸ When studying religious language, every individual has to realize if he uses religious language or if he uses some other varieties different from the common language used in everyday communication, i.e. jargons or particular registers. Then, one should examine the context in which religious language appears and what features make it different from the common usage of language.

In the discussion about the relationship between language and religion, it is significant to realize that

language includes not only specific historical languages, not only the universal principles of phonology, syntax and the lexicon, not only how these principles arise and are used within the mind/brain, but how language is used to communicate messages and to perform actions within various registers: to pray, to engage with a sermon, to study scripture, to participate in liturgy or discuss theology, and so on.¹⁹

¹⁷ David J. Bosch. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. (New York: Orbis Books, 2011). 24.

¹⁸ David Crystal. “Whatever happened to theolinguistics?” In Paul Chilton & Monika Kopytowska (eds): *Religious language, metaphor and the mind*. (New York. OUP, 2017). 2.

¹⁹ William Downes. *Language and religion: a journey into the human mind*. (New York: Cambridge Univ Press, 2013). 2.

Of course, language is also used in religion, but it is necessary to ascertain if it differs from the everyday use of language or if it is a regular language used with particular jargon. Priests, preachers or other students of religious text typically tend to approach a broader range of target groups than other people; therefore, it is possible that their language contains devices that render their message accessible to other people.

From the philosophical point of view, one can ask whether religious language exists, and a common discussion consists of the problem: “If God is infinite, then words used to describe finite creatures might not adequately describe God.”²⁰ If this is true, one might question if believers need to enhance their vocabulary ‘religious’ or whether they need to limit their spiritual experiences to their everyday vocabulary. Probably, one can never describe God perfectly, because spiritual world is experienced not only through logical thinking, but also through intuitions and feelings. Religious language serves to describe human feelings and attitudes towards supernaturality and not only certain superior entity. It is also significant to mention that in religious texts, internal language and implicit language seem to be of greater importance than the explicit narrative, and therefore if believers cannot explain explicitly what they believe about God, they can experience it through their own internal language.

To answer the question whether it is possible to talk about God, one can say that believers need to have certain shared understanding of their beliefs. Shared understanding and presuppositions are crucial for communication within a small community. Believers need to be able to share their internal language so the religious belief might be discussed. This does not mean that talking about God can be fully meaningful but rather that one community can

²⁰ Jennifer Hart Weed. “Religious Language.” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 July 2017.

find a sufficient vocabulary to describe the beliefs. This is the psychological approach that can be applied to any discussion of the unknown, not only religion and its language.

2.1. Theolinguistics

A discipline dealing with religious language and its study is called theolinguistics. It derives from the Greek word ‘theo’ which means God. While a variety of definitions of the term theolinguistics have been suggested, this thesis will use mostly the definition first suggested by David Crystal. In his *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, David Crystal, who coined the phrase, defines theolinguistics as

a term which has been used for the study of the relationship between language and religious thought and practice, as illustrated by ritual, sacred texts, preaching, doctrinal statements and private affirmations of belief. The distinctiveness of religious language usually takes the form of a special set of varieties within a language, but special scripts and languages (as with Ge’ez in the Ethiopian Church) may also be found, and considerable attention needs to be paid to philological enquiry, given the way much religious language takes its origin from old texts and practices.²¹

Theolinguistics interconnects theology and linguistics. Crystal writes about the connection between these disciplines and believes that “almost certainly religious expression will form an important part of the linguistic distinctiveness that reflects cultural identity.”²² This means that religious thoughts influence the overall behavior of people and their language usage and vice versa. Religious thoughts and identity also depend on ethnic and cultural influences and, therefore, differences in religious language are based not only in official language, but also in various traditions that can coexist within the same religion. For example, Greek Catholics in Central Europe can have different religious language than those living in Greece.

Theolinguistics has a significant role in public discourse and describes how this discourse can refer to the divine and how language works in situations which operate with a

²¹ David Crystal. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Sixth edition. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008). 484.

²² David Crystal. “Whatever happened to theolinguistics?” In Paul Chilton & Monika Kopytowska (eds): *Religious language, metaphor and the mind*. (New York. OUP, 2017). 7.

logic limited by linguistic processes such as speech acts or metaphors. Moreover, it also examines an ideological background of religion and language, which is the main task of critical theolinguistics.²³ To put it differently, theolinguistics also examines the human mind and its possibilities in regards to language usage when contemplating the supernatural. It also represents the ideological concepts that shape public thinking and discussion of religious activity.

Crystal emphasizes the importance of pragmatics. He writes about the usage of religious language and particular expressions that may have different meanings, especially when translating for liturgical crowds where the translation affects large numbers of the mass-attending public.²⁴ For example, many religious texts are translated from Latin or Greek, which can change their original meaning. Therefore, it becomes necessary to compare translations in different languages to determine the original message.

2.2. The power of language within religious discourse

Religion has a different role than it had in previous centuries and religious communication is becoming less common. Discourse is a social practice that can have various forms, but a typical feature of Christian discourse is “its dependence on assertions and statements recorded in a number of texts, i.e. in the Scriptures and traditional statements of faith and doctrine.”²⁵ This discourse is then transformed into the individual interpretations of the texts by the Christian leaders and believers themselves.

²³ Jean-Pierre Van Noppen. “Methodist Discourse and Industrial Work Ethic: A Critical Theolinguistic Approach.” In: *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*. (tome 73, fasc. 3, 1995). 693.

²⁴ David Crystal. “Whatever happened to theolinguistics?” In: Paul Chilton & Monika Kopytowska (eds): *Religious language, metaphor and the mind*. (New York. OUP, 2017). 9.

²⁵ Jean-Pierre van Noppen. *Developing Pragmastylistic Competence*. (Brussels:Presses Universitaires de Bruxelles, 1995). 212.

In the debate about religious discourse and language, religious statements are often regarded as hermeneutic fictionalism. Various approaches have been put forward to find a connection between hermeneutics, religion, reality and fiction. This fictionalism results in religious utterances that can be taken at their face value but when uttered these sentences, speakers do not always assert the truth of them.²⁶ This means that their truth value may be questioned. Using religious language, speakers can address something which is not considered literal truth by everyone else. For example, spiritual miracles can be presented as empirical truths; however, they can be also perceived as fictional because they cannot be understood by natural human logic.

One of the important features found in religious discourse is metaphor. It is not only a poetic and stylistic device, but also has a significant role indispensable in the religious tradition.²⁷ Religious language, and especially Christian one is based in metaphors. It is most readily observed in the communication between religious leaders and general public or in sacred books. The vision of the usage of metaphors originates in the Bible and other religious books. There are many scholars who claim that Biblical language should be perceived metaphorically. This means that the Bible was written in different metaphors and mainly in parables.

Language is an essential aspect of human life and a crucial element in the power of religion, too. Religion has not only its own specific code, but it also intensively influences the language that is used outside religious discourse. For instance, biblical expressions used in various domains are such as:

The sweat of one's brow; eye for eye; to be one's brother's keeper; Sodom and Gomorrah; to see the writing on the wall; to harden one's heart; to cast pearls before swine; the salt of the earth; the light of the world; separate the chaff from the wheat; weeping and gnashing of teeth; the prodigal son; a faithful servant; to have received a

²⁶ Michael Scott. *Religious language*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). 157.

²⁷ Slawomir Sztajer. *How Is Religious Discourse Possible? The Constitutive Role of Metaphors in Religious Discourse*. (Lingua ac Communitas, 2011). 49.

talent; heaven and earth shall pass away; our daily bread; a whitewashed sepulchre; the good shepherd; a lost sheep; a wolf in sheep's clothing; the lilies of the field; the judgment seat; man shall not live by bread alone; to every thing there is a season, king of kings...²⁸

Religion has always had an immense power over people's minds and worldviews. For instance, believers are manipulated by religious institutions by means of their language. This can be truth in a bad as well as good sense. More specifically, believers might be affected by religious fundamentalists on the one hand, while on the other hand they can be instructed by the religious language of the religious leaders. Moreover, nonbelievers are often affected by the Biblical language spread into different social domains.

Religious language has its discursive strategies such as metaphors, stories and parables that facilitate the process of social dominance of the Church and ideological maintenance of religious beliefs. Language acts as "an instrument to produce behavior policy, provoke psychological interest and evocate power, not to produce a sudden illumination or disclosure."²⁹ Language of religion and its power can be perceived in various ways, depending on how it is analyzed. This type of language looks for truth through factual evidence that reaches far beyond imagination. Religious language does not serve as a pattern or an instruction for life but it helps believers find their own attitudes towards religion and its teaching.

2.3. Religion and sociolinguistics

Religion, as well as language, can be studied through diverse perspectives, and one of them is its relation to society, as in sociolinguistics, "a branch of linguistics which studies all

²⁸ Jean-Pierre van Noppen. *Developing Pragmastylistic Competence*. (Brussels:Presses Universitaires de Bruxelles, 1995). 208.

²⁹ Ali Rahimi, Navvab Hematiyan. *Language and Religion; Linguistic Religion or Religious Language*. (Bangkok: Bangkok University, 2015). 8.

aspects of the relationship between language and society.”³⁰ Sociolinguistics reveals the language’s powers acquired by different social issues.

Language correlates with social meanings, and the society affects the language use. Sociolinguistics shows language and religion as anthropological constants in the evolution of mankind. This relationship can be recognized from previous centuries when language was considered divine.³¹ Language has always had an important role in society as evident in religious traditions developed in history. It is also evident that today’s society has been shaped by religion and language used by religious representatives.

The society and worldview are often influenced by religion, and so are religious institutions and leaders who are well versed in politics, culture or social media. If willing to respect nonreligious attitudes as well, they can have an enormous impact on general public. From the point of view of sociolinguistics, one needs to examine the relationship of speakers and audiences whether it is a part of religious relationships or not.

Sociolinguistics and religion are also associated with social equality, because it depends on how religious language is used whether believers are regarded as equal society or not. For example, *The Equality and Human Rights Commission* came with a report saying that there are some misunderstandings about the laws protecting freedom of belief.³² It is important to understand religious language because, otherwise, it can cause many fault ideas about believers. As reported in the research, Christians were afraid of losing their place in society because they were mocked as being bigots.³³ Therefore, religious sociolinguists may

³⁰ David Crystal. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Sixth edition. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008). 440.

³¹ Jeroen Darquennes, Wim Vandenbussche. *Sociolinguistica: International Yearbook of European Sociolinguistics*. (Vol. 25. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011). 5.

³² Caroline Wyatt. “Christians fear their religion is losing its place in society.” (BBC News. *BBC*, March 12 2015. Web. 29 July 2017).

³³ *Ibid.*

consider working on better interaction between believers and nonbelievers and, hence, between religious and nonreligious language used within one society.

In the sociolinguistics of religion, we can differentiate between linguistic and metalinguistic, or primary and secondary levels of religious language. The first one is language in use in the experiential world of the individual and the second one can be defined as language about this existential language.³⁴ Language in society can be examined through its individual, as well as, communal usage. For instance, the language of worship can be called linguistic or primary and a particular study about this kind of language is secondary or metalinguistic religious language.³⁵ Of course, one can study the impact of worship on society and society's impact on individual worship and prayer. In today's society, worship can be also a part of the language outside the structured religion. This means that there are people who consider worshipping as an essential part of their lives; however, they do not profess any religion.

3. RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Having defined what is meant by religious language, I will now move on to discuss the concept of religion and leadership. Monotheistic religions are based on belief in a single entity and require certain hierarchy of members within religious institutions, particularly in Christianity and Catholicism, which is lead by one pope, cardinals, bishops, ordinaries, vicars, and priests. However, Christians have a material authority, which is even more important than the Pope himself, i.e. the Bible.³⁶ A very common phenomenon is that religious leaders become motivational leaders for nonbelievers and also that believers do not need any religious leaders.

³⁴ Ron Holt. "A Socio-Linguistic Approach to Religious Language." In: *Australian eJournal of Theology*. (Vol. 6. 2006. Web. 29 July 2017) 4.

³⁵ Ibid. 4.

³⁶ Michael Walsh. *Roman Catholicism*. 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016). 40.

Religious leadership and authority play important roles also in interconnecting religions. Pedro Barrajon emphasizes the importance of leadership and claims, “the leaders of the world religions have a special mission in working together toward important world issues: peace, justice, brotherhood and ecology.”³⁷ Even though the religious communities need to work together to make their beliefs reasonable, they also need individual authorities to lead them. The religious leaders should deal not only with spiritual world, but also with daily problems in politics, culture, media or even ecology. Rather than transforming their religious language, they have to learn how to use it elsewhere so that it can be understood.

Pope Francis, whose communication is the next focus of this thesis, talks about leadership and emphasizes that all religious leaders have their calling. He calls it a key initial discernment or right intention. This means that leaders should not have bad intentions that tend to end up as motivations turning into fanaticism. Also, they should not use their power for entertainment and business.³⁸ He also describes the negatives of leadership and claims that, “the bad leader is the one who is self-assured, and stubborn. One of the characteristics of a bad leader is to be excessively normative because of his self- assurance.”³⁹ Therefore, the leaders should be open to their followers and know how to use special devices of their language. According to the Pope, “to be a leader demands thoughtfulness, training and experience.”⁴⁰ In terms of international communities, Pope Francis is one of the most significant leaders for the society of the 21st century. Pope Francis’ life, attitudes and language is described in sections 3.1 and the empirical part.

³⁷ Pedro Barrajon. “Religions and Leadership.” *Integral Leadership Review*. (January 2013. Web. 29 July 2017).

³⁸ Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorpa. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 29.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 52.

⁴⁰ Pope Francis. “(Re)Thinking Europe Conference.” *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 16 Noveber 2017).

3.1. Pope Francis

The word ‘pope’ comes from a Greek *pappas* which means father.⁴¹ But what does it mean to be a good father of the Church? To be a pope means to have a large responsibility. Pope Francis says that the role of priest in Catholicism is to be a “teacher, guide of the people of God and president of the liturgical assembly.”⁴² However, Pope Francis is not only the priest, but also the representative of the whole Church. The Pope leads more than a billion Christians and is also the bishop of Rome and the head of state of Vatican City. The Pope should also nominate cardinals around the whole world and the spiritual tone, roles and visions for the church.⁴³ Since development of the Church is among highly discussed topics in the world media, it is crucial to analyze Pope Francis and his attitudes.

Jorge Mario Bergoglio is the first Latin American pope. He was born in Buenos Aires where he served as the city’s archbishop and as the cardinal from Argentina before he became the pope. He became the pope of the largest Christian Church in the time when the Church had the problems with scandals associated with corruption, same-sex marriage, women’s role in the Church and sex abuse cases. Pope Francis came as a hope to solve these problems.⁴⁴ Francis sometimes criticizes the Church “for putting dogma before love, and for prioritizing moral doctrines over serving the poor and marginalized. He articulated his vision of an inclusive church, a “home for all.””⁴⁵ The philosophy of Pope Francis seems to be based on communicating good in different social domains.

⁴¹ Michael Walsh. *Roman Catholicism*. 2nd edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016). 59.

⁴² Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skoraka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 69.

⁴³ Amanda Lanser. *Pope Francis: Spiritual Leader and Voice of the Poor*. (Minnesota: ABDO, 2014). 9.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 8-15.

⁴⁵ N. n. “8 Ways Pope Francis Is Changing the Direction of the Catholic Church.” *The New York Times*. (6 July 2015. Web. 16 November 2017).

Bergoglio became the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church and took the name Francis after St. Francis of Assisi.⁴⁶ Pope Francis is the first non-European pope since Syrian pope Gregory III ended to reign in 741 CE. He is also the first pope from the order of Jesuits, a religious order focusing on education and social justice.⁴⁷ In recent times, Pope Francis has been in position for more than four years and became one of the most influential persons of the 21st century.

One of the milestones that influenced the life of Pope Francis is his membership in the Jesuit order. Jesuits or Society of Jesus is a Roman Catholic order of male priests and other clergymen. It is the largest Catholic order in the world and was founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola. As mentioned above, Jesuits focus on education and another Jesuits' task is to bring spirituality into the world through emphasizing peace, global justice and dialogue. Nowadays, Jesuits work on *Jesuit Refugee Service*, *Vatican Observatory*, *Pontifical Gregorian University*, and *Pontifical Oriental Institutes*.⁴⁸ Jesuits still teach the values which are typical for the values of Pope Francis.

Francis joined the order of Jesuits in 1958 and it was four years before the Second Vatican Council, the Church reformation. Catholic life started to be modernized and the liberalization had the form of the introduction of modern languages in worship, interreligious dialogue and religious freedom. Jesuits helped Pope Francis progress in studying languages, basic human sciences geared toward ministry and liberal arts.⁴⁹ Pope Francis' Jesuit past is evident in many of his speeches, sermons and any other communication with the public.

⁴⁶ Grace Hansen. *Pope Francis: Religious Leader*. (Minnesota: ABDO, 2015). 22.

⁴⁷ Amanda Lanser. *Pope Francis: Spiritual Leader and Voice of the Poor*. (Minnesota: ABDO, 2014). 8.

⁴⁸ N. n. "The Jesuits." *Jesuits*. (N. d. Web. 22 January 2018).

⁴⁹ John L. Allen Jr. *The Francis Miracle. Inside the Transformation of the Pope and the Church*. (New York: TIME Books, 2015). 8.

3.1.1. Pope Francis' rhetoric

The study of rhetoric reveals a lot about one's intentions and goals achieved through language. One of the first persons who introduced the term rhetoric was Socrates. In his work *Gorgias*, Socrates pointed out that rhetoric represents talent and art resulting in persuading people by telling them what they want to hear.⁵⁰ Rhetoric is the study of one's speeches that may serve, for example, as motivation for the listeners. Therefore, it is crucial to examine Pope Francis' rhetoric to find out his communicational strategies. Pope Francis tells people what they want to hear, however, he does not try to persuade them but rather to offer them a free choice. The rhetoric of Pope Francis is not tendentious but motivational, inspiring and personal.

Pope Francis is undoubtedly aware of the power of language. This pope is well educated and he even came in contact with the study of language. During his preparations for the priesthood, he used to be a teacher at university where he taught several subjects and especially religion and literature.⁵¹ This time was undoubtedly one of the experiences that made Pope Francis learn how to communicate with his audience. Since then, Francis' audience increased from small classes to big crowds consisting of people of different ages, nationalities and beliefs.

When Francis became the Pope, his first words were:

You all know that the duty of the conclave was to appoint a bishop to Rome. It seems to me that my brother cardinals have come almost to the ends of the Earth to get him, but here we are. . . . First of all, I would say a prayer: pray for our Bishop Emeritus Benedict XVI.⁵²

Even the first Francis' words introduced a person with a particular gift of language and speech, who spontaneously and metaphorically expressed his feelings of being the pope. This

⁵⁰ Seth Paskin, et al. "Socrates' Attack on Rhetoric in the "Gorgias."" *The Partially Examined Life Philosophy Podcast*. (11 June 2015. Web. 16 November 2017).

