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**PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ON THE AXIOLOGICAL
POTENTIAL OF OBITUARY HEADLINES IN THE
CONTEMPORARY BRITISH PRESS**
The proposal of axiological linguistic analysis

1. Introductory word

This paper constitutes an attempt to account for the semantic as well as pragmatic axiological characteristics of headlines of texts representing the genre of obituary in the following British national newspapers: *The Guardian* as well as *The Telegraph*. On a slightly different track, the paper fulfils a more general function as a proposal of the axiological analysis of meta-texts of press articles, here carried out on examples of the headlines taken from a variety of obituaries, within the residual approach to axiological properties of the language (see Bartmiński 2003). This paper is drawn from part of a larger analysis of meta-text of obituaries in the British press. Consequently, it falls within the larger project of the complex, axiological, genological analysis of the genre of obituary.

1.1. Theoretical assumptions

From the perspective of the methodology which was applied to the present analysis, the paper constitutes an illustration of the residual approach to values and value judgements reflected in natural language and its textual manifestation. Bartmiński (2003:59–60) explains that the residual stance on value judgements within the language, according to which values come into language as if from the outside, e.g. culture, society (examples given by the author), contrasts with the holistic approach, according to which values embrace the whole language, i.e. the axiological domain constitutes the essential component of the linguistic domain. The residual approach to axiological parameters of the language entails the distinction between

systemic, semantic and extra-systemic pragmatic valuations (see Puzynina 1983) (e.g. evaluative connotations are culturally motivated, whereas the holistic approach rejects this distinction) because it assumes that the axiological domain, which contains a given hierarchy of value and value judgements, constitutes, as Bartmiński (2003:81) clarifies, *the basis for the whole process of linguistic categorisation* and thus values do not constitute additional elements of meaning, but, as mentioned above, pervade the whole language.

Although one finds oneself able to appreciate the cognitive holistic approach to the axiological properties of linguistic entities, a decision has been made to test in the present paper the possibilities of the residual approach in the analysis of value judgements expressed within the natural language and its textual representation – here the headlines of obituaries. Thus, the author accepts the distinction between systemically motivated valuations, i.e. the case when the axiological component enters the semantic structure of the linguistic entity, and pragmatically justified valuations, e.g. through connotations. The paper tries to illustrate that even when the structural residual approach to axiological properties of the natural language and its textual manifestations is applied, cognitive notions, such as Johnson's (1987) preconceptual image schemata (see also Krzeszowski 1997) or the idealised cognitive model (ICM) (see Lakoff 1987), could still be used, although would be regarded here in a different manner.

Contrary to the cognitive holistic approach, the preconceptual image schemata, for example, used within the residual approach, could justify the pragmatic rather than semantic facet of given valuations, because the schemata are likely to be regarded in the residual approach with respect to the extra-linguistic field of human experience and not with regard to the very language itself – the approach that results from structuralism in linguistics which postulates the autonomy of the language. The notion of ICM must also be regarded within the residual approach in a different way than within the cognitive holistic approach because the methodology of the residual approach leads one to assume that the axiological properties of some lexical entities, e.g. *education* or *media*, belong to the pragmatic sphere of connotations, and, since ICM of these items constitute the gestalt of all their features, among them axiological, one must also presume that some elements of a given ICM are of a semantic character and others belong to the sphere of pragmatics, e.g. connotations and stereotypes justifying these connotations. That is why the cognitive notion of ICM can still be used for the purpose of linguistic analysis carried out within the residual approach to valuations; but within this approach it appears to be a gestalt of semantic as well as pragmatic features of a given concept, where the axiological properties belong, in many cases, to the latter.

It is claimed here that the terminology characteristic of a given paradigm of linguistics, e.g. cognitive linguistics, can be at least partly used for the purpose of the analysis carried out within another paradigm, e.g. the structural, residual approach to the axiological properties of the natural language, whose deficiencies can be reduced by cognitive terminology, which, in turn, result from cognitive methodology. Thus, the present paper constitutes a kind of experiment of complementing the residual, structural approach to the axiological linguistic analysis with cognitive terminology.

1.2. Organisation of the paper

The present paper consists of the following parts: an outline of the general characteristics of the genre of obituary, a description of the structural properties of the headlines of obituaries and a presentation of the preliminary results of linguistic axiological analysis of obituary headlines in the British press. The paper also contains a conclusion in which possibilities of further analysis of axiological properties of headlines of press articles by using terminology of different linguistic paradigms are alluded to.

2. General remarks on the genre of obituary

Obituary represents a creative, non-fictional, retrospective piece of writing that falls within the journalistic genres of speech. This speech genre finds its realisation in texts which constitute a kind of account of the life of a person who died and may include, among other things, a character sketch and elements of eulogy. The genre of obituary can be realised either as a report-like professional journalistic piece of writing or as termed by Starck (2001) *homespun obituaries* or *folksy eulogies* written by the family of the deceased. Such *folksy eulogies*, however, are beyond the scope of the present paper, which is to specifically focus on the analysis narrowed down to subheadings of report-like broadsheet obituaries.

The choice of material for the axiological linguistic analysis, i.e. headlines of obituaries, is justified by the fact that the linguistic literature concerning genres of speech still lacks, as Corona Marzol (2006:119) claims, the description of *distinctive properties and functionality of obituary headlines*, let alone their axiological properties, which constitute the main objective of the present paper.

The main purpose of obituary headlines is to provide the reader with a reply to the following questions: *WHO is the title character?* and *WHY has he been chosen to be described in a newspaper?* The answers to these questions imply axiological consequences because presentation of the subject can be

linked with implying some value judgements concerning the deeds of the deceased, professions, achievements, accomplishments as well as such other related fields as social or political roles. Such an axiological assessment, which can be either expressed directly or presupposed by the text, refers to linguistic as well as pragmatic means of expressing values, e.g. culturally motivated connotations. Thus, obituary headlines do not only constitute an insight into the text by introducing the subject to whom the obituary is devoted, but they may also bias readers for or against the facts concerning the main character by imposing upon or at least inducing the reader to accept a given axiological interpretation before the reader actually starts to read the main text introduced by the headlines.

3. Structural properties of obituary headlines

The structural properties of obituary headlines can be regarded as genre specific; a conclusion which is justified by the high frequency of given syntactic structures occurring within these headlines. Corona Marzol (2006:120) writes that the headlines of obituaries consist of two decks, i.e. the *main headline* and *small headline*: the former presents the name of the subject to whom an obituary is dedicated, and the latter refers to the subtitle which describes the subject from the main headline. The most frequent structures within small headlines of obituaries embrace elaborate noun phrases, where the nominal head can be modified by adjectives and/or postmodified by participial clauses or relative clauses introduced by the interrogative pronoun *who* e.g.:

Bill Clement (*main headline*)
Soldier and rugby international who became an
outstanding administrator of the sport in Wales
(*small headline*)
(The Telegraph 03 Apr 2007)

According to Corona Marzol (2006:121) the most expanded realization of a nominal group within obituary small headline falls under the following schema:

Epithet/s + Classifier/s + Thing/s + Qualifiers [minor or/and major processes].

The high frequency of such extended nominal structures results from the fact that obituary headlines fulfil a dual function; they attract the reader's attention and give the gist of a story. Corona Marzol (2006:123) claims that the small, not elaborate headlines *fail to fulfill headlines' double function of attracting the reader's attention and giving the gist of the story. Short headlines are hardly informing and definitely not tempting or intriguing.*

4. Examples of valuations within obituary subheadings

The evaluation, as mentioned above, can be expressed either explicitly or implicitly. The explicit evaluation of the subject within headlines of obituaries analysed here is predominantly expressed by linguistic, i.e. systemic means of expressing values, such as adjectival phrases as well as participial constructions, as illustrated in the following example from the *The Guardian* obituary of John Sinclair: *Brilliant language scholar and deviser of the 'idiom principle'* (Thursday May 3, 2007), and *The Telegraph* obituary of Belinda Wright: *Elegant ballerina who performed internationally and was acclaimed as 'the perfect dancer'* (02 Apr 2007). These two subtitles clearly illustrate the explicit valuation expressed here by lexical entities such as the adjectives *brilliant*, *elegant*, *perfect* as well as the past participle *acclaimed*, which is used here in the passive construction. In all these lexical means of expressing axiological assessment, the value judgements are embedded in their semantic structure, which is reflected by definitions of their meanings, quoted here from the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (<http://dictionary.oed.com/entrance.dtl>) together with numerical references of dictionary entries:

Brilliant: 2.b. *Of persons: Very distinguished or celebrated; esp. distinguished by talent and cleverness; having showy good qualities;*

Elegant: 2 a. *Characterized by refined grace of form (usually as the result of art or culture); tastefully ornamental. Of physical movements: Graceful, free from awkwardness, 6. b. Refined in manners and habits (formerly also, in feeling);*

Perfect: 1.a. *spec. Of, marked, or characterized by supreme moral or spiritual excellence or virtue; righteous, holy; immaculate; spiritually pure or blameless, b. gen. In a state of complete excellence; free from any imperfection or defect of quality.*

The definition of the lexeme *acclaim* is quoted from the Collins Cobuild Advanced Learners English Dictionary (2003) as follows: if someone or something is *acclaimed*, they are praised enthusiastically. That means that positive connotations of the lexical entities defined above are not motivated merely by cultural or social conventions but by the semantic system of the very language and, thus, belong to the systemic means of expressing value.