⁵¹ Kris Woll. *Pope Francis: Catholic Spiritual Leader*. (Minnesota: Abdo, 2015). 13.

⁵² Amanda Lanser. *Pope Francis: Spiritual Leader and Voice of the Poor*. (Minnesota: ABDO, 2014). 13.

statement became the beginning of his journey – the journey of words changing the society of the 21st century.

According to Zuzana Vandáková, managing editor of the prestigious Slovak Christian newspaper *Cesta +*, people who regularly read the posts of Holy Fathers, know which ones belong to whom. She states that it was enough to look at John Paul II. and to listen to Benedict XVI for one to know who is who. Benedict's rhetoric is brilliant, however to an extent that many people do not understand him. John Paul II. wrote publications which are generally of different quality and are less demanding, but definitely based it in his sense of humanity. Pope Francis is a combination of the two Holy Fathers. He is charismatic and knows how to write and speak to be close to people. It is interesting that he often uses a three-point system or parallelism. People who follow him start to realize that and it is becoming very memorable. Also, he uses his experiences and stories from his praxis. He is a 'practical theologian.' On the other hand, John Paul II. was the theologian of body and Benedict XVI. is a theologian – philosopher. It is important here that different categories of people are able to listen to Pope Francis largely because of his unique language, which he can bring closer to his followers. There is also one important element, which differentiates Francis' language from the language of the other two popes. It is his 'contact expressions.' He markedly reacts to people and to the crowds. He is able to communicate with them and ask them questions, especially when speaking to young people, but also during the general audiences. He wants to hear the people's reactions and wants them to stay concentrated. This is the characteristic feature of his rhetoric.⁵³ One of the most significant elements of the theoretical approach toward Pope Francis' rhetoric is that his language is not only about the words but also about specific actions that interconnect him, his audience and God.

⁵³ Zuzana Vandáková. Interview by Andrej Bartík. (Unpublished manuscript. Zvolen, 4 July 2017).

The rhetoric of Pope Francis can be undoubtedly studied through the communication accommodation theory. This theory is recognized in mutual interaction of people who “adjust their speech, their vocal patterns and their gestures, to accommodate to others.”⁵⁴ This phenomenon can be applied to the language of Pope Francis, because he uses his linguistic religious devices when communicating with his audience. In such situations, Pope Francis changes his language into the communal language to make his statements instructive for believers and nonbelievers. Pope Francis’ accommodative communication causes convergence crucial in the relationship of him and his audience.

The language of Pope Francis is unique because of his frequent use of the Biblical references, and also the Biblical parables and similes. This is the feature of Christian language which might have the form of an individual interpretation: to interpret the Bible through one’s own words. Pope Francis uses not only the Biblical quotations but also applies the parables and similes to different issues he discusses. He also elaborates new parables through which he communicates with the public.

Pope Francis is an extraordinary speaker and his language is rich and influential, which will be further analyzed in the empirical part of this thesis where I focus on Pope Francis’ word choices, strategies, tools, topics, linguistic devices and other phenomena typical of his way of approaching other people.

⁵⁴ Lynn H. Turner and Richard West. *Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application* (4th ed.). (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2000). 405.

II. EMPIRICAL PART

4. POPE FRANCIS' RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The previous pages introduced the problem of religious language and provided a short insight into the life of the current pope. The analysis of Pope Francis' sermons, online communication, different publications and interviews, is going to show the attributes of Pope Francis' language and communication with the public.

Pope Francis' language is a very important element of the spiritual development of many Christians and also people of other or no beliefs. His religious language becomes the tool for changing the minds of believers and nonbelievers. Just like St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis is not separated from the people; rather he wants to be close to them. "Francis is more than a name – it is a plan for a poor Church, one that is close to the people, gospel-centered."⁵⁵ Francis' language consists of the gospel presented to the public in a modern and revolutionary way.

When studying Francis' public communication, one might ask if this pope prepares and writes everything himself. In answering to this question, it is important to differentiate between official writings and verbal speeches of Pope Francis. When writing official letters or publications, Pope Francis has, of course, his team which helps him develop and translate his ideas. However, when talking to crowds, Francis usually does not need any help with his speeches. Peter Wells, the official at the Secretariat of State says that "Pope Francis clearly knows how to communicate and his effectiveness comes from his authenticity."⁵⁶ The communication coming from his own mind is crucial for his role of being a pope. According

⁵⁵ Leonardo Boff. In Adrienne E. Hacker Daniels. *Communication and the Global Landscape of Faith*. (London: Lexington Books, 2016). 140.

⁵⁶ Carol Glatz. "Decoding Francis: Vatican media adviser offers "10 things to know."" *CNS*. (October 2013. Web. 10 January 2018).

to Rev. Manuel Dorantes, the assistant to the Vatican's spokesman, "The Holy Father likes to have a direct control over the message he gives."⁵⁷ Vandáková too claims that Pope Francis' speeches are unique because of his spontaneity. Of course, general audiences must follow certain rules; however, young people require certain contact when listening to the Pope; therefore, it is necessary for him to speak spontaneously. It is even unacceptable to "only read from the paper" because it might ruin the relationship between young people and Pope Francis.⁵⁸ This can be also seen in his *TED* talk on the topic called *Future You*. When speaking, Francis has a paper in front of him but does not look at it at all.

The role of Pope Francis in the Christian world is to represent the Church. Therefore, he is regularly required to speak with the public. Most of his speeches follow a typical pattern consisting of introduction, core and conclusion. Pope Francis usually starts with greeting people who are present as well as those who watch his speeches online or read them in the press. Pope Francis often tries to introduce what he is about to say or write and then he provides some details of the introduced items in the next paragraphs.⁵⁹ When Pope Francis is invited somewhere he never forgets to thank the people who invited him.

The feature that appears in almost every Francis' speech is his requesting people to pray for him. For example, he asked the people who were listening to him: "Please, think of me as well with tenderness, so that I can fulfill the task I have been given for the good of the other, of each and every one, of all of you, of all of us."⁶⁰ This does not mean that Pope Francis is egocentric and wants his audience to think of him but rather that he needs a spiritual support so he can be a good representative of the Church.

⁵⁷ Bart Jones. "Spokesman: Pope Writes His Own Speeches." *Newsday*. 6 March 2016. Web. 9 November 2017).

⁵⁸ Zuzana Vandáková. Interview by Andrej Bartík. (Unpublished manuscript. Zvolen, 4 July 2017).

⁵⁹ Carmine Gallo. *The Storyteller's Secret: From TED Speakers to Business Legends, Why Some Ideas Catch On and Others Don't*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016). 116.

⁶⁰ Pope Francis. "Why the only future worth building includes everyone." *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

Pope Francis uses his religious language to teach his followers how to communicate. For instance, he said: “I would like, then, to contribute to the search for an open and creative style of communication that never seeks to glamourize evil but instead to concentrate on solutions and to inspire a positive and responsible approach on the part of its recipients.”⁶¹ Francis knows that language and communication are crucial in the development of one’s faith. To help develop others’ religious language, one needs to understand that language. Pope Francis said that “if we wish to adapt to people’s language and to reach them with God’s word, we need to share in their lives and pay loving attention to them.”⁶² Francis is not only the person who represents the Church by speaking about it but he is also someone who needs to have a direct contact with believers and nonbelievers. He also knows that communication is the core of humanity and essential for solving problems. When discussing communication, Pope Francis says: “I encourage everyone to engage in constructive forms of communication that reject prejudice towards others and foster hope and trust today.”⁶³ Francis believes that communication is crucial in relations based in equality and interpersonal respect.

One of the issues studied in this thesis is the concept of religious language and it is questionable how meaningful this language may be. In other words, religious language includes many terms that do not have the same value for believers and for nonbelievers. It is also Pope Francis’ task to make his statements with a religious content meaningful enough. According to Wendell Johnson, American psychologist who dealt with general semantics,

[t]he crucial point to be considered in a study of language behaviour is the relationship between language and reality, between words and not words. Except as we understand this relationship, we run the grave risk of straining the

⁶¹ Pope Francis. “Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 51st World Communications Day.” *The Holy See*. (24 January 2017. Web. 16 November 2017).

⁶² Pope Francis. “Evangelii Gaudium.” Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis. *La Santa Sede*. (24 November 2013. Web. 10 January 2018).

⁶³ Pope Francis (pontifex). 28 May 2017, 4:30 AM. Tweet.

delicate connection between words and facts, of permitting our words to go wild, and so of creating for ourselves fabrications of fantasy and delusion.⁶⁴

To put it another way, language has the potential of creating a new reality for us. Not only our actions but also our utterances make us live differently. If we let ourselves speak uncontrollably, it may cause unjustified representations. This is especially true in religious communities since their members not always work with facts but rather with individual assumptions and beliefs.

Pope Francis is undoubtedly the speaker who controls his language usage, and uses it to break the boundaries between words and not words. This means that he tries to communicate the reality which, Christians believe, should be an essential part of every person. He does that in different ways and, for example, he asks young people to prove the goodness of God with the help of their words and actions. One example of this can be found in one Francis' homily. The homily about Christians and their joyfulness describes believers as people who should show the world God's forgiveness. He asks the people: "If you have the face of one at a wake, how can [Christians] believe that you are redeemed?"⁶⁵ Francis highlights the fact that words do not have a general value and meaning for every person. In this case God's forgiveness is a fictional term which Francis tries to make real.

When Pope Francis communicates with the public, he is careful about what words he utters. For instance, when he was traveling from Asia, Francis met a group of journalists in the plane to explain the words he used in his speeches. He was talking about the absolute non-acceptance of nuclear weapons and about why in his speech in Myanmar he did not mention the term Rohingya saying that "public denunciation would have slammed the door in the face

⁶⁴ Sue Bastian et al. *Theory of Knowledge: Lessons from Around the World*. (Geneva: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2000). Lesson 7, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Pope Francis. "Pope at Casa Santa Marta: Christians should be joyful." *Vatican News*. (21 December 2017. Web. 7 January 2018).

of his hosts and prevented his message from being heard.”⁶⁶ Rohingya is the ethnic group consisting mostly of Muslims persecuted in Myanmar. Francis tried to at least contribute to the solution of this problem with his speech; therefore, he did not mention Rohingya at all. Pope Francis could also have used some euphemisms, but he rather considered silence to be a better device for keeping a good relationship with this country. This can be regarded as Francis’ rhetorical strategy. Pope Francis also often omits the word ‘Muslim’ when talking about terrorism. This means that he does not want to associate terrorism only with Muslims because he tries to respect every religion.

The concept of silence within the language of Pope Francis is not only about omitting particular words. Pope Francis considers silence as a very effective instrument of language used not only in prayers. “Silence is not reduced to the absence of words, but rather to be willing to listen to other voices. [...] Silence helps us to gather ourselves [and] without this silence, we risk neglecting the recollection of the soul.”⁶⁷ Francis sees the silence as something that is helpful for proper selection of words and phrases. It is the internal language crucial for the development of the external one.

4.1. Rhetorical devices

This study makes a contribution to research on religious language by analyzing Pope Francis’ rhetoric. As mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, Pope Francis has a unique rhetoric and style characteristic by inspirational and motivational content. He is quite unconventional speaker who uses his rhetoric to affect his followers.

The usage of rhetorical devices is common in religious language. According to William Downes, the changes in preferred metaphors and notations are always a theoretical

⁶⁶ Vincenzo Pinto. “Pope Francis defends public silence over plight of Rohingya refugees.” *Los Angeles Times*. (2 December 2017. Web. 8 January 2018).

⁶⁷ Pope Francis. “General Audience.” *La Santa Sede*. (10 January 2018. Web. 10 January 2018).

possibility and “Christian religious language like that of any other religious tradition, is a mobile thing, responsive to the needs and perceptions of religious adherents.”⁶⁸ This means that although religious language includes metaphors and other rhetorical devices, it has to be natural in the communication with believers. This is true also for Pope Francis who communicates with the public depending on actual needs and conditions. Even if he has some prepared notes, he always speaks naturally and changes his speeches according to given situations.

When communicating with the public, Pope Francis sometimes invents new words. For example *misericordiare*, which means mercying, and *rapidacion* which has a meaning of rapidization.⁶⁹ He also created some words whose meaning cannot be guessed so easily. For instance, *stralimitata* which means beyond all limits.⁷⁰ This creation of neologisms might be considered as a unique feature of his rhetoric.

It is important to point out that Pope Francis’ rhetorical strategies help him to affect his followers. One of these strategies is a direct address of his audience. Francis is often focused on individuals rather than people as a whole. This phenomenon can be seen in many of his speeches. For example, Pope Francis said that “a single individual is enough for hope to exist and that individual can be you.”⁷¹ He also repeatedly emphasizes that he wants to pray for each person he addresses.

⁶⁸ Janet Martin Soskice. *The Kindness of God: Metaphor, Gender, and Religious Language*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). 68.

⁶⁹ Massimo Faggioli. “The language of Pope Francis.” *La Croix International*. (17 August, 2015. Web. 11 January 2018).

⁷⁰ Jaime Fuller. “Pope Francis Forced to Invent New Word to Describe His Trip to New York.” *New York Mag*. (28 September 2015. Web. 11 January 2018).

⁷¹ Pope Francis. “Why the only future worth building includes everyone.” *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

4.1.1. Metaphors

Central to the entire discipline of religious language is the idea of metaphor. Almost every world leader uses plenty of metaphors in his or her speeches. However, not everyone has the same reasons for the usage of this rhetorical device. Metaphor is a figure of speech representing a word or phrase which is not said or written in its literal meaning but in a form of different figurative and poetic sense.

Pope Francis is a religious leader who explains why he uses his religious language and metaphors to communicate with other people. His religious language is based on Jesus' parables. He explains that "...this use of images and metaphors to convey the quiet power of the Kingdom does not detract from its importance and urgency; rather, it is a merciful way of making space for the listener to freely accept and appropriate that power."⁷² This means that also Pope Francis uses his uncommon religious language to offer his followers freedom. By all means, he wants to make his speeches accessible to believers and nonbelievers without any compulsion.

There is probably no speech of Pope Francis that would not contain metaphors. As an illustration, here are examples that show the character and forms of the most common Francis' metaphors:

Everything depends on the way we look at things, on the lens we use to view them;⁷³ Love, by its nature, is communication; communication has the power to build bridges;⁷⁴ the coin that was mislaid; open arms and hearts; long and challenging path; each one of us, is that little lost lamb; the flame of Christ's merciful love; a sign and an instrument of the Father's mercy;⁷⁵

⁷² Pope Francis. "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 51st World Communications Day." *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2017. Web. 16 November 2017).

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Pope Francis. "Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter." *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2016. Web. 18 November, 2017).

⁷⁵ Pope Francis. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the thirty-first World Youth Day 2016. In: Andrej Bartík. *Register, Style, and Code in Papal Language*. Unpublished manuscript. (Anglo-American University: Prague, 2017). 2.

It must be remembered that Pope Francis uses metaphors mostly when he wants to emphasize a phenomenon that cannot be regarded as real. His metaphors reflect his spiritual world which is described by human language.

Pope Francis also uses this rhetorical device to disagree with certain political or theological issues. A notable example is Francis' relation to the American politics. It is not surprising that Pope Francis does not agree with the politics of the American president Donald Trump. Trump's creation of the wall preventing immigrants to come to the US became the reason to talk about this act also from the religious perspective. Explicitly, Pope Francis said that people should not build the "walls but bridges."⁷⁶

The concept of metaphor covers an important area in linguistics. Pope Francis' language proves the thesis of two eminent linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life; not just in language but also in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. That is to say, metaphors are not only about the usage of language but also about the metaphorical way one sees the world and relates to other people. Lakoff and Johnson believe that communication is based in the same system of concepts that one uses in thinking and acting. According to them, metaphors are not just a matter of language and words but human thought is profoundly metaphorical.⁷⁷ When studying the language of Pope Francis, it is not difficult to notice that Pope Francis uses metaphors even if he did not prepare them beforehand. He uses them in interviews when he is supposed to react to different questions. Pope Francis lives in the metaphorical world of religion and the Bible and so one can assume that his thinking processes are highly metaphorical. These processes are reflected in Francis' religious language.

⁷⁶ Reuters Staff. "Don't build walls, Pope Francis says." *Reuters*. (8 February 2017. Web. 8 January 2018).

⁷⁷ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors we live by*. (London: The university of Chicago press, 2003). 4.

Lakoff and Johnson developed the idea of a conceptual metaphor which refers to the concepts that are metaphorically structured in a systematic way. Conceptual metaphor allows using expressions from one domain “to talk about corresponding concepts in the metaphorically defined domain.”⁷⁸ Pope Francis uses conceptual metaphors frequently, as in his first homily, when he said that “our life is a journey and when we stop, there is something wrong.”⁷⁹ The phrase ‘life is a journey’ is the conceptual metaphor representing Francis’ common words in the form of metaphorical language.

Lakoff and Johnson’s theory highlights the fact that one’s life is influenced by the metaphors we use. This can be true about Pope Francis and his communication with the public. Francis has been always affected by studies of the Bible full of metaphors and he applies its metaphors to his own speaking and teaching other people. Pope Francis, as well as other deep believers, lives in the metaphorical world. In other words, since believers live in the world they consider real, atheists consider the same world as a fiction and imagination. Metaphors are therefore crucial in the relationship between reality and belief, and not only in one’s inner world, but also in proving and communicating own beliefs to those who do not believe.

4.1.2. The rule of three

As discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis, the typical feature of Pope Francis’ public communication is a kind of parallelism called the rule of three. The examples below illustrate the character of this rule used in Pope Francis’ speeches:

Man is no longer simply a civis, a citizen endowed with privileges to be enjoyed at leisure; no longer a miles, a soldier serving the powers of the time; and above all, no

⁷⁸ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors we live by*. (London: The university of Chicago press, 2003). 52.

⁷⁹ Pope Francis. “1st homily.” *Radio Vaticana*. (14 March 2013. Web. 15 January 2018).

longer a servus, a commodity bereft of freedom and destined solely for hard labour;⁸⁰ ...It is threefold: teacher, guide of the people of God and president of the liturgical assembly;⁸¹ ...those in need of understanding, healing and forgiveness [...] wounded by selfishness, hatred and so much despair [...] love that is faithful, freely given and able to forgive [...] his time, his words and his capacity to listen.⁸²

This rule is something that gives Francis' speeches dynamics and makes the listeners and readers concentrate. This figure of speech contributes to the authenticity of his speeches.

The most likely cause of Pope Francis' usage of the rule of three is his education. Pope Francis learned about rhetoric in his studies and in the Jesuit training aimed at persuasive writing and speaking. In his first homily, Pope Francis summed up his faith in three points as journeying, building, and professing. He uses this technique in almost every speech or conversation. In one of his speeches, he said to the audience: "First of all, I will talk about three things: one, two, three, like old-timer Jesuits used to do, right? One, two, three!"⁸³ Pope Francis knows that he uses this rule and he even humorously speaks about it from the historical perspective. He often divides his whole messages into three points, three key words or three themes based on the deeply rooted spiritual and rhetorical tradition of Jesuits, i.e. the Ignatian discourse present in his messages.⁸⁴ One could also assume that Pope Francis finds the symbolism and connection between his three-part speeches and the Holy Trinity.

4.1.3. Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical question is a figure of speech in the form of question that is not asked to get the exact answer. As many other rhetorical devices, the origins of rhetorical questions can be

⁸⁰ Pope Francis. "(Re)Thinking Europe Conference." *Radio Vaticana*. (28 Oct. 2017. Web. 14 Nov. 2017).

⁸¹ Bergoglio, Jorge Mario and Abraham Skorka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (Transl. by Alejandro Bermudez and Howard Goodman. London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

⁸² Pope Francis. "Blessed are..." In: Andrej Bartík. *Register, Style, and Code in Papal Language*. Unpublished manuscript. (Anglo-American University: Prague, 2017). 2.

⁸³ Carmine Gallo. *The Storyteller's Secret: From TED Speakers to Business Legends, Why Some Ideas Catch On and Others Don't*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016). 116.

⁸⁴ Pope Francis. *Encountering Truth: Meeting God in the Everyday*. (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2015). 14.

found in the Bible. Perhaps, the most famous Jesus' questions are: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3); "Why are you afraid, have you no faith?" (Mark 4:40); "Do you love me?" (John 21:17). The language of Pope Francis is highly Biblical and his speeches contain many questions. He tries to answer these questions through the communication with the public. This is exemplified in many of his speeches:

What is our responsibility at a time when the face of Europe is increasingly distinguished by a plurality of cultures and religions, while for many people Christianity is regarded as a thing of the past, both alien and irrelevant?;⁸⁵
So how can we begin to "read" reality through the right lens?;⁸⁶
Do we really understand the power of these words?⁸⁷

Pope Francis truly believes in the power of words; he asks rhetorical questions to repeat and emphasize his ideas, and make the audience concentrate on particular teachings.

One of Francis' most famous questions that got quoted in different websites and magazines is: "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?"⁸⁸ This question is associated with the issue of LGBT community and same-sex marriage; the topic due to which Francis is hated by many priests and religious representatives. Spite this, attitudes of many nonbelievers towards religious institutions have changed. This question became the reason why so many nonbelievers started to listen to Pope Francis. This means that Francis used one rhetorical question to show a general idea that Church is respectful and does not judge.

Pope Francis' rhetoric combines diverse rhetorical devices. When Pope Francis asks his audience some questions, he often does that metaphorically. A notable example is Francis'

⁸⁵ Pope Francis. "(Re)Thinking Europe Conference." *Radio Vaticana*, (28 October 2017). Web. 15 November 2017).

⁸⁶ Pope Francis. "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 51st World Communications Day." *The Holy See*. (24 January 2017). Web. 16 November 2017).

⁸⁷ Pope Francis. "Blessed are..." In: Andrej Bartik. *Register, Style, and Code in Papal Language*. Unpublished manuscript. (Anglo-American University: Prague, 2017). 2.

⁸⁸ CNN Wire. "Top 10 most shocking comments from Pope Francis." *Fox 31*. (19 January 2015). Web. 11 January 2018).

address in which he was talking about the deeds of hope in people's lives. He asked: "...but how can we do that with all the evil we breathe every day?"⁸⁹ This statement is the combination of rhetorical question and metaphor which invites people to reduce the evil in the world.

4.1.4. Pope Francis' candidness

Having defined what is meant by Pope Francis' rhetorical devices, I will now move on to discuss the figures which Francis does not use. More specifically, euphemisms. The language of Pope Francis not only includes metaphors, and statements related to faith, hope and love, he also knows how to address diverse social and religious issues. Pope Francis' language is very direct and he is not afraid to express his thoughts even if they might seem inadequately religious to some people.

When talking about the Pope, one might assume that the papal religious language includes euphemisms and certain generalizations. However, religious language is not about the representation of religious content in the Biblical terminology. Religious language addresses different topics within spiritual context. This does not mean that religious language should be a tool to hide pejoratives or "linguistic negativity" but rather it should offer different religious perspectives for communicating nonreligious topics.

Pope Francis does not follow any rules that would shape his vocabulary and his speeches do not have to be pre-approved by political or religious doctrines of the Vatican. According to Greg Burke, media adviser to the Vatican, "Pope Francis is not a politically-correct pope [but he is] a loyal son of the Church."⁹⁰ There may be a disagreement about this statement. Pope Francis is polite, diplomatic and certainly politically correct; however, his

⁸⁹ Pope Francis. "Why the only future worth building includes everyone." *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

⁹⁰ Carol Glatz. "Decoding Francis: Vatican media adviser offers "10 things to know."" *CNS*. (22 October 2013. Web. 10 January 2018).

words are not always religiously correct. In December 2015, Pope Francis gave the Christmas address to the curia (the papal court at Vatican governed by the Catholic Church) and he accused its members of arrogance, spiritual Alzheimer's, hypocrisy, empty materialism, an addiction to gossip and backbiting and of a progressive spiritual emptiness.⁹¹ This example represents Francis' poetic language that does not come across as positive; Pope Francis spoke directly to emphasize his attitudes towards unfair practices in the Vatican.

The directness of Pope Francis could be considered as *parrhesia*. This term has been described by different philosophers but it got well known mostly due to Michel Foucault. This term is generally understood to mean a free speech without any manipulative or hidden discourse, i.e. an expression of what the speaker really believes. Pope Francis' parrhesiastic language is not a tool to influence minds but rather reveal them. His language and thoughts are so important that he cannot hide them.

On many occasions Pope Francis could have used euphemisms to cover up social problems but he decided to speak directly. During his apostolic journey he said that "our world is increasingly a place of violent conflict, hatred and brutal atrocities."⁹² He could have spoken in euphemisms; however, Pope Francis seems to be the first pope in history who is not afraid to use terms that are normally not in the religious terminology.

Some statements of Pope Francis appear unexpected or meant jokingly. For instance, the Pope met a couple of men who were trying to rob the Church and he said that, "...either I insult them and give them a kick where the sun doesn't shine or I play the fool."⁹³ Again, he did not use a formal or official statement that would sound religiously correct. Pope Francis is

⁹¹ Andrew Brown. "The war against Pope Francis." *The Guardian*. (27 October 2017. Web. 15 November 2017).

⁹² Pope Francis. "Visit to the joint session of the United States Congress." Address of the Holy Father. *La Santa Sede*. (24 September 2015. Web. 10 January 2018).

⁹³ CNN Wire. "Top 10 most shocking comments from Pope Francis." *Fox 31*. (19 January 2015. Web. 11 January 2018).

straightforward and it is a crucial element in his communication with the public. If he was not that clear, direct and outspoken, his audience would not believe in his words.

When the world experienced the shock of the attacks on *Charlie Hebdo*, Pope Francis addressed this topic several times. He said that it was unacceptable to kill in the name of God but also expressed his opinion that this magazine should have expected the attack since it was too provocative. According to Pope Francis, if his good friend “says a curse word against his mother, he can expect a punch. It’s normal. You cannot provoke. You cannot insult the faith of others. You cannot make fun of the faith of others.”⁹⁴ This is a part of his interreligious dialogue. Equality, that should be respected by all people regardless of their beliefs. According to Pope Francis, the lack of respect in the case of *Charlie Hebdo* caused the wave of hatred and tragedies.

Pope Francis addresses political situations and he expresses his disagreement with some people even if it sounds harsh or too strong. For instance, in one of the calvaries *Via Crucis*, he said: “Shame for the innocent blood shed daily by women, children, migrants and people persecuted because of the colour of their skin or their ethnic and social diversity or because of their faith in You.”⁹⁵ Even though Pope Francis talks about forgiving, he also names the evil he disagrees with.

4.2. Pope Francis’ actions and body language

Even though body language is not studied by sociolinguists, it is a part of communication. The features of Pope Francis’ body language are recognized in his meetings with people known in the media. His meetings with politicians, artists and different leaders

⁹⁴ Pope Francis. “Pope’s press conference on the flight from Sri Lanka to the Philippines.” *Radio Vaticana*. (15 January 2015. Web. 11 January 2018).

⁹⁵ Pope Francis. “Pope Francis: Remarks at Good Friday Via crucis.” *Radio Vaticana*. (15 April 2017. Web. 15 January 2018).

reflect the ways he communicates with general public, i.e. his face expressions reflect his attitudes he shows to his followers.

In my thesis I seek to prove that Pope Francis is aware of the power of language, including body language. When talking about the essence of confession, Francis said that “it is important to understand body language, not to ask things that are already evident from body language.”⁹⁶ He communicates with believers through confession and knows that body language is a crucial element of communication. Pope Francis knows that he needs to understand body language to help other people understand their faith.

One of Francis’ actions that have been discussed in different media is his face expressions in the meeting with Donald Trump and his family (see fig. 1). These two leaders often exchange their opinions through social media and it is obvious that they do not agree with each other. In this meeting, Pope Francis did not smile to express his disagreement with the politics of Donald Trump. He was polite but smiled only as necessary. This act has been also discussed by the supporters of Pope Francis who recognized it as a tool to communicate with the public.

Some critics compare body language of Donald Trump and Pope Francis. According to the American magazine *Forbes*, it is evident that in interaction with people, Pope Francis makes minimal moves and unlike Trump, has no need to crowd other people’s space. Francis makes people come to him. Pope Francis “slows time down, by speaking slowly and deliberately, slowing down the pace of the interaction, making others come to him and wait for him.”⁹⁷ Pope Francis is aware of his position but, unlike Trump, he never tries to be superior.

⁹⁶ Pope Francis. “Third Meditation: The Good Odour of Christ and the Light of His Mercy.” *La Santa Sede*. (2 June 2016. Web. 9 January 2018).

⁹⁷ Nick Morgan. “The Pope And Donald Trump: Contrasting The Body Language Of Two Powerful Men.” *Forbes*. (29 September 2015. Web. 9 January 2018).

Pope Francis is often filmed when he has an interview with journalists. He rarely looks at the cameras but rather at the people he is talking with,⁹⁸ to show his esteem and respect toward others. Pope Francis communicates with the public through the media and his behavior during interviews is very important. The body language of Pope Francis is as simple and informal as his communication. “We never see a formal pose, there is nothing artificial. There is no rigidity in his movements, which are not followed or guided by a master of ceremonies.”⁹⁹ Even though Francis’ body language is not the result of rules and patterns, one can discern what he communicates when silent.

One’s body language includes not only gestures or face expressions but also actions used without words. There are many actions through which Pope Francis communicates and which are not considered as a typical language usage. More specifically, Pope Francis presents to the world the idea of humility, love and mutual help between people and it is reflected in his unconventional actions. For example, he washes feet of immigrants, embraces and kisses the face of the man who suffers from neurofibromatosis, and rejects the Church’s poverty like expansive cars and houses. Pope Francis’ actions are his communication tools so he can show and convey his message to his audience. Some unconventional (and modern) actions of Pope Francis can be also recognized in his interaction with young people. For instance, he likes to take ‘selfies’ with them (see fig. 2-3). The modernity of this pope is seen in many unconventional ways of contact with young people. It is not only taking selfies but Pope Francis also has a rock album consisting of his speeches and accompanied by songs of different Italian singers called *Wake Up! Music Album with His Words and Prayers*.

⁹⁸ Bombard’s Body Language. “Body Language: Pope Francis.” Online video clip. *YouTube*. (YouTube, 19 January 2017. Web. 9 January 2018).

⁹⁹ Pope Francis. *Encountering Truth: Meeting God in the Everyday*. (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2015). 17.

4.3. Negative reactions to Pope Francis' language

To study Pope Francis and his language use is sometimes surprising, because the reactions towards his language are not always positive. Although his language might inspire many people, some persons, and especially believers, do not believe in the significance of Francis's words.

Pope Francis' language has often caused linguistic discrimination, i.e. judging Pope Francis according to his language usage. Whether he speaks too "religiously" or too "secularly" his language is not always accepted. Pope Francis does not hesitate about using religious terms when talking in nonreligious communities such as conferences about politics and ecology. As a matter of fact, he is not afraid to use highly direct, strong and sometimes negative terms in his sermons and spiritual speeches.

In his extensive article on *The War Against Pope Francis*, Andrew Brown writes about religious representatives who do not agree with the Pope's statements and overall public behavior. According to Brown, Francis has been attacked by conservatives fighting against his liberal opinions. It is a dispute between believers who believe that the Church should set the agenda for the world, and those who think that the world must set the agenda for the Church. One English priest said to Brown: "We can't wait for him to die. It's unprintable what we say in private. Whenever two priests meet, they talk about how awful Bergoglio is [...] he's like Caligula: if he had a horse, he'd make him cardinal."¹⁰⁰ What is more, one Archbishop from Kazakhstan claimed that the Pope's attitudes towards divorce and homosexuality had allowed "the smoke of Satan" to enter the Church.¹⁰¹ This negativity within Church requires Pope Francis' control over his language. This means that Pope Francis has to be aware of the impact he has on the public as well as on the Church and its

¹⁰⁰ Andrew Brown. "The war against Pope Francis." *The Guardian*. (27 October 2017. Web. 9 November 2017).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

representatives. Besides, this ‘hatred’ on the side of conservative priests and clerics seems to evoke an atmosphere of revolution and hunger for novelty in the Church which might be inspired by Pope Francis. This does not mean that this Pope fights against the traditional organization of the Church; rather he realizes the problems and looks for possible solutions. This “Church revolution” proposed by Pope Francis is happening through his communication with believers and also atheistic audience.

There are not many books that criticize the life or language of Pope Francis; however, the most recent one is *The Dictator Pope* written by anonymous author. This book describes Pope Francis as a member of Vatican mafia and includes quotes of Pope Francis related to politics and religion. The core of this work is Francis’ comparison to Juan Perón, an Argentine politician whose statements were highly ambiguous and not politically correct. According to the author of this book, the dominant symbol of Pope Francis and Curia is fear.¹⁰² So far, Pope Francis did not have a chance to comment on this book but there are blogs and online articles whose authors argue about the verity of historical and current facts mentioned in this book.

When atheists or people fighting for secular society disagree with Pope Francis and his words, it is quite understandable. However, there are still more believers and even clerics who oppose modernity of Pope Francis. One of the most controversial situations associated with the verbal and written attacks on Pope Francis is the letter *Correctio filialis de haeresibus propagates* - the filial correction on account of heretical propagations. It has the form of a petition made by more than 60 people who criticize the heresy of Pope Francis - teachers, priests, writers, philosophers and theologians who wrote to Pope Francis:

¹⁰² Dan Hitchens. “‘The Dictator Pope’: a mixture of hearsay and insight.” *Catholic Herald*. (12 December, 2017. Web. 8 January, 2018).

we are compelled to address a correction to Your Holiness on account of the propagation of heresies effected by the apostolic exhortation *Amoris laetitia* and by other words, deeds and omissions of Your Holiness.¹⁰³

They strictly reject Francis' words which lead to nonreligious actions. More specifically, the authors of this letter criticize Pope Francis' beliefs in Christian remarriage of divorced people, their reception of the Eucharist and sexual relationships outside a marriage. They also criticize Francis' statements about his sympathy toward the protestant reformer Martin Luther.

5. PUBLIC SPEECHES, SERMONS AND AUDIENCES: MAIN TOPICS AND TOOLS THROUGH WHICH POPE FRANCIS COMMUNICATES

5.1. Language and communication

When studying Pope Francis' language use, it is not enough to scrutinize his speeches. It is also important to examine his attitudes towards language as such. Pope Francis mentions the importance of language often in his public speeches. Investigating Francis' opinions is an ongoing concern within the study of religious language.

Pope Francis knows that language and communication are fundamental properties of different domains. He also knows that it is not possible to profess any belief without language. He says that, "Christian faith is expressed with three things: words, the heart, and the hands."¹⁰⁴ This statement, in the form of Francis' favorite rule of three, summarizes the Christian belief. According to Pope Francis, believers need to speak about their faith and take action to develop it.

It is Pope Francis' "job" to communicate with the public. He uses different methods to influence especially young people and one of these methods is to show them the importance

¹⁰³ Gerard J. M. van den Aardweg. "Correctio filialis de haeresibus propagatis." *Correctio Filialis*. (16 July 2017. Web. 15 January 2018).

¹⁰⁴ Katie Forster. "Pope Francis: There is 'no point' going to church if you don't really believe in it." *The Independent*. (16 January 2017. Web. 16 January 2018).

of communication itself. A useful example is the Pope's idea that we should change our focus first, to differentiate between right and wrong ways of communication. Pope Francis uses his religious language to describe the differences between good and evil which can be applied to the media and communication:

I am convinced that we have to break the vicious circle of anxiety and stem the spiral of fear resulting from a constant focus on "bad news" (wars, terrorism, scandals and all sorts of human failure). [...] Moreover, in a communications industry which thinks that good news does not sell, and where the tragedy of human suffering and the mystery of evil easily turn into entertainment, there is always the temptation that our consciences can be dulled or slip into pessimism.¹⁰⁵

This means that Pope Francis emphasizes the value of communication and applies it to the media and its power of control over people's minds. Francis also claims that we should not forget to emphasize a better side of the world we live in.

Pope Francis certainly realizes the power of language and often describes it as something that is necessary for the right development of humanity. He says that our words and actions should help us escape all evil in ourselves. He emphasizes the religious language when he says that "the words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication."¹⁰⁶ This is the power of religious language emphasized by Pope Francis. Believers are responsible for communicating good in the world, whether it has a religious origin or not. In their communication, Christians have to be always polite and faithful. This is Francis' view of the Christian communication.

When explaining the importance of religious language, Pope Francis talks about its meaningfulness. He claims that religious language can be meaningful and has an enduring power to open new horizons. Pope Francis tries to be empathetic and understand that some

¹⁰⁵ Pope Francis. "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 51st World Communications Day." *The Holy See*. (24 January 2017. Web. 16 November 2017).