In the vast majority of samples, however, the given valuation, be it positive or negative, is not expressed directly but it is implied or presupposed by the text. Consequently, such cases represent the pragmatic type of evaluation, in which various value judgements concerning given issues are motivated not by the linguistic system but rather by speakers'/readers' general knowledge of the world as well as their cultural competence. General

knowledge is understood here as a deposit of information common for the author and reader/speaker as well as various stereotypes according to which the general knowledge is often organised. This knowledge enables readers to draw given inferences from the text and base their axiological judgement on these inferences. There are, however, cases where given values can be evoked only by reference to some specific, not common, knowledge of an encyclopaedic nature; hence in such cases valuation is possible only through the recognition of connotations restricted to some group of speakers, e.g. artists, scientists, etc.

The implicit evaluation can be explicated according to Laskowska's (1992) axiological formulae translated here into English as follows: Notice that X {and that is G/BV), which is highly schematic and can be read in the following way: Notice that X, e.g. that he (Jim Stevenson) is pioneering the education with new media (Thursday March 15, 2007 The Guardian), and that is Good/Bad with respect to values V, e.g. perfectionism and cognitive values. It can be seen that such an evaluation requires the readers' general knowledge, in the present example it is the knowledge concerning the domain of education as well as media, i.e. the idealised cognitive model (ICM) (see Lakoff 1987) of media that embraces, among other things, widely-shared information and stereotypes concerning different media and their impact on education. The positive pragmatic evaluation of the subject's actions also sheds a positive light on the very subject, which means the indirect axiological assessment of the subject through his/her deeds. Positive values assigned to the subject and implied by the context are in the present example intensified by the lexeme pioneer that informs the reader that the subject is among the first to implement media in education.

Lexical entities such as pioneer, pioneering, leading occur particularly frequently in obituary headlines taken from The Guardian, in those which present the subject from the positive perspective. Such a positive context in which they appear may imply that being at the forefront of something, being in the leading position, being the first in doing something tends to be regarded in positive terms, contrary to being at the back of something, at the backstage. The aforementioned expressions reflect the FRONT-BACK schema, which belongs to preconceptual image schemata proposed by Johnson (1987), according to which, as Krzeszowski (1997:126) states, FRONT is PLUS and BACK is MINUS. It is noteworthy that we can distinguish primary and secondary evaluation. In the present example the primary evaluation concerns the deeds of the subject, whereas the secondary evaluation refers to the very subject, i.e. his skills, and that is why it is the evaluation with respect to pragmatic and perfectionism values. Such a pragmatic evaluation as well as that of semantic type within the subheadings of obituaries can be further clarified by the following examples:

Table 1

THE GUARDIAN	THE TELEGRAPH
<p>1. Mstislav Rostropovich A superb Russian cellist and conductor whose humanity and moral stature matched his musical eminence (Saturday April 28, 2007)</p>	<p>1. Kurt Vonnegut Science fiction novelist who emerged as one of America's greatest literary satirists and a guru of the counterculture during the 1970s. (12 Apr 2007)</p>
<p>2. Belinda Wright Virtuoso English ballerina, she danced with the Rambert and Festival Ballet (Thursday April 5, 2007)</p>	<p>2. Joanna Buchan Gifted radio broadcaster whose mellifluous voice was heard on Today and caught the attention of Nelson Mandela. (07 Apr 2007)</p>
<p>3. Philippa Pearce One of the finest children's writers of her generation (Tuesday January 2, 2007)</p>	<p>3. Colin Graham Outstanding director and designer who staged most of the operas of Benjamin Britten and later worked in America. (09 Apr 2007)</p>
<p>4. Tony Goble One of Wales's best loved artists, he dedicated himself to the local community (Friday April 27, 2007)</p>	<p>4. Ian Wooldridge Sports writer admired for the quality of his prose and his irreverent sense of humour. (06 Mar 2007)</p>
<p>5. Willie Pep Featherweight champion considered by many to be the greatest of all time, not least because of his Detroit defensive style (Saturday December 2 , 2006)</p>	<p>5. Penny Phillips Ambulance driver awarded the Croix de Guerre for her intrepid service during the Fall of France in 1940. (13 Mar 2007)</p>

<p>6. David Ervine Loyalist leader widely praised for his journey from terrorism to peaceful politics (Tuesday January 9, 2007)</p>	<p>6. Bryan Balkwill Conductor at Covent Garden, Glyndebourne and Sadler's Wells. (09 Mar 2007)</p>
<p>7. David Halberstam A Pulitzer-winning reporter, he questioned the official line about the Vietnam war (Wednesday April 25, 2007)</p>	<p>7. Peter Semmens Train expert and author who supervised the building of the Railway Museum at York (03 Apr 2007)</p>
<p>8. Ian McGregor