¹⁰⁶ Pope Francis. "Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter." *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2016. Web. 18 November, 2017).

religious statements, writings and ethical principles can be dismissed because they arose in the context of religious beliefs. However, Pope Francis emphasizes that ethical principles found in religious language are not only abstract forms detached from context. Although ethical principles are couched in religious language, they are valuable in a public debate: “The ethical principles capable of being apprehended by reason can always reappear in different guise and find expression in a variety of languages, including religious language.”¹⁰⁷ To put it another way, Pope Francis says that religious language is not only about our intuitions, emotions and instincts, but also about rational thinking necessary for our understanding of the world.

Pope Francis describes not only form and essence of religious language, but also its purpose. He claims that religious language and communication should not aim to be superior and dividing people. Rather, the religious way of communication should stand for equality among people.¹⁰⁸ The implication is that religious language should not just provide an alternative expression but rather bring about new perspectives and approaches that should help to communicate and think critically about different topics. Religious perspectives do not aim to replace “nonreligious” ones; they may suggest novel terms enabling an unprecedented discussion of an issue.

The speeches of Pope Francis often point out to the qualities of religious language. One of these qualities is rejection of phrases that might sound haughtily or negatively change the behavior of people who do not use religious language. For instance, the Pope said that “harsh and moralistic words and actions risk further alienating those whom we wish to lead to

¹⁰⁷ Jorge Mario Bergoglio. *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si: Care for our Common Home*. (Vatican: Vatican Press, 2015). 145.

¹⁰⁸ Pope Francis. “Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter.” *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2016. Web. 18 November, 2017).

conversion and freedom, reinforcing their sense of rejection and defensiveness.”¹⁰⁹ This means that religious language should be also available for nonbelievers. When considering the language of spirituality and religion, one should not use his religious language to compel other people to believe; rather, religious language should offer the idea of freedom and free will.

One of the forms of religious language, especially for Pope Francis, is prayer. Prayer is Pope Francis’ communication with supernaturality which can be rarely perceived by logical and rational thinking. Pope Francis often prays publically in different ways. One of the most famous prayers of all Christian times is *Our Father*. At this time, at the end of the year 2017 and at the beginning of 2018, Pope Francis claims that this prayer should change its form. He is aware of the fact that translations might not always be correct as it happened in this case. The original Aramaic version of *Our Father* had been translated into Greek and Latin. This translated version contains the statement “leads us not to the temptation” in all languages around the world except French. According to the Pope, it is not a good translation, because God does not cause any evil. He speaks about the power of particular words, because this, at first sight, simple statement seriously changes the essence of the prayer. Pope Francis sees devil as someone who leads to the temptation. Therefore, Pope Francis would like to change it into “do not let us fall into temptation” because we should be responsible for our sins in a way.¹¹⁰ Pope Francis knows that the terms matter and it is so also in his prayers. More about the concept of prayer will be examined in the analysis of Pope Francis’ online communication.

¹⁰⁹ Pope Francis. “Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter.” *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2016. Web. 21 November, 2017).

¹¹⁰ Lydia Smith. “Pope Francis calls for Lord’s Prayer to be changed as it implies God ‘induces temptation.’” *The Independent*. (14 December 2016. Web. 8 December 2017).

5.1.1. The concept of dialogue

The fact that ‘dialogue’ is a key word in Francis’ phrases is the evidence of the power of language Francis undoubtedly believes in. ‘Dialogue’ is one of the most frequently used terms in Pope Francis’ speeches and this concept becomes the *logos* behind his arguments. He bases his philosophy on the importance of dialogue and communication in interpersonal relations.

In the conference dealing with the European situation, Pope Francis mentioned dialogue as an important aspect of negotiation: “Today the whole of Europe [...] cannot miss the chance to be first and foremost a place of candid and constructive dialogue.”¹¹¹ He often offers some solutions to political issues and believes that everything needs to start with a dialogue. In his *TED* talk, Pope Francis said that “while looking at tomorrow it invites us to open a dialogue today.”¹¹² To that end, Pope Francis pointed out to the importance of considering the future as intensely as we consider the present. It does not mean that we should plan every action; rather one should assume what is about to happen in the future and communicate it ahead. The dialogue should help us confront problems that might appear in different personal areas.

Francis talks about dialogue also in the domain of interreligious relationships. At the beginning of his papacy, he said:

It is not possible to establish true links with God, while ignoring other people. Hence it is important to intensify dialogue among the various religions, and I am thinking particularly of dialogue with Islam.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Pope Francis. “(Re)Thinking Europe Conference.” *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 14 November 2017).

¹¹² Pope Francis. “Why the only future worth building includes everyone.” *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

¹¹³ Pope Francis. “Pope to Muslims for end of Ramadan: Promoting Mutual Respect through Education.” *Radio Vaticana*. (2 August 2013. Web. 15 January 2018).

Pope Francis' communication with the public takes the form of a dialogue, i.e. he shows his followers how to communicate by means of a dialogue, for example, among different religions. This notion develops the dialogue between Pope Francis and the audience.

The notion of dialogue is the feature characteristic of the religious language of Pope Francis. These are Francis' well-known quotations and ideas based on this concept:

We must have a dialogue. This dialogue between the past and the future is important. Because of this I underline so much the relationship between the youth and grandparents.

Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths to dialogue and not by constructing new walls!

How important it is to have intergenerational exchanges and dialogues, especially within the context of the family.

It is neither a culture of confrontation nor a culture of conflict which builds harmony within and between peoples, but rather a culture of encounter and a culture of dialogue; this is the only way to peace.¹¹⁴

Pope Francis repeatedly emphasizes the importance of dialogue and mentions this term in diverse contexts. As evident in his speeches, Pope Francis considers dialogue as a tool to make the interpersonal relationships more respectable and positive.

5.1.2. Latin and other religious languages

When talking about religious language, one often thinks of Latin. In the history of Christianity, Latin has been the key language of liturgy. Before the 20th century, Latin language was a standard of Roman Catholic masses, it was used throughout the service and the version of the Catholic service had been ratified in the 16th century at the Council of Trent. The Second Vatican Council caused the Church to allow use of local languages in masses. 50 years later, the priests could use the Latin mass again but at the end of the 20th century, there was a permission to use the old-rite mass. Ten years ago, Pope Benedict XVI. said that there can be old as well as new versions of the Roman rite and priests could decide whether to use

¹¹⁴ Pope Francis. "Speeches." *Radio Vaticana*. (26 July 2013-1 August 2016. Web. 15 January 2018).

Latin liturgy or not.¹¹⁵ The position of Latin language in the history of religion had been always changing. In today's society, Latin has still a significant role in religion but it is not used as often as before.

Pope Francis regards Latin language as an increasingly important language of the Church. "In the Vatican some of the more important documents issued by the Pope and the Holy See are officially written in Latin. [...] The Church's standard version of the Bible, called the Vulgate, is also in Latin."¹¹⁶ That is why the Latin language should not be completely forgotten in the Church and elsewhere.

It is questionable whether Latin language should be the main language of the Catholic liturgy or not; but Pope Francis propagates this language quite often. He even wants young people to study Latin: He said to the Latin teachers that they should know how to speak to "the hearts of the young, know how to treasure the very rich heritage of the Latin tradition to educate them in the path of life, and accompany them along paths rich in hope and confidence."¹¹⁷ Although Pope Francis brings a kind of modernity into the contemporary Church, he asks young people to follow the traditions.

The religiosity in the language of Pope Francis can be also seen in the usage of other languages in his speeches as in code-switching within a single speech, document or a conversation. He speaks, among others, Spanish, Italian, English, German and Portuguese. He switches quite often between these languages, but mostly he uses Latin or Hebrew terms in whatever language he speaks. For instance, in his message to the *World Youth Day* in 2016 in Krakow, Pope Francis used Latin terms like *Dives in misericordia* and also *Misericordiae vultus*. He also mentioned some Hebrew terms like *rachamim*, *jobal*, *eleos*, *chesed* and

¹¹⁵ Emma Green. "The Extraordinary Feature of Pope Francis's Mass: Latin." *The Atlantic*. (23 September 2015. Web. 16 January 2018).

¹¹⁶ Hannah Brockhaus. "Why does the Catholic Church still care about Latin?" *Crux*. (20 April 2017. Web. 15 January 2018).

¹¹⁷ Hannah Brockhaus. "Pope Francis: It's good for young people to study Latin." *Crux*. (7 December 2017. Web. 15 January 2018).

*jubil.*¹¹⁸ Pope Francis always uses such words intentionally but code-mixing can be recognized in Pope Francis' speeches as well, especially when he speaks English.

5.2. The power and language of today's society

There are not many religious leaders in today's society who would be more powerful than Pope Francis. Many people follow the opinions of this pope and that is the reason why he has to be concerned with issues other than those related singularly to religion.

It is important to point out that Pope Francis does not use his leadership and power to manipulate other people. According to Teun Adrianus van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis theory, language usage differs according to the power people have. Dijk relevantly points out that "the powerless have literally nothing to say, nobody to talk to, or must remain silent when more powerful people are speaking, as is the case for children, prisoners, defendants, and (in some cultures) women."¹¹⁹ To apply this notion to the language of Pope Francis, one can say that he uses his power to speak on behalf of those whose language is not that powerful. He communicates with the poor, persecuted and disadvantaged people and interprets their needs and beliefs through his own language. To put it another way, his power is a tool allowing to speak; the tool needed by people who feel powerless and unfree.

Pope Francis is concerned about power. As he said,

the more powerful you are the more your actions will have an impact on people, the more responsible you are to act humbly. If you don't, your power will ruin you, and you will ruin the other. [...] Through humility and concrete love, power - the highest, the strongest one - becomes a service, a force for good.¹²⁰

This statement confirms his position of being the "pope of contrasts." In other words, Pope Francis asks his audience to be humble with whatever kind of power they have. The more

¹¹⁸ Pope Francis. "Blessed are..." In: Andrej Bartík. *Register, Style, and Code in Papal Language*. Unpublished manuscript. (Anglo-American University: Prague, 2017). 2.

¹¹⁹ Teun A. van Dijk. *Discourse and Power*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). 31.

¹²⁰ Pope Francis. "Why the only future worth building includes everyone." *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

humble individuals will be, the more chances to be powerful they will have. Francis talks about power often indeed; however, he does not talk about his own power at all. His messages are full of questions on equality and that is why he does not display any superiority in the relationships with his audience.

As has been already mentioned, religious language may have a form of internal language that plays an important role in the realization of prayer or meditation. Pope Francis acknowledges the power of prayer. “Our power lies not in triumphing or shouting loud according to the logic of the world but in exercising the ‘gentle power of prayer’, with which one can even stop wars and obtain peace.”¹²¹ He believes that prayer of an individual can change the world. The change of the world is what Francis frequently emphasizes in his communication with the public.

5.2.1. Current position of religion

The unique language of Pope Francis fulfils diverse functions and one of them is to represent Church. Francis changes the position of the Church in the 21st century because it is becoming more and more stigmatized. It could be argued that the Pope presents Church and religion as opened to everybody and as an important part of society.

In his talk on Europe and European Union, Pope Francis expressed the reasons why religion is such an important aspect in the right development of society. He said that:

[We should] reflect on the positive and constructive role that religion in general plays in the building up of society. I think, for example, of the contribution made by interreligious dialogue to greater mutual understanding between Christians and Muslims in Europe. Regrettably, a certain secularist prejudice, still in vogue, is incapable of seeing the positive value of religion’s public and objective role in society, preferring to relegate it to the realm of the merely private and sentimental. The result is the predominance of a certain groupthink, quite apparent in international meetings, which sees the affirmation of religious identity as a threat to itself and its dominance,

¹²¹ Pope Francis. “The power of Christians lies in prayer and preaching – Pope in Genoa.” *Radio Vaticana*. (27 May 2017. Web. 16 January 2018).

and ends up promoting an ersatz conflict between the right to religious freedom and other fundamental rights.¹²²

Francis sees as a problem that religion is not shared objectively; rather it is the matter of personal experience. He explains that Church should not be associated with prejudice, but be respected also by those who have no religious beliefs.

Pope Francis has a clear idea of how the Church should look like. He sees many shortcomings within this institution and seems to be doing the best to change it. When he was describing religion and the Church, he said:

I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures.¹²³

Francis believes that today's Church is not humble enough and so its members should change the position and a general view of it.

It is apparent that the language of Pope Francis serves not only to present religion and Christians with a certain pathos. Francis communicates with his audience about what religion is all about:

If I say I am Catholic and go to mass, but then don't speak with my parents, help my grandparents or the poor, go and see those who are sick, this does not prove my faith, there's no point, [...] those who do this are nothing but Christian parrots – words, words, words.¹²⁴

This metaphorical notion of “passive Christians” is the way Francis presents the necessity of helping those who are in need. He communicates the idea of goodness which is necessary for believers as well as nonbelievers.

¹²² Pope Francis. “(Re)Thinking Europe Conference.” *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 15 November 2017).

¹²³ Pope Francis. “Evangelii Gaudium.” Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis. *La Santa Sede*. (24 November, 2013. Web. 16 January, 2017).

¹²⁴ Katie Forster. “Pope Francis: There is 'no point' going to church if you don't really believe in it.” *The Independent*. (16 January 2017. Web. 16 January 2018).

Pope Francis is aware of the fact that it is necessary to communicate and defend the roles of religion in today's society. He thinks that Christianity and other religions are often wrongly blamed for mistakes of individuals. He clearly said that,

no people is criminal and no religion is terrorist. Christian terrorism does not exist, Jewish terrorism does not exist, and Muslim terrorism does not exist. They do not exist. No people is criminal or drug-trafficking or violent.¹²⁵

Pope Francis, again in his frequently used rule of three, points out to hatred which appears due to generalization and fundamentalism.

Francis continues to warn people about following religions that are not real. He warns people of professing the "cosmetic religion" that takes the form of a show. Pope Francis suggests that one needs to follow "inner freedom, that freedom to do good deeds in secret without blowing our trumpets because the path of true religion is Jesus' path: humility and humiliation."¹²⁶ This means that the true religion is the faith which happens inside one's individual being. Of course, it is crucial to evangelize; however, without any unnecessary and unnatural glorification.

5.2.1.1. Humanity and Church for all

To better understand the functions of religious faith and its effects, Pope Francis emphasizes dignity and the essence of human beings as significant elements in the relationship between religion and society. In the conference on Europe and its politics, Pope Francis said:

The first and perhaps the greatest contribution that Christians can make to today's Europe is to remind her that she is not a mass of statistics or institutions, but is made up of people. Sadly, we see how frequently issues get reduced to discussions about numbers. There are no citizens, only votes. There are no migrants, only quotas. There are no workers, only economic markers. There are no poor, only thresholds of poverty.

¹²⁵ Pope Francis. "Pope sends message to popular movements meeting in California. Radio Vaticana." (17 February 2017. Web. 16 January 2018).

¹²⁶ Pope Francis. "No to a "cosmetics" religion that's all show." *Radio Vaticana*. (11 October 2016. Web. 16 January 2018).

The concrete reality of the human person is thus reduced to an abstract – and thus more comfortable and reassuring – principle.¹²⁷

However, it is important to mention that, Pope Francis talks not only about individual humans, but also about humanity. He does not separate people according to their religion or social conditions because he believes in equality.

When Pope Francis talks about humanity, he often mentions the sense of hope and hopefulness as a crucial truth to believe in. This is associated with the fact that he often emphasizes reality and realism important for one's spiritual life. Francis said that "feeling hopeful does not mean to be optimistically naïve and ignore the tragedy humanity is facing."¹²⁸ This means that, on the one hand, people should believe in a better future, while, on the other hand, they should not forget to look at the world realistically. Even though, Pope Francis' speeches are full of spiritual advice, he also wants to spread the message of critical and rational relations humanity needs. In other words, people can change the world not only through their prayers and beliefs but also through their particular actions.

One significant characteristic of the Pope's rhetoric is the usage of his personal stories and experiences. One of them can be considered as a representation of his sense of equality and anti-fundamentalism:

...when I was a boy, in my family there was a certain Puritan tradition. [...] If someone close to the family divorced or separated, they could not enter your house; and they believed all Protestants were going to hell; but I remember one time [...] two women from the Salvation Army had just passed by. [...] they are Protestants, but they are good. That was the wisdom of the true religion. They were good women who did good things. That experience was contrasted with the Puritan formation that I was getting on the other hand.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Pope Francis. "(Re)Thinking Europe Conference." *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 15 November 2017).

¹²⁸ Pope Francis. "Why the only future worth building includes everyone." *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

¹²⁹ Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 72.

This can be also seen when Pope Francis speaks about nonbelievers and their attitudes to religion: “When I speak with atheists, I will sometimes discuss social concerns, but I do not propose the problem of God as a starting point, except in the case that they propose it to me. If this occurs, I tell them why I believe.”¹³⁰ The talking about God is one of Francis’ main tasks. However, he knows that he can talk about religion and spirituality even without a direct mention of God by discussing different nonreligious topics.

Pope Francis does not differentiate between believers, nonbelievers and people who profess other than Catholic religion. He sees all these people as equal. This is evident in the case of the Pope’s language by which he often addresses the issue of relationship between different religions. To give an illustration of this relationship, one can look at the *Lutheran World Federation*. When Pope Francis attended this event, he spoke about acceptance and rejection of hatred between Catholics and Lutherans. He also mentioned the role of language in this relationship; he said that we should not be followed by fear or bias in relation to the faith which other people profess only with a different accent and language.¹³¹ This means that although the essence of different religions should be the same, they can differ in their religious language.

Pope Francis’ interreligious dialogue is present in many of his speeches. When he was talking about Islam, he expressed his belief that “every religion has dignity; every religion that respects life, human life, the human person. And I cannot make fun of it.”¹³² Pope Francis strongly condemns the killing within religions but he respects all the beliefs that are different from his own.

¹³⁰ Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 12.

¹³¹ Pope Francis. “Common Ecumenical Prayer at the Lutheran Cathedral of Lund.” Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis. *La Santa Sede*. (31 October 2016. Web. 21 November 2017).

¹³² Pope Francis. “Pope’s press conference on the flight from Sri Lanka to the Philippines.” *Radio Vaticana*. (15 January 2015. Web. 11 January 2018).

Some quotations of Pope Francis hide within themselves more than one can assume. Many of them are based in the sense of humanity as the message which Pope Francis conveys. Francis said that “each and everyone’s existence is deeply tied to that of others.”¹³³ This statement means not only the significance of human interrelations but also the sense of interreligiosity. More specifically, mutual connection of beings is the core of many religions like Buddhism and Hinduism but, not so much, Christianity. Christianity is a monotheistic religion in which God is the only power which controls others. Francis’ religious language is, therefore, based on the respect for spirituality that can be applied to different worldviews and philosophical approaches to supernaturalism.

5.2.2. Global politics and ecology

Pope Francis’ communication with the public is at the heart of our understanding of religious language. His communication might be characterized by the fact that he talks not only about religious topics, but also about different themes that may raise the interest of young people. It is the Pope’s strategy to build a strong, unified society.

The role of Pope Francis is to represent Church as a place for believers as well as nonbelievers. Since Pope Francis is one of the most influential leaders in the world, he often expresses his opinions on politics through his religious language. He sees Christians as the people who should “restore dignity to politics and to view politics as a lofty service to the common good, not a platform for power.”¹³⁴ He considers politics as the power that can be used for the purpose of developing a collective good.

Pope Francis uses his political opinions to emphasize the power of individuality. For example, he is contrasting the political power with the individual power to change the world.

¹³³ Pope Francis. “Why the only future worth building includes everyone.” *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

¹³⁴ Pope Francis. “(Re)Thinking Europe Conference.” *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 16 November 2017).

Francis said that “the future of humankind isn’t exclusively in the hands of politicians, of great leaders, of big companies.”¹³⁵ He asks his audience to desire for a better world even if it might seem that people alone are not powerful enough.

Francis often addresses particular politicians and recognizes the power of political language. In his *Message for the 50th World Communications Day*, Pope Francis said there are many people who have an enormous institutional and political responsibility and who form public opinion. He asked them to be attentive to the way they speak of people who have different opinions and who act differently. Moreover, they should be aware of the way they speak about those who may have made mistakes.¹³⁶ This notion confirms the fact that Pope Francis communicates with public also through the explanation of how one should communicate.

Pope Francis realizes different issues in global politics and he uses his religious language to point them out. This means that, for example, he uses typical religious terms like ‘mercy’ to describe his attitudes towards political justice. In an interview with Andrea Torielli, Francis said that mercy has a public value and contaminates humanity. According to the Pope, when mercy is present, justice is more just, and then it fulfills its true essence. Pope Francis says that we should help the people who are convicted. This means that we should not just put some people in a prison for their whole lives; rather we should help them accommodate in society.¹³⁷ This is Pope Francis’ notion of justice which he associates with mercy.

As has been noted, Pope Francis expresses his opinions on particular political problems: For instance, he said that politicians should be lead “by the example of those

¹³⁵ Pope Francis. “Why the only future worth building includes everyone.” *TED*. (April 2017. Lecture. 14 January 2018).

¹³⁶ Pope Francis. “Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter.” *La Santa Sede*. (24 January 2016. Web. 21 November, 2017).

¹³⁷ Pope Francis, Andrea Torielli. *The Name of God is Mercy*. (New York: Random House, 2016). 58.

European and world leaders who consistently gave pride of place to dialogue and the quest of common solutions: Schuman, De Gasperi, Adenauer, Monnet and so many others.”¹³⁸ Pope Francis is familiar with the issues of global politics and politicians. He uses his knowledge to motivate his followers to change the role of politics and religion in today’s society.

Francis’ attitudes to politics are often associated with the critique of the lack of equality. The Pope said that in the hearts and minds of government and political leaders, “there is a need to give absolute priority to the poor, refugees, the suffering, evacuees and the excluded, without distinction of nation, race, religion or culture, and to reject armed conflicts.”¹³⁹ He demonstrates that politicians might be responsible for social justice and injustice.

One of the most serious crises of contemporary society is migration. The worldview of many individuals is changing according to attitudes towards refugees and their acceptance in Europe as well as the US. Pope Francis has a clear approach in regards to immigrants. Through the relation with them, he communicates the ideas of humility and love to the neighbor. As has been mentioned, typical feature of Francis’ communication is the association between his own life experiences and the problem he talks about. This is certainly true in the case of the issue of migration. For example, in one of his congresses, Francis said that “[we] are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners. I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants.”¹⁴⁰

Pope Francis is known for his strong sympathy toward ecology. Furthermore, St. Francis of Assisi, whom Pope Francis admires so much, is the patron of environment. Pope Francis directly addresses the problems such as pollution and climate change, lack of water and loss of biodiversity. His opinions and actions related to this problem serve as an activism

¹³⁸ Pope Francis. “Message to G20.” *Radio Vaticana*. (7 July 2017. Web. 21 November 2017).

¹³⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁰ Pope Francis. “Visit to the joint session of the United States Congress.” Address of the Holy Father. *La Santa Sede*. (24 September 2015. Web. 10 January 2018).

aiming at pointing out the mistreatment of nature. Pope Francis speaks about nature and earth as about our Sister and Mother Earth. These names are based on the Bible. To protect Mother Earth, Francis wants to bring the whole human family together. He points out to young people who demand change and who cannot imagine their future without a solution to the help for environmental crisis. Pope Francis emphasizes that he urgently appeals for a new dialogue about how people shape the future of the planet and wants us to communicate about the environmental issues to help our planet. He indicates that we need a conversation which includes everyone, because the human roots of environmental challenge affect us all.¹⁴¹ The dialogue between different religions, countries and political parties might help to save the planet which is in catastrophic conditions.

The problem of ecology and our planet has become one of the most common topics through which Pope Francis communicates with the public. He speaks about this problem not only in his speeches, but also in the interviews with famous people. Francis' attitudes are recorded in the documentary called *Before the Flood* moderated by Leonardo DiCaprio. Regardless of whether one perceives it as a marketing strategy or not, DiCaprio is followed by many people around the world and his support of ecology benefits the society. In this documentary film, the two men met in the Vatican and they talked about the most serious problems of the planet Earth. DiCaprio said that, "a pope has never done anything like this in history" and that Pope Francis, "feels we all need to keep speaking out about this issue as loud as we can, and that we must immediately take action."¹⁴² Both men used the interview as a tool to publicly point out to these problems. DiCaprio comments the meeting and says that Pope Francis wanted to communicate this issue "but more than anything, he said to pray for

¹⁴¹ Jorge Mario Bergoglio. *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si: Care for our Common Home*. (Vatican: Vatican Press, 2015). 3-14.

¹⁴² *Before the Flood*. (Dir. Fisher Stevens. Perf. Leonardo DiCaprio and Pope Francis. National Geographic, 2016. YouTube. Web. 31 October 2016).

the human race.”¹⁴³ Pope Francis conveyed his message through a prayer narrated by one of the most successful Hollywood actors.

5.2.3. Philosophy

Philosophy is a classical issue in the study of religious language. As a priest, Pope Francis was required to study philosophy during his seminary studies. His philosophical background is beneficial to his language and communication with the public.

The language used by Pope Francis is highly philosophical and not always easy to follow and understand. The Pope often offers philosophical reflections that compel his followers to contemplate about different topics. He uses philosophy to express statements that might be regarded as purely religious and, therefore, not understandable enough. It would be better to say that Pope Francis often speaks about his religious reflections that cannot be logically proven. His religious language is supported by philosophical arguments to make his statements clear and trustworthy.

Pope Francis speaks a lot about fundamentalism in religion. This fact is characteristic for his liberal way of leadership. He believes in the importance of one’s own decision and not one general truth that should be impressed into the views of believers. He sees fundamentalism as something that should not be part of a “healthy religious community.”¹⁴⁴ Besides, he says that “we must be especially attentive to every type of fundamentalism, whether religious or of any other kind.”¹⁴⁵ The language of Pope Francis is based on communicating mutual respect and, therefore, fundamentalism in society cannot be accepted.

¹⁴³ *Before the Flood*. (Dir. Fisher Stevens. Perf. Leonardo DiCaprio and Pope Francis. National Geographic, 2016. YouTube. Web. 31 October 2016).

¹⁴⁴ Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 72.

¹⁴⁵ Pope Francis. “Visit to the joint session of the United States Congress.” Adress of the Holy Father. *La Santa Sede*. (24 September 2015. Web. 10 January 2018).

When talking about philosophy, Pope Francis often suggests new philosophical reflections to express his ideas. He uses his philosophy to enrich his language and hence to make his communication with the public more valuable. For instance, in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Francis proposes four philosophical principles of peace and common good in society, i.e. time is greater than space, unity prevails over conflict, realities are more important than ideas and the whole is greater than the part. In sum, Pope Francis tried to emphasize a lack of patience missing due to the lust for power of political leaders. The leaders should be patient to be able to control the limited time they have. This Francis' reflection aims to point out acceptance of conflicts and evil, and not their ignorance. This should help the leaders not to be egocentric but rather willing to fulfill the needs of their followers. Unity should be the result of the unifying relationship between man and society. Pope Francis also reflects on the dialogue that should appear between ideas and their realizations, i.e. people and especially political leaders should not follow purism, relativism of dictatorship, declaratory nominalism, fundamentalism, ethics without good, and intellectualism without any wisdom. When we do not realize our ideas, it might lead to the idealism that cannot serve as a motivation for other people. And motivation is what Pope Francis considers as a crucial element in his communication with the public. He warns the politicians of globalized universalism that compels them only to "join the crowd" without individual efforts. Finally, politicians should seek common good which is beneficial for every part of society.¹⁴⁶ Pope Francis' philosophy seeks to communicate the ideas related to the power of individuality as well as the collective power.

One major issue Pope Francis sees in the philosophy of language concerns the concept of dialectic. This term representing the uncovering of a substance had been used by Francis in relation to language, communication and parent-child relationships. He said that

¹⁴⁶ Pope Francis. "Evangelii Gaudium." Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis. *La Santa Sede*. (24 November, 2013. Web. 21 November, 2017).

“...transmission of the faith can only be done in dialectic. [...] If the dialectic is missing at home, if parents don't speak that language of love among themselves, transmission isn't easy, it can't be done.”¹⁴⁷ This, in fact, represents Francis' belief in the power of language because according to him, love has its own language. He claims that people have to learn to communicate and lead a reasonable dialogue.

Along with his own philosophy, Pope Francis writes about the ideas of different philosophers. His relation to the philosophy of language can be recognized when he uses the ideas of, for example, Ludwig Wittgenstein. In his encyclical letter *Lumen Fidei*, Francis writes about Wittgenstein and his view of faith and certainty. He paraphrases it as the idea of believing which is compared to the falling in love. Believing is therefore something that cannot be a truth valid for everyone. Francis disagrees with Wittgenstein and says that love cannot be reduced to an ephemeral emotion. According to Francis, love needs truth, truth needs love, and love is a source of knowledge.¹⁴⁸ Pope Francis uses here quite difficult philosophy through which he tries to explain the concept of believing. Although it might seem difficult to understand, he uses only simple words so his explanation can be understood by every person who reads or listens to his message. Philosophy does not necessarily have to consist of difficult terms and phrases. “While Pope Francis is revered for his acts of compassion and humility, his stories connect for another reason: their simplicity.”¹⁴⁹ Francis' speeches always contain some philosophical ideas, but they are simple and easy to understand.

Pope Francis understands the power of communication and philosophical interpretation. He warns other priests of making their messages ideological. In his address to

¹⁴⁷ John L. Allen Jr. “Pope says to transmit the faith, parents must speak ‘language of love.’” *Crux*. (January 7, 2018. Web. January 7, 2018).

¹⁴⁸ Pope Francis. “Lumen Fidei.” *La Santa Sede*. (29 June 2013. Web. 8 January 2018).

¹⁴⁹ Carmine Gallo. *The Storyteller's Secret: From TED Speakers to Business Legends, Why Some Ideas Catch On and Others Don't*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016). 116.

the *Episcopal Conferences of Latin America*, he offered several philosophical concepts because he assumed that the members are the bishops or priests who have a background in philosophy, i.e. he adjusted the words to those whom he spoke to. When Pope Francis was talking about the message and ideology, he said that there are temptations against missionary discipleship. This might be sociological reductionism, psychologizing, the Gnostic solution, the palegian solution, functionalism and clericalism. Francis also mentioned a “claim based on a hermeneutics drawn from the social sciences. It extends to the most varied fields, from market liberalism to Marxist categorization.”¹⁵⁰ Pope Francis undoubtedly follows the rules of hermeneutics as the art of interpretation. However, he sees it as a possible danger in interpreting the Gospel. To put it differently, he does not want the preachers to interpret the Bible in their own words; rather they should see it as a single truth. In contrary, Francis challenges other priests to think and contemplate about the words of God.

5.2.4. The focus on youth

The communication between Pope Francis and his audience can be characterized by many different considerations. One of them is his focus on youth. This means that in most of his speeches, Pope Francis addresses young people as his “target group.” It is evident that he believes young people can change the world and are a key part of society.

The biggest event that connects Christianity with the community of young people is the *World Youth Day*. It is an event which was first initiated in 1985 by Pope John Paul II. Pope Francis attended this event two times. In the year 2016 in Krakow and in 2013 in Rio de Janeiro. Francis propagated this event on social media and spread the message in a form of letters as well as online articles.

¹⁵⁰ Pope Francis. “Apostolic Journey to Rio de Janeiro on the Occasion of the XXVIII. World Youth Day.” *La Santa Sede*. (28 July 2013. Web. 15 January 2018).

In the message for the *World Youth Day* in 2016, Pope Francis was talking largely about mercy. He believes that mercy is necessary for the life of, not only, young people. This message contains typical rhetorical devices of Francis. For example, he said:

You, dear young man, dear young woman, have you ever felt the gaze of everlasting love upon you, a gaze that looks beyond your sins, limitations and failings, and continues to have faith in you and to look upon your life with hope? Do you realize how precious you are to God, who has given you everything out of love?¹⁵¹

This statement is representative of his communication with young people. He addresses them individually and asks them rhetorical questions to make them contemplate about the topics related to faith. Francis psychologically emphasizes the value of each individual.

Sometimes, Pope Francis answers the questions within his speeches, as in his homily for *World Youth Day* in 2013. He addressed young people and asked them: “Do you know what the best tool is for evangelising the young? Another young person. This is the path to follow!”¹⁵² This means that Pope Francis offers young people different specific solutions to develop their faith and encourages them to connect their powers and try to change the society they live in.

Pope Francis attended a conference which was called *(Re)Thinking Europe*,¹⁵³ where, as usual, he addressed young people: “The young have been able to present their expectations and hopes, and to share them with their elders, while these in turn have drawn on their own reflections and experiences.”¹⁵⁴ Pope Francis emphasizes that there should be an inter-age dialogue in regard to the development of young people’s faith.

The Pope often talks about the relationship between young people and those who should be their teachers, leaders and motivators. He addresses young people with the

¹⁵¹ Pope Francis. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” *La Santa Sede*. (15 August 2015. Web. 17 January 2017).

¹⁵² Pope Francis. “WYD 2013: Homily for World Youth Day’s closing Mass.” *Catholic Herald*. (28 July 2013. Web. 17 January 2018).

¹⁵³ Pope Francis. “(Re)Thinking Europe Conference.” *Radio Vaticana*. (28 October 2017. Web. 14 November 2017).

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

warnings about whom they should listen to. For example, Francis speaks about fundamentalists who bring uncertainties to the lives of young people. Young people are uncertain about their lives which is the fault of some clerics. This danger results in the fact that young individuals are not prepared to overcome their life crises. According to the Pope, such people mortgage their double lives and follow just rigid religiosity which is depriving and does not allow them to grow as persons.¹⁵⁵

These are some quotations that characterize Pope Francis and his attitudes toward young people:

We don't need young museums but we do need holy young people.
Dear young friends, when I look at your faces I am filled with joy and hope: joy and hope for you, for your country, for the Church and for your communities.
I don't like it when I hear it said: but these youth say stupid things!
The restless youth, the creative youth, I like them!
There is something unique about young people: you are always full of enthusiasm, and I feel rejuvenated whenever I meet with you.
Here is a great task entrusted in a special way to young people: to be missionary disciples.¹⁵⁶

Pope Francis is 81 years old but in spite of his age, he is very close to young people. He believes that they can spread faith, hope and love to this generation. The religious language of Pope Francis seems to be changing when talking about the youth. He probably realizes that his words can affect the young and the next generations. In his communication with youth, Pope Francis uses more metaphorical and poetic language and his quotations become unforgettable.

6. ONLINE COMMUNICATION: RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION OF THE INTERNET

This chapter sheds new light at Pope Francis, his religious language and communication with the public. It calls into question the religious teaching found on the

¹⁵⁵ Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorcka. *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family and the Church in the 21st Century*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). 71.

¹⁵⁶ Pope Francis. "Speeches." *Radio Vaticana*. (24 July 2013-2 December 2017. Web. 16 January 2018).

internet. It is probable that for many people, Pope Francis evokes the view of a conservative priest without any notion of the modern world; however, as has been showed in the analysis above, this is not true because he is a popular and “modern” pope. His popularity has different forms and, for example, he was named Person of the Year by *Time* magazine and nominated for the *Nobel Peace Prize*.

Unlike other popes, Francis communicates through the internet very often. In his annual message on the occasion of *Communications Day*, he said that “the internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God.”¹⁵⁷ Francis encourages other people to use the internet in a right way and knows that it can be dangerous: “Let us ensure that the Internet is a safe and richly human place for children: a network that does not entrap them but helps them to grow.”¹⁵⁸ Although Pope Francis is 81 years old now, the online communication does not pose any problem for him.

The evidence of Pope Francis’ “modernity” might be seen in his usage of social networks such as *Twitter* and *Instagram*. He is very active on social media and his “tweeting” and “instagramming” is one the most influential ways he communicates with the public. There are also many *Facebook* pages related to the teaching of Pope Francis; however, all of them are unofficial. One can never be sure who exactly chooses Pope Francis’ ideas to present them on the social networks. Perhaps, Pope Francis has a special team, but he undoubtedly has to approve everything that is published. It is crucial to analyze these social networks because it is the part of Pope Francis’ communication with his audience. The findings should make an important contribution to the field of religion and the internet.

¹⁵⁷ Pope Francis. “Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter.” *La Santa Sede*. (1 June 2014. Web. 21 January 2018).

¹⁵⁸ Pope Francis (pontifex). 6 October 2017, 4:30 AM. Tweet.

Even though Pope Francis does not have a *Facebook* account, he personally met its co-founder, Mark Zuckerberg. According to the Vatican spokesman, these two men “spoke of how to use communication technologies to alleviate poverty, encourage the culture of encounter and bring a message of hope, especially to the most disadvantaged.”¹⁵⁹ Pope Francis knows that the internet has an immense power and tries to encourage other people of using it in a right way.

Pope Francis communicates online not only through the social networks, but also through letters, speeches and other written documents uploaded to the official websites of Pope Francis and Vatican. Most of them can be found on *w2.vatican.va* or *radiovaticana.va* whose content is translated into 37 languages.

How popular is Pope Francis on the internet? It is evident that Francis and his teaching is very popular because the demand for his ideas is rising. This means that Pope Francis was popular not only when he became the Pope but also several years later. According to *Google Trends*, people around the world googled Pope Francis in 2016 thirty percent more than in 2013. Whether it is criticism or admiring of Pope Francis, his name is significant in the contemporary online world.

It is also important to point out that Pope Francis strictly differentiates between online reality and the real world. He regards the internet and social media as a powerful method of communication; however, he said: “Do not underestimate the value of example, for it is more powerful than a thousand words, a thousand “likes”, retweets or *YouTube* videos.”¹⁶⁰ This means that he wants people to be real examples to others through the exemplary life they lead. Francis’ audience and other people may like Francis’ post and motivation but it is not sufficient for changing the world. That is to say, when the internet users feel motivated by

¹⁵⁹ Elise Harris. “Pope Francis meets Mark Zuckerberg and his wife at the Vatican.” *Catholic News Agency*. (28 August 2016. Web 11 January 2018).

¹⁶⁰ Pope Francis (pontifex). 23 February 2017, 4:30 AM. Tweet.

Pope Francis' words, they should live up these ideas and transfer them to other people through their lives.

6.1. Twitter

The social network which is used by Pope Francis the most is *Twitter*. He uses his account almost every day and sometimes even several times a day. Whilst an analysis has been carried out on some of the first Francis' tweets, no studies have been found which would analyze his usage of social media. There are almost no analyses of Pope Francis' tweets although it can be regarded as a significant phenomenon of this age. To put it differently, it is fascinating to examine the timeless quotations of the person who represents the institution which, according to many people, should not even exist.

The name of Pope Francis' account is *@Pontifex*, which is the Latin term for 'pope'. This account was established in February 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI.; however, he wrote only 39 tweets. Pope Francis started to use this account in March 2013. So far, he wrote 1455 tweets. This *Twitter* account is offered to the public in nine languages. It is Italian, English, Latin, Arabic, Spanish, French, German, Polish and Portugal. In this thesis, I analyze only the years 2016 and 2017, because Pope Francis' tweets from the preceding years are no longer accessible.

There are many notions of Pope Francis' followers in this thesis; however, the term follower acquires a different meaning in this case. In his *Twitter* account, Pope Francis has more than 40 millions followers. He is the most followed leader in the world, but his account competes with Donald Trump, who has usually more followers than the Pope. According to the comments on certain tweets, it is evident that *@realDonaldTrump* is followed by the people who like his political views as well as those who come to his account to disagree with him. On the other hand, it seems to be the exact opposite on the account of Pope Francis – the

comments on his tweets are full of understanding and support from his followers. These two *Twitter* accounts reveal one of the biggest differences between the languages of Pope Francis and Donald Trump. Unlike Francis' language, Trump's language often abuses power. In other words, Trump is aware of his function and uses his language for manipulation and even propaganda. What is more, the power imbalance between Trump and his followers is much more intensive than the power imbalance between Pope Francis and the people who follow him. The similarity between Pope Francis and Donald Trump is certainly instructive; however, it is beyond the scope of this study to examine it.

6.1.1. Tweets in 2016

The year 2016 was for Pope Francis very "productive" in terms of *Twitter* quotations. In this year, he posted 363 tweets. The results obtained from the analysis of quantity of Francis' tweets in this year are presented in Figure 5. This graph shows that Francis was most active in April 2016. He described different topics and addressed different people in his posts. This is Francis' tweet that was the most popular one in 2016: "Let us carry Mother Teresa's smile in our hearts and give it to those whom we meet along our journey." This metaphorical statement has 39 641 retweets and 90 765 likes.

Overall, Pope Francis' tweets from 2016 have 7189 words. This means that he used approximately 20 words for one tweet. Among the words that Pope Francis used most are, of course, religious terms like 'God' (93 times) and 'Lord' (39 times) or 'pray' (38 times). Other frequent words are 'love' (61 times), 'journey' (18 times), or 'young,' 'youth' and different forms of 'charity' (10 times).

The term that is described by Pope Francis a lot is 'mercy' or 'merciful.' In 2016, he used it in his *Twitter* account 69 times and it can be regarded as a basis for Francis' philosophy. He speaks, writes and tweets about this term more than about any other concept.

He perceives the concept of mercy as something which is crucial for one's faith; something that enriches nonbelievers and enormously changes the world. 'Mercy' is a typical spiritual word; however, it can be used in different connotations. Whether it means kindness, forgiveness, grace or compassion, it reflects the language of Pope Francis – representation of Church and humanity for all. Moreover, the episcopal motto of Pope Francis in Latin is *Miserando atque eligendo*, which means "because he saw him through the eyes of mercy and chose him."¹⁶¹ Furthermore, one of the most famous Francis' books is called *The Name of God is Mercy*.

One of the crucial features of Francis' *Twitter* is the usage of hashtags. Hashtag is a device used in social networks that helps the users to easily find specific statuses, quotations, tweets, messages or tags that share the same content. It is important to point out, that Pope Benedict XVI. did not use hashtags in his tweets whatsoever. In 2016, Pope Francis tweeted with the help of hashtag 20 times. He used "#Krakow 2016" (four times), "#PopeInArmenia," "#migrants" (three times), and then "#NoDeathPenalty," "#LaudatoSi," "#Rio2016," "#Assisi," "#Porziuncola," "#peacepossible4Syria," "#ZeroHunger," "#ComMisericordia" and "#Brussels." As can be seen in these hashtags, Pope Francis lets people know about the topics that are not always religious. He emphasized global problems like death penalty, the issue of hunger and migration or the war in Syria. On the other hand, he mentioned his travels to Krakow, Brussels, Assisi or Armenia as well as the work *Laudato Si*.

The *Twitter* quotations by Pope Francis are full of ideas that may be beneficial for believers as well as nonbelievers. Even though Francis writes a lot about God and Christianity, he addresses the topics that have almost nothing in common with spirituality or religion. After the analysis of Francis' account in 2016, I can conclude that he used 83 nonreligious tweets. This means that these tweets do not contain any religious term and do not

¹⁶¹ Carol Glatz. "Pope's episcopal motto comes from homily by English doctor of church." *Catholic News Service*. (15 March 2013. Web. 11 January 2018).

aim to profess a spiritual belief. The amount of these nonreligious quotes is almost 23% or one quarter of the overall @Pontifex' tweets in 2016. For example:

We don't have to go far or come up with grand projects to be charitable.
Love is a patient effort by persons who dedicate themselves to listening and drawing closer to others.
Today there is an urgent need for politics and economics to be centered on the service of life.
Children have the right to a healthy and secure family environment.
Let us promote a sustainable tourism, which stimulates development and encounter with local peoples and avoids every sort of discrimination.
The firm commitment for human rights springs from an awareness of the unique and supreme value of each person.
Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing.
Among the poor being treated worst is our planet. We cannot pretend all is fine in the face of the great environmental crisis.¹⁶²

The fact that Pope Francis uses a big amount of nonreligious quotations does not mean that other tweets are full of religious terms. The rest of the tweets can be considered as a combination of Francis' religious views on the world and socio-political issues lead by certain kind of spirituality. In his tweets, Pope Francis prays for nonbelievers, asks for their forgiveness and he links global problems to his faith. For instance: "I pray for the victims of the attack in Nice and their families. I ask God to convert the hearts of the violent blinded by hate."¹⁶³ I do not consider such tweets as nonreligious. It can be seen from the data in Figure 5. that most of these nonreligious tweets were posted in April 2016.

It is evident that many of the tweets of Pope Francis contain religious language. However, not all of them have the form of prayer. Prayer is a metaphysical conversation that can be professed only by people who go far beyond their rational understanding of the world. For people such as Pope Francis, prayer is a real talking to a supernatural entity and the result of one's religious language. It is even a taboo topic in the secular society to analyze this "transcendental intercession;" however, Pope Francis uses his prayers to communicate with the public. His prayers appear at the boundary between linguistic and supernatural reality. In

¹⁶² Pope Francis (pontifex). 16 November 2016 - 15 February 2016. Tweet.

¹⁶³ Ibid. 15 July 2016, 4:30 AM.

other words, Pope Francis uses his language to provide his inner vision to the world. His tweets often have the form of prayer which is evident through the usage of terms like ‘may,’ ‘let’ or ‘pray.’ Such terms were used in the prayers found in the Bible and therefore, these tweets can be regarded as prayers. Francis used these prayers 39 times in his tweets. As an illustration, these are some examples of his prayers within his tweeting:

Let us be touched by the tenderness that saves. Let us draw close to God who draws close to us.

May the Holy Spirit help us to be patient when enduring, and to be humble and simple when advising.

Let us abandon a language of condemnation and embrace one of mercy.

May you always be messengers of goodwill and true sporting spirit.

God wants to live amidst his sons and daughters. Let us make space for him in our hearts.¹⁶⁴

The prayers of Pope Francis together form a strategy used to communicate with the public. His spiritual language aims not only to deepen his relationship with unearthliness but also to encourage his followers to change the world. To change the public picture of the Church, to change people’s pragmatism in regards to their living, and to change the hatred and inequality in society. What is more, Pope Francis is aware of the power of religious language and communication: “What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God’s compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all.”¹⁶⁵ For Pope Francis, religious language is God’s language communicated through one’s good deeds and right way of life.

The rhetorical devices in the religious language of Pope Francis have been already analyzed; however, Francis uses many rhetorical devices in his *Twitter* account too. He is not an artist but in spite of this fact, his language is full of metaphors. In 2016, he used 88 metaphors. For example:

the balm of mercy; the virus of indifference; door of my heart; a pilgrimage of faith and fraternity; the journey of faith; weapons of love; a bridge of encounter; the royal

¹⁶⁴ Pope Francis (pontifex). 29 December 2016 - 4 February 2016. Tweet.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 11 May 2016, 5:00 AM.

road to peace; Door of Salvation; spiritual food; spiritual and moral abysses of mankind; door of mercy; instruments of peace; the oil of gladness.¹⁶⁶

It is remarkable that many of Francis' statements share similar content. More specifically, a lot of his phrases and metaphors are based on the concept of journey, road, way and path. All of these terms are used poetically. For instance, life's journey, apostolic journey, journey of faith, roads of the world, road to peace, way of the Church, way of the cross, way of peace, path towards holiness, path of honesty, path of mercy¹⁶⁷ and so on. This means that Pope Francis speaks a lot about the process and development of faith and religious beliefs. He focuses on young people, who can influence their 'journey' of life. It is also significant to point out that Francis uses metaphors in his religious tweets much more than in nonreligious ones.

Metaphor is not the only rhetorical device used by Pope Francis. Similar to this figure of speech is the usage of metonymy that may be difficult to distinguish from metaphor. Francis uses this device quite often. For example, he tweeted about mercy toward our neighbor, serving to our neighbors, or love for our brothers and sisters or different relations to Church, i.e. certain phrases are described by different, more general and collective terms. This figure of speech gives Pope Francis and his tweets a unique kind of poeticity.

One of the rhetorical devices used by Pope Francis is the rule of three, whose meaning has been already explained. In 2016, Francis used this rule in his tweets 32 times. For instance:

the days, weeks and months; joy, fidelity and enthusiasm; the life of the Church, all humanity, and the entire cosmos; dialogue, mutual acceptance and fraternal cooperation; compassion, tenderness and forgiveness; courageous, generous and real; Love has triumphed over hatred, life has conquered death, light has dispelled the darkness!; He calls us to be disciples. He would never send us to die. He invites us to live; wealth, vanity and pride.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Pope Francis (pontifex).. 20 November 2016 - 24 March 2016. Tweet.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 19 March 2016 – 15 August 2016.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 14 February 2016 – 31 December 2016.

Pope Francis probably knows that “the rule of three makes any story more effective because audiences are more likely to recall the content.”¹⁶⁹ When Pope Francis communicates with the public, he certainly wants his audience to remember “the stories,” he says.

As has been already mentioned, Pope Francis uses his language directly, without any expressions that would need to be “hidden” due to political correctness or his own insecurity about their meanings. He rarely uses euphemisms in his tweets. Even though some phrases can have role of synonyms, they tend to sound as euphemisms. For example, when Pope Francis was praying for his followers, he said “both believers and those far away.”¹⁷⁰ This means, that he probably did not want to label people who do not believe as “atheists” because it might sound pejoratively. Also, Francis often expresses his opinions towards negative situation in the world. He discussed many serious conflicts, and was not afraid to strongly disagree with what was happening, for instance, in Nice. However, he only wanted to condemn terrorism and not terrorists. He did not use the word ‘terrorists’ but instead, he labeled them as “the violent blinded by hate.”¹⁷¹ His euphemisms are sometimes the result of his politeness strategies. For example, when he writes about people other than young, he addresses them as “elderly friends” or just “elderly” but not “old.” The same can be applied to people whom he usually calls “people in need.” The talking about the poor and poverty might sound as a taboo topic. Francis does not avoid these terms but he often tries to replace them with polite words to make his followers feel “at home.” Even though Pope Francis is undoubtedly outspoken in his speech he knows that sometimes he speaks to very young people. That is why he needs to use terms that are not that direct. For instance, he speaks about “a broken world”¹⁷² instead of decadent society full of sexuality, drugs and immorality.

¹⁶⁹ Carmine Gallo. *The Storyteller's Secret: From TED Speakers to Business Legends, Why Some Ideas Catch On and Others Don't*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016). 116.

¹⁷⁰ Pope Francis (pontifex). 20 November 2016, 7:00 AM. Tweet.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. 15 July 2016, 4:30 AM.

¹⁷² Ibid. 23 May 2016, 4:00 AM.

6.1.2. Tweets in 2017

In terms of *Twitter*, the year 2017 was for Pope Francis similar to the year before. He still uses *Twitter* as an instrument of communication with the public and his tweets are generating considerable interest in terms of virtual communities. Francis' account has many followers who read, like and comment on his tweets also in 2018. At the end of the year 2017, Francis wrote: "Thank you for following @Pontifex which turns five years old today. May social media always be spaces that are rich in humanity!" This means that Francis is aware of the power of *Twitter* and other social media. He knows that he has to keep in step with the progressive society to communicate the Church as the place for everyone.

In 2017, Pope Francis tweeted 353 times. It is only 6 % more than in 2016. The results obtained from this analysis are set out in Figure 6. The result is that Francis tweeted most in September 2016. He used only seven hashtags; for example, #ShareJourney, #WorldChildrensDay and #ZeroHunger.

Francis' tweets address similar topics; however, in 2017, he tweeted more about seasonal topics like Lent, Easter, and Christmas. Again, Pope Francis was trying to address especially young people. He emphasized the necessity of prayer as a primary kind of communication people need to have. The most described topic of the 2017 tweets was the help to the poor and those who are not able to help themselves. Pope Francis offered this concept of help to those in need as the idea with the Biblical origin. This idea can also be recognized in his most favorite tweet from 2017: "How often in the Bible the Lord asks us to welcome migrants and foreigners, reminding us that we too are foreigners!"¹⁷³ This tweet has 65 371 retweets and 162 940 likes/hearts.

Another difference compared to the previous year is the fact that Pope Francis used to tweet about different Saints. In 2017, Pope Francis mentioned the lives of St. Ignatius of

¹⁷³ Pope Francis (pontifex). 4:30 Am. 18 February 2017. Tweet.

Loyola, St. Monica, St. Joseph, St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and also the popes St. John XXIII. and St. John Paul II.

Even though the tweets of 2017 were not always fully religious or spiritual, Pope Francis associated many social issues with the higher power. He used the words ‘God’ (87 times), ‘pray’ (36 times), ‘Lord’ (only 25 times) and ‘Christ’ (19 times). Pope Francis used many words that interconnect spirituality with common problems of society. For example, the words like ‘peace’ which has been used 40 times, ‘love’ (56 times) and ‘hope’ (33 times). Other frequent terms are, again, ‘mercy,’ ‘tenderness,’ ‘joy,’ ‘journey’ and also ‘fast’ and ‘lent.’

Many of the 2017 tweets have a nonreligious character. In this year, there are 90 posts that do not include any mention of God, Lord, religion or praying. It makes up 26 % of all the tweets in 2017 which is only a little bit more than in 2016. There are quotations that could be said by any influential leader, not only by religious leaders. For instance,

There can be no true peace if everyone claims always and exclusively his or her own rights, without caring for the good of others.

Peace is an “active virtue,” one that calls for the engagement and cooperation of each individual and society as a whole.

Take action! Live life to the full! And when others see the witness you give, they may ask: why do you live this way?

Let’s work together to increase solidarity and sharing. Cooperation helps to build better and more peaceful societies. I encourage everyone to engage in constructive forms of communication that reject prejudice towards others and foster hope and trust today.¹⁷⁴

These quotations serve mostly as the “proposals” for peace and humanity that should be spread around the world. The usage of nonreligious quotes is summarized in Figure 6. In terms of nonreligious tweets, September 2017 was for Pope Francis the most active month. On the other hand, he used the biggest amount of typical religious tweets in April 2017.

¹⁷⁴ Pope Francis (pontifex). 3 January – 28 May 2017. Tweet.

The concept of prayer used by Pope Francis has been already elucidated. There are 54 quotations in his 2017 tweets that can be certainly considered as prayers. These are some examples:

May a culture of encounter always be promoted that is able to bring down the walls which still divide the world

May artists spread the beauty of the faith and proclaim the grandeur of God's creation and His boundless love for all.

I pray for all the victims of the attacks of these days. May the blind violence of terrorism no longer find room to exist in this world!

O Cross of Christ, inspire in us a desire for God, for goodness and for light.¹⁷⁵

Pope Francis uses these prayers to show his followers that it is possible to fight against problems facing the society.

The year 2017 was for *@Pontifex* the year full of rhetorical strategies. The frequently used rhetorical devices were metaphors and the rule of three. In 2017, Francis used 29 metaphors which is much less than in 2016. This means that Francis' tweets from 2017 were not that poetical but rather stricter, clearer and shorter. Most of the metaphors were used in the sense of prayer or emphasis of spiritual life.

The rhetorical device typical for Pope Francis and his communication is the, many times mentioned, rule of three. He used it 24 times in 2017 which is 25 % less than in 2016. These are the most memorable three-part phrases used by Pope Francis in 2017: "Shalom, salaam, peace!"; "The Church wishes to be close to each person with the love, compassion and consolation.;" "Prayer is powerful. Prayer conquers evil. Prayer brings peace."¹⁷⁶

6.2. Instagram

Pope Francis has used only two social networks so far. He is active not only on *Twitter*, but also on *Instagram*. *Instagram* is a website through which its users can share the

¹⁷⁵ Pope Francis (pontifex). 9 April – 9 November 2017. Tweet.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. 29 January – 30 March 2017.

pictures or videos with their followers. The posts can be also accompanied by the texts as it is in the account of Pope Francis.

Pope Francis or *@Franciscus* has an account on *Instagram* since 19 March, 2016. This means that his *Twitter* account is three years older. Pope Francis shares the pictures, or videos made of pictures with more than 5,2 millions followers. Unlike his *Twitter* account, Pope Francis' *Instagram* is not divided into different languages. He has only one account in which he posts the texts in English, Italian, Portugal, Spanish, French and German. It is important to point out that some of his *Instagram* posts contain the quotations that Pope Francis already said in his speeches. Moreover, several quotations were used as both tweets and *Instagram* posts.

So far, Pope Francis posted 512 pictures and videos. The pictures are, in most cases, described by different quotations of Pope Francis; however, most of these quotations make sense even without the posted pictures. There are only few photos that do not contain an accompanying text and are described only by hashtags.

In his official account, Pope Francis has one general quotation: "I want to walk with you along the way of God's mercy and tenderness." This statement represents Pope's philosophy, not only, in social networks: He wants to influence the people and conveys the message of mercy and tenderness. Evidently, Francis sees his online communication as a journey and that is why he considers social networks as a walk with his followers.

6.2.1. Instagram stories 2016

The year 2016 was for Pope Francis full of online communication. He communicates with the public also through the pictures he posts. In some of his posts he even did not use any text. In 2016 year, he posted 274 pictures or videos, most of them with the accompanying

texts. Only eight of these pictures do not capture Pope Francis but something different. From the data in Figure 7, it is apparent that Pope Francis was active on *Instagram* mostly in April.

Each of the posts can be commented by the *Instagram* users and they can also click on the heart icon which means that they put a “like” on different posts. The picture with the biggest amount of “hearts” or “likes” is his first post (see fig. 4) with the statement “Pray for me.”¹⁷⁷ 327 005 people like this post.

One of the biggest differences between Pope Francis’ *Twitter* and *Instagram* accounts is the usage of hashtags. In 2016, Pope Francis used 1437 hashtags which is much more than he used in *Twitter*. The reason for this is that almost each of his *Instagram* posts is written in more than one language and, therefore, it requires the same hashtag used in different languages. The most frequently used hashtag of 2016 was ‘#mercy’ in its different forms.

Francis’ tweets in 2016 aimed to address different issues. The most discussed topic was the motivation of young people to not be afraid and develop their faith. Francis also wrote about the topics related to politics, ecology, sports, science, and largely migration and discrimination of different social groups and minorities.

After the analysis of the *Twitter* account of Pope Francis, I can conclude that Francis uses similar key words in both social networks. It is not surprising that the most frequently used word in this year was ‘mercy.’ Pope Francis used this word 103 times. Returning to Francis’ concept of mercy, it is important to emphasize that he uses it not only in religious thematic. He tries to convey the message of mercy to all people regardless of their beliefs. For example, he said: “This is also an expression of mercy: spreading beauty and joy in a world at times dark and sad.”¹⁷⁸ Also, he said: “We want to affirm that our lives are fulfilled when they are shaped by mercy, for that is the better part, and it will never be taken from us.”¹⁷⁹ This

¹⁷⁷ Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 19 March 2016.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 16 June 2016.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 28 July 2016.

means that Francis presents mercy not only as God's power but also as the power of humans who change this world. Pope Francis uses his concept of mercy to point out to the importance of equality: "Mercy also means accepting others without excluding or classifying them on the basis of their social background, language, race, culture, or religion..."¹⁸⁰ Mercy is the representation of social justice he communicates to his audience. Among other words that Pope Francis used frequently are 'God,' (81 times), 'pray' (82 times), 'love' (55 times), 'peace' (49 times), 'tender/ness' (34 times) and other words like 'Lord,' 'journey,' 'young,' 'family,' 'joy,' 'dialogue,' and 'hope.'

In 2016, Pope Francis posted on *Instagram* 266 pictures or videos with a text, and 66 of them are nonreligious. The nonreligious posts of 2016 make up almost 25 % of the overall posts in this year. These statements are some examples of Pope Francis' mentioning the topics without religious content:

Tenderness: a word almost forgotten and one which the world today needs, all of us need!
Every family can become a light in the darkness of the world!
We have come to call the attention of the world to this grave humanitarian crisis and to plead for its resolution. Only those who serve with love build peace.
Look ... if the sun is able to weep, so can we...
Scientific research should safeguard human life and the dignity of the person!
Be champions in sports, but above all champions in life!¹⁸¹

The results obtained from the analysis of Francis' nonreligious quotes can be compared in Figure 7. In April, Pope Francis used 20 nonreligious quotes, which is much more than in other months.

As shown in the analysis of Pope Francis' *Twitter*, he often posts his status in the form of a prayer. In 2016, he posted on *Instagram* only 26 prayers which is less than 10 % of his overall posts. For example, these quotations might be regarded as prayers:

May mercy guide our steps, inspire our reforms and enlighten our decisions.

¹⁸⁰ Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 12 November 2016.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* 5 April 2016 – 20 May 2016.

We pray for the earthquake victims in Ecuador and Japan. May God and all our brothers and sisters give them help and support.

Mother, we thank you for your faith; we renew our entrustment to you.

May God grant to the beloved Armenian people and to the whole world peace and consolation.

I pray for all victims of terrorism in the world. Please, no more terrorism! It is a dead-end street!¹⁸²

Although prayer is Pope Francis' internal language, he does not use a lot of prayers on *Instagram*, because he respects those who do not believe in prayers at all.

A lot has been written about metaphors in this thesis since a characteristic features of Pope Francis' language is his usage of metaphorical expressions. He uses this rhetorical device also on *Instagram*. In 2016, Pope Francis posted 33 phrases which can be considered as metaphors. For instance,

weapons of love; We are the guardians of creation!; our daily journey; the balm of faith; to build bridges; The Lord sows his Word; servant of the Lord; revolution of tenderness; the light of Christ; spiritual fruits; the door of salvation; true door of mercy; Hope is the fuel.¹⁸³

Francis' usage of metaphors is so frequent and natural that one can even believe that he uses these phrases without considering them as being metaphors. In other words, Pope Francis speaks metaphorically without any special rhetorical preparation of his speeches and online posts. This confirms Lakoff and Johnson's thesis mentioned in the previous chapter, i.e. metaphors are used in everyday life - not only in language but also in one' thought and action.

Another significant rhetorical device used by Pope Francis also on *Instagram* is the rule of three. As an illustration, these are some Francis' three-part tweets:

To dialogue means to be able to listen, to put ourselves in someone else's place, to build bridges.

In nature, in plants and in animals, we recognize the imprint of the Creator.

The future is in your heart, in your mind and in your hands.

Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!

Spirit prays in us, with us and for us.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 12 April – 23 July 2016.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.* 27 March – 15 December 2016.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 30 May – 1 December 2016.

In 2016, this strategy has been used by Pope Francis 28 times.

The content of Pope Francis' *Twitter* and *Instagram* does not differ much. However, there are differences in the form of Francis' posts. In particular, there are more pictures on *Instagram* and it contains much more rhetorical questions and direct communication with his audience. In other words, Pope Francis uses this social network to make people answer his questions. For instance, Francis shared a video of him talking to a little girl with a Down syndrome, in which he said:

Everyone can get to know God. Please, come over here...you are courageous, aren't you?! She is not afraid, she takes risks! She knows that diversity is a richness. And in this way she teaches us a lesson. You will never be discriminated against – you know how to defend yourself!¹⁸⁵

He used the part of his speech also on *Instagram* so it can be seen by more people. He asked the questions to communicate the idea of the power of individuality as well as diversity. As can be seen in this quotation, Pope Francis uses much longer posts on *Instagram* than on *Twitter*. Besides, one can notice that Pope Francis reacted according to the actions of the little girl. This means that his speech was not prepared in advance.

The fact that Pope Francis sees the importance in asking the questions is seen in the video in which he says:

I ask you: do you want to be young people who nod off, who are drowsy and dull?
[No!] Do you want others to decide your future for you? [No!] Do you want to be free?
[Yes!] Do you want to be alert? [Yes!] Do you want to work hard for your future?
[Yes!] You don't seem very convinced...Do you want to work hard for your future?
[Yes!]¹⁸⁶

This statement is the example of Francis' focus on youth, the example of his long *Instagram* posts, the example of his desire to hear the people's answers and the example of Pope Francis being a motivational speaker.

¹⁸⁵ Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 14 June 2016.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 12 August 2016.

Another feature of Francis' *Instagram* which differs from *Twitter* is the strategy of repetition. Pope Francis often repeats the phrases he writes or says. Sometimes, he repeats himself more than once. For instance, "...peace in Syria is possible! Peace in Syria is possible!" or "God never abandons us! We must have this certainty in our hearts: God never abandons us! [...] we are to become saints. Helping one another to become saints!"¹⁸⁷ This repetition does not mean that Pope Francis has nothing to say, but rather that he wants to emphasize the important ideas of his. This is not that common in Pope Francis' *Twitter* account.

6.2.2. Instagram stories 2017

In 2017, Pope Francis was very active on *Instagram* but he did not use it as much as in 2016. During the whole year he was posting pictures associated with diverse topics in the total of 219 pictures or videos. Only nine of them do not contain any text or are posted in languages other than English. There are no posts without the picture of Pope Francis. The results on his *Instagram* posts in 2017 are compared in Figure 8. The graph shows that Pope Francis was the most active in January and April 2017.

Even though Francis' *Instagram* is not satiated by posts, as it was in 2016, his followers seem to like the last year's posts more. For example, his picture showing him and the Nativity scene was "liked" by 398 685 people. The text within this picture says: "Contemplating the Baby Jesus, with His humble and infinite love, let us say to Him, very simply: "Thank you for doing all this for me!"" This picture has been posted during the Christmas time and evokes the idea of humility and thankfulness. Other posts are also popular, but this one has the biggest amounts of "hearts" so far.

¹⁸⁷ Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 5 July – 14 November 2016.

Pope Francis' account in the year 2017 contains not only fewer posts but also fewer hashtags. He used 91 hashtags describing the key words of his messages in different languages. The hashtags Pope Francis used the most were: '#GeneralAudience,' '#peace,' '#Hope,' and '#prayer.'

The topics of Pope Francis' *Instagram* in 2016 were different and this year, he was writing much more about sports because of the *Super Bowl*. He asked his followers to interconnect the health of their bodies with the health of their souls. Francis in 2017 was also writing a lot about Virgin Mary and her maternal love. This means that he mentioned a lot Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Coromoto, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of Aparecida. Except for these topics, Francis was talking about politics, ecology, spirituality and, of course, the problem of migration.

It is surprising that in 2017, Pope Francis was not writing about the concept of mercy that much. He wrote about it 13 times that is less than in 2016. Even though Francis' *Instagram* in this year was less spiritual and religious in terms of the topics, the words he used most were 'God' (53 times), 'prayer' (44 times), 'hope' (33 times), 'love' (31 times), 'Lord' (30 times) and 'peace' (26 times). Other frequent words were, again, 'journey,' 'young/youth,' 'family,' 'joy,' and 'tenderness.'

In 2017, Pope Francis used 44 nonreligious posts. This makes up 21 % of his overall *Instagram* posts. The data identified in these responses are summarized in Figure 8. It is evident that Pope Francis was posting nonreligious content mostly in February 2017 and these are some examples:

Life has to be shared with others.

Sports help us to spread a culture of encounter and solidarity. Together, athletes and helpers show us that there are no obstacles or barriers which cannot be overcome. You are a sign of hope for all who commit themselves to a more inclusive society.

The value of indigenous communities needs to be recognized and their full participation in society supported.

Serving with love and tenderness those who are in need helps us to grow in humanity.

The root of peace lies in the capacity to listen.

Solidarity gives rise to openness towards others.¹⁸⁸

These quotes represent mainly Pope Francis' ideas of love, humility and tenderness.

One kind of Pope Francis posts is the form of prayer. In 2017, he used the form of prayer only 17 times, which might mean that he wanted his posts to be more accessible to nonbelievers. These are the examples of his *Instagram* prayers from 2017:

May the Lord accompany you with his blessings throughout the new year.
May this year's Super Bowl be a sign of peace, friendship and solidarity for the world.
You, young people, are the ones who hold the future! I ask you to be builders of the world, to work for a better world. It is a challenge, yes it is a challenge. Do you accept it? Pray with me that young people may respond generously to their own vocation and mobilize for the great causes of the world.¹⁸⁹

Only 8 % of Francis' *Instagram* posts in 2017 might be considered as prayers.

Pope Francis' *Instagram* account in 2017 was also full of metaphors. He used 13 phrases that can be regarded as evidently metaphorical. For example: "the burden of our weaknesses;" "the path of salvation;" "Sow hope: sow oils of hope, perfumes of hope, rather than a vinegar of bitterness and hopelessness."¹⁹⁰ Pope Francis was also writing a lot about the "journey" which the believers experience. The concept of journey originates in the teachings of Jesuit, St. Ignatius. Also in this year, Pope Francis did not use euphemisms but wrote directly about war, death or terrorism.

In 2017, Pope Francis used the rule of three strategy 35 times. It is well illustrated by these posts: "I urge you: be brave, be generous and, above all, be joyful!" or "A woman is harmony, is poetry, is beauty."¹⁹¹ It is significant to mention that in 2017, Pope Francis directly pointed out to the importance of three-part phrases and statements. For instance, he said: "...I invite you to acclaim it three times [...], like the faithful of Ephesus..." or "I offer you some advice, three things that will help you grow in friendship with Jesus:..." or "Let us

¹⁸⁸ Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 18 January – 24 March 2017.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 4 January – 8 April 2017.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 5 January – 31 May 2017.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* 6 June – 30 November 2017.

contemplate the Cross of Jesus now and say all together three times to the crucified Lord...”¹⁹² This is the evidence that Pope Francis uses the rule of three as historical knowledge.

Pope Francis also leads people to repeat his ideas several times, as he himself does. For example: “...we have a Mother. We are not orphans. We have a Mother.;;” “It is a challenge, yes it is a challenge.;;” “It is graciousness, the graciousness of God....;;” “Be not afraid! Do not be afraid.”¹⁹³ In brief, Pope Francis contemplates about what he says and also he wants his audience to remember his ideas.

¹⁹² Pope Francis (franciscus). *Instagram*. 2 January – 12 April 2017.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.* 2 January – 26 June 2017.

CONCLUSION

As the first epistle to the Corinthians states, if we do not know the meaning of someone's language, we are the foreigners to the speaker and the speaker is a foreigner to us. This is the idea noted in the Introduction to this thesis and it suggests that language has not only one general meaning for all but that there are many languages and their varieties. The language and searching for its meanings was the primary purpose behind writing the thesis *The Power of Religious Language: Pope Francis and his Public Communication*.

The power of language evokes an ability to form an inspiring environment in which ideas flow. In this thesis, I worked with the concepts related to the power of language, communication, religion, leadership, politics, ecology and philosophy, and also the power of individuality and humility. I analyzed language as part of a discourse relevant to religion per se and Catholicism in particular. I tried to answer the questions of what religion means and what role language plays within religious system of beliefs. I have found out that language is an essential component of religious power.

I reached a conclusion that religious language is essential in changing the ways religion is perceived in contemporary society and I applied this fact to the teachings of Pope Francis, one of the most influential leaders of the 21st century. I have examined his communication with the public and found out that the right word and topic choices have the power to change the attitudes of believers as well as nonbelievers.

The theoretical part aimed to clarify the definitions of religion, language and leadership from diverse perspectives. The first chapter offered reasons why religion continues to be a powerful social force and language a significant phenomenon through which it is possible to study religious institutions and their representatives. The comparison of different authors and theoretical works dealing with religion helped me to understand that religion is not only an imagined category of thoughts; rather, religious beliefs are informed by rational

thinking. Discussion of internal religious language within communities causes religious beliefs to be not only products of one's imagination but also of relevant dialogue between believers and atheists. Also, religious concepts must be studied through the tools of scientific enquiry and contribute to philosophical debates. As pointed out in the empirical part, religious and spiritual thoughts instruct and inspire nonbelievers who seek to find an inspiration or motivation in different spheres of their lives.

The first chapter of this thesis pointed out that religion and its traditions are gradually changing and that there are many revolutionary theories that compel us to see religion differently. Due to the development of religious institutions, we live in the world where religion is the part of liberal modernism. Although this modernism is not always positive in terms of religious institutions, it seems to be bringing a new kind of freedom into the interreligious dialogue because communication between religions begins to coincide in the approaches toward ethics and morality. When considering the development of today's society, one can assume that there is the public's lack of interest in religious institutions. However, people tend to be looking for unsystematic spirituality, mysticism and esoteric.

The thesis is based in the concepts of religious language but I also ask the question whether religious language even exist. Returning to this question, it is now possible to state that it does exist. In terms of religious language, one has to differentiate between individual language and its functional identification. This means that everyone has his or her own language crucial for describing individual beliefs. When we recognize that our religious language is different from our everyday communication, it is necessary to find out what factors cause its diversity. One also has to distinguish between linguistic and metalinguistic religious language. This means that we can linguistically perceive our existential language, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, we may talk about this language metalinguistically.

Generally speaking, religious language is something through which the prayers, sermons, worships, scriptures and liturgies are thought, said or written. When external religious language is not enough for describing the infinite and supernatural entities, it is transformed into an internal language of individuals. Religious language forms an important part of the linguistic distinction that reflects cultural identity. It influences the overall behavior of people and their common language usage. It is affected by different traditions of usage and can also affect one's logical thought because as its users we often think in metaphors and specific speech acts.

Christian discourse is based on the sacred texts that are subject to diverse interpretations considered as a part of religious language. However, the content described by the religious language might be fictional for many people. Therefore, religious language serves to interpret the boundaries between reality and faith by metaphors, parables and other rhetorical devices.

Religious language is recognized not only within the communication of believers but also in the language of those who do not believe but use phrases and terms from the Bible and other religious texts in everyday communication. This means that some people use religious language and do not even know about it. However, religious language is not only about terminology. It also serves to bring new perspectives to different discussions. Religious language is a tool to discuss nonreligious topics from the religious point of view.

In my thesis, the theoretical approach toward religious language is followed by a practical application of religious sociolinguistics in the language of Pope Francis. In this investigation, the aim was to assess the characteristics that make Pope Francis' language different from the language of world leaders. I have analyzed this pope because the relationship between him and his audience exemplifies the particulars of religious language. I focused on Francis' communication because he communicates like no one before him, mostly

on the internet, which changes the way people perceive the Church. I offered critical analysis of Pope Francis' rhetoric and language that is significant for his communication with the public. The analysis of Francis' sermons, speeches, audiences and online communication results in the finding that Pope Francis brings new revolutionary thinking to the Church, enabled through his use of religious language.

The theoretical information about the background of Pope Francis reveals that Francis' Jesuit studies became formative for his rhetoric and language skills. Francis' rhetoric aims to be motivational, inspiring and also personal and contacting. The motivational value of Francis' statements depends on subjective inferences made by his audience. One of the most relevant characteristics of Pope Francis' language is his ability to adjust his speech to accommodate to his audience.

From the sociolinguistic perspective, I analyzed the religious language in terms of its form and content and the correlation with its social setting. I analyzed the form and content of Pope Francis' utterances and found out that there are different factors that affect his language usage and that his language is changing according to the reactions of his audience. Sociolinguistics studies how language is related to society as it is evident in Francis' language that shapes the religious society, i.e. religious communities and individuals. Pope Francis works on the idea of religion as fully integrated into the society by forming an equal relationship between the people of different beliefs.

In the discussion about Pope Francis' speeches, I pointed out that he has a direct control over his utterances. Even though he speaks several languages, he has a team that helps him translate his words to make them grammatically correct and semantically adequate. Pope Francis often has the speeches prepared in advance but it is evident from the online videos that he almost never follows such texts, reacts directly to the audience and his speeches tend to be spontaneous and unrehearsed.

From the linguistic point of view, Pope Francis writes about different topics by using certain key words and phrases, i.e. ‘mercy,’ ‘dialogue,’ ‘equality,’ ‘journey,’ and also typical religious terms like ‘God,’ ‘Lord’ and ‘prayer’ in statements with religious as well as nonreligious content. Pope Francis wants to affect as many people as possible and therefore his speeches are not based in a strictly religious discourse. For example, he communicates the idea of mercy which comes not only from God but also from every human being. Thus, he uses his religious language to interconnect the supernatural with the power of individuality.

The rhetoric of Pope Francis is a crucial element in the study of his communication with the public. A typical feature of his rhetoric is his asking the audience for prayers for the Pope himself as well as for the others. A prayer is the part of Francis’ religious language which he finds necessary in his communication with the public, which is straightforward. The Pope often says that he needs to understand the language of his audience to know how to communicate. Moreover, he teaches especially young people the rules of right communication and emphasizes that everyone needs a constructive form of communication.

One of the questions asked in the theoretical part of this thesis was whether religious language is rich in meaning. I have described several Pope Francis’ statements and found out that it is Francis’ goal to make this kind of language meaningful. He uses different tools for this, i.e. he works with philosophical argumentation to discuss the relationship between beliefs and reality and offers his personal stories as examples of the miracles he experienced. He also uses religious terms in nonreligious context whereas he tries to make them meaningful and real.

Another typical feature of Pope Francis’ rhetoric is his avoidance of euphemisms. When he uses euphemistic expressions, it is the intention to avoid repetitions. He is not afraid to speak about taboo topics and serious social issues which are not religiously proper. This confirms the fact that the task of religious language is not to hide or replace direct and

unambiguous names and labels; on the contrary, religious language contributes new words, new perspectives and new ideas. The language of Pope Francis is enormously important because it represents the position of the whole Church and affects the opinions of people around the world. Therefore, it is not possible for Pope Francis to hide anything within his words.

This thesis reveals the main features of Pope Francis' rhetoric, among them frequent usage of rhetorical devices such as metaphors, rhetorical questions and the rule of three. It has been emphasized that the usage of rhetorical devices is not only the feature of Pope Francis' language, but also the feature of religious language as such. The linguistic devices originate in the Bible and other sacred texts and are significant in explaining relationships with the supernatural. Pope Francis uses metaphors as something to make space and freedom for his audience. Metaphors are, according to the Pope, merciful. His conceptual metaphors render his overall communication metaphorical and show how he sees the world and relates it to his audience.

A communication is not only about words and Pope Francis proves it. His language contains statements emphasizing the power of communication; however, he also claims that the words are not enough. Pope Francis encourages his followers to take actions in their lives. Furthermore, Francis' religious language is not just about words but his actions and deeds represent his communication. This is the element of religious language: to do what particular religion aims to do even without the words. This has been seen in the case of Pope Francis who does the deeds of mercy. Francis' deeds result in his silent religious language.

The revolutionary character of Pope Francis' language also results in the criticism towards his papacy. This thesis revealed that Pope Francis is, surprisingly, criticized mostly by religious representatives and not by the opponents of religious institutions. It means that Francis' religious language brings to the Church the sense of newness and revolution which is

perceived positively by nonreligious individuals and negatively by the conservatives who have high religious functions. This is just a general view; Francis' real position depends on individual opinions.

A religious language is not an idea made up for the labeling of religious symbols. It is a real phenomenon which enables communication of one's faith in public discussion. According to the Pope, religious language has a strong value that should be accepted by those who do not use this language at all. He believes that religious language needs to be based in rational thinking and brings new perspectives to a public discourse. Even though religious language does not use euphemisms, it should not be harsh, unrepresentable and moralistic. What is more, Pope Francis sees religious language as something that can speak on behalf of those who cannot normally speak for themselves, i.e. the persecuted, condemned and socially excluded.

The last chapter of this thesis was designed to determine the effect of Pope Francis' online communication. The evidence from this study suggests that Pope Francis is profoundly active on the internet. This means that he communicates with the public through social media, especially *Twitter* and *Instagram*. Francis uses these websites very often and he evidently prefers *Twitter*. The analysis shows that these social networks make an effective platform for the communication with young people. The content of Pope Francis' posts indicates that he uses his religious language also outside the typical religious themes and describes different social issues through his prayers and faith. In the graphs below, I analyzed the quantity of Francis' posts and divided them into religious and nonreligious. Nonreligious posts are the quotations in which Francis did not use any religious terms or topics. In general, approximately 20 % of Francis' posts are nonreligious or nonspiritual. One of the findings in this chapter was that Pope Francis' language is more metaphorical when he writes about faith and focuses on young people. Another finding was that Francis uses the social networks as the

place of prayer and meditation. He uses these platforms as an instrument to pray for his followers and for himself.

If I should summarize religious language of Pope Francis into one sentence, I would point out that it is based in the idea of “Communication enabled by mercy.” These two words are the concepts that best characterize Pope Francis’ language. He uses the concept of communication in religious topics, on the one hand, while, on the other hand, he uses the concept of mercy in nonreligious topics. He brings to the society of the 21st century a new interreligious dialogue, the dialogue between believers and atheists and the dialogue between the young and the elders. One of the most obvious findings to emerge from this study is that the power of religious language rests not only in terminology, but also in new perspectives brought into the public dialogue. The evidence of this finding indicates that Pope Francis uses his religious language to communicate the ideas of merciful society steeped in mutual respect. Finally, it may be concluded that Pope Francis’ revolutionary teaching is by all means reflected in the power of religious language.

Appendices

Appendix A: Pictures and Graphs

Figure 1



Fig. 1. “Pope Francis poses with Donald, Melania and Ivanka Trump at the end of a private audience at the Vatican.” Photograph: Evan Vucci/AFP/Getty. In Stephanie Kirchgaessner. “Pope looks glum after Vatican meeting with Donald Trump.” *The Guardian*, 25 May 2017. Web. 9 January 2018.

Figure 2



Fig. 2. “Pope Francis, center, poses for a selfie (PA).” Photograph: Jo-Anne Rowney. “Most Americans dream of having a selfie with Pope Francis, archbishop says.” *Catholic Herald*, 14 August 2017. Web. 9 January 2018.

Figure 3



Fig. 3. “Pope Francis poses with youths during a meeting with the Piacenza diocese in Saint Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.” Photograph: L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters. In David R. Arnott. “Pope Francis poses for a ‘selfie’ at the Vatican.” *NBC News*, 29 August 2013. Web. 9 January 2018.

Figure 4



Fig. 4. “Pray for me.” Photograph: Pope Francis (franciscus). “Pray for me.” *Instagram*. 19 March, 2016.

Figure 5

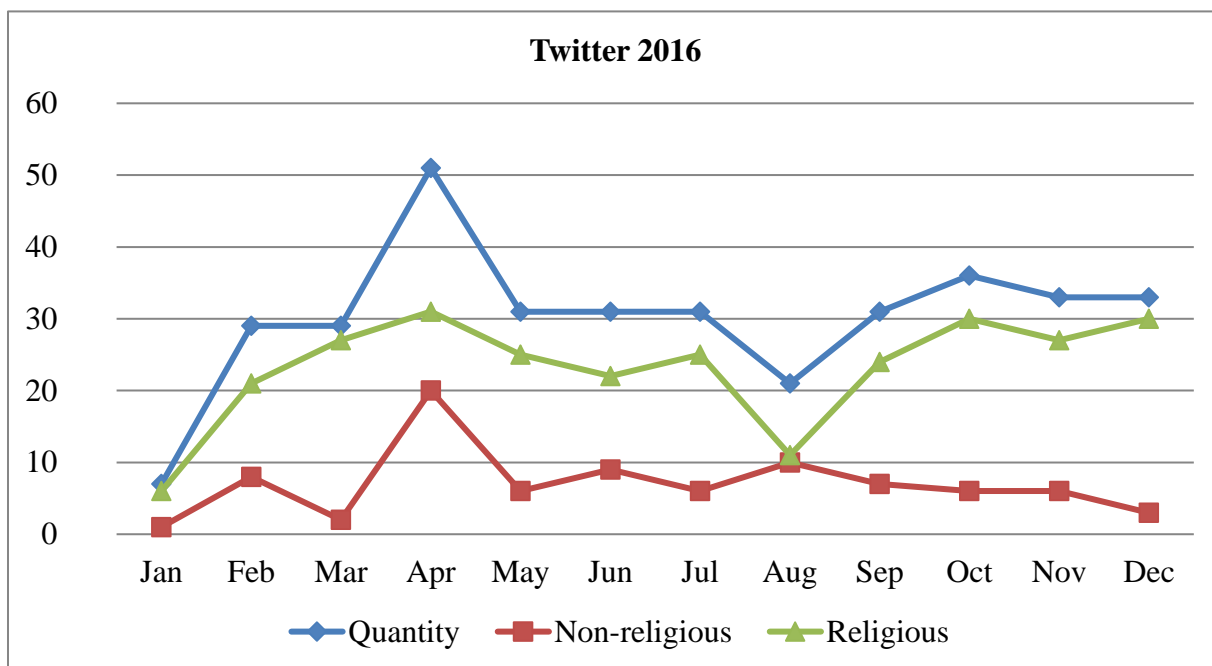


Fig. 5. “Graphic representation of Pope Francis’ Twitter 2016.” (Author’s graph).

Figure 6

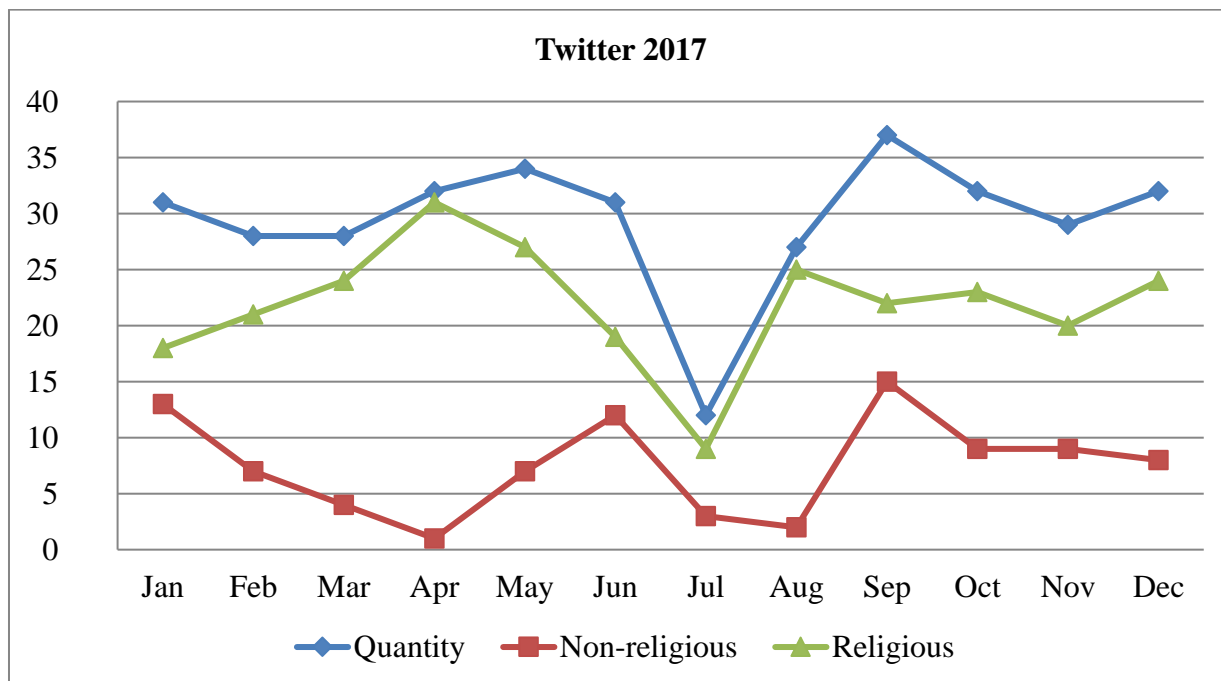


Fig. 6. “Graphic representation of Pope Francis’ Twitter 2017.” (Author’s graph).

Figure 7

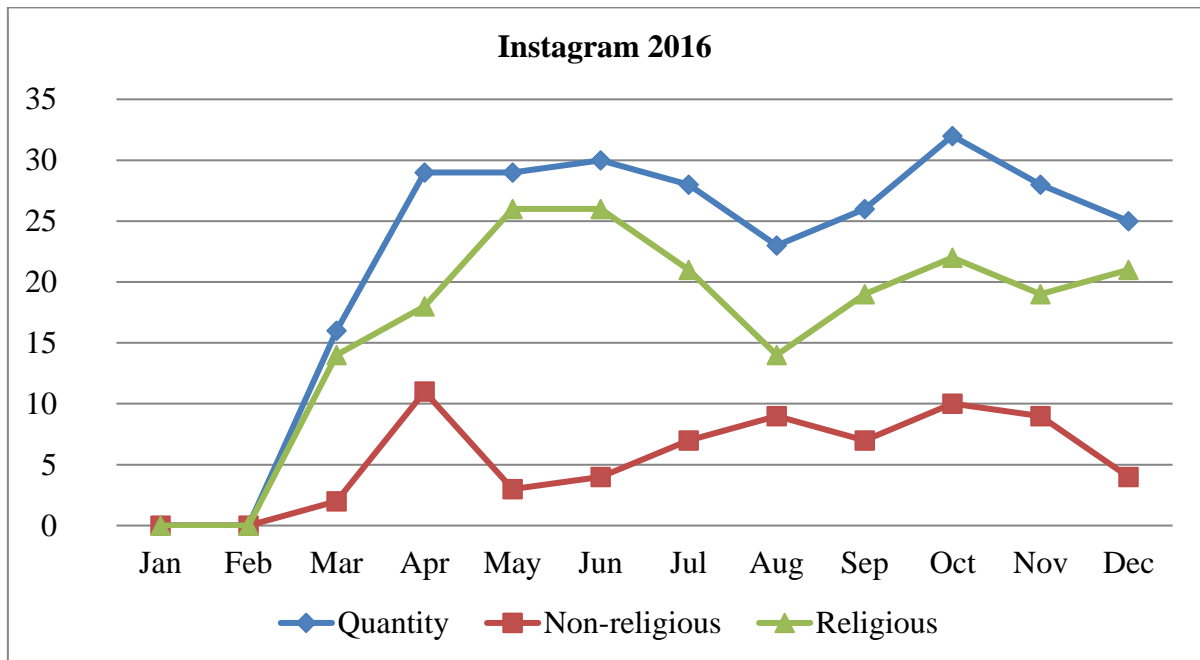


Fig. 7. “Graphic representation of Pope Francis’ Instagram 2016.” (Author’s graph).

Figure 8

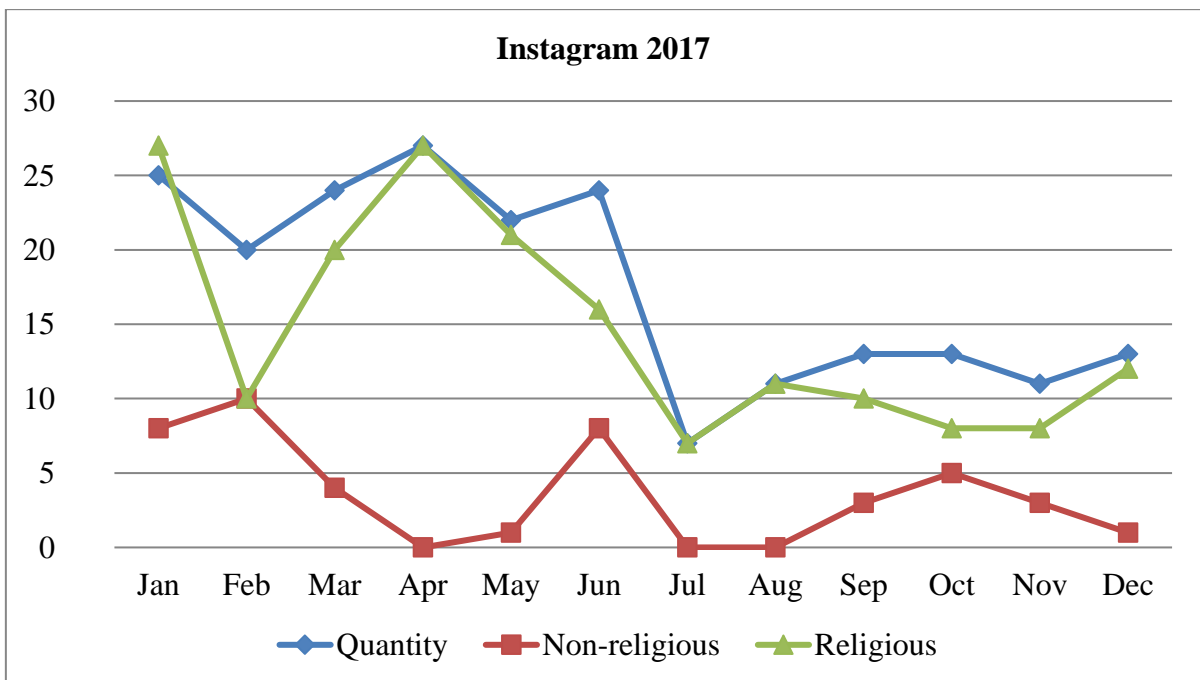


Fig. 8. “Graphic representation of Pope Francis’ Instagram 2017.” (Author’s graph).

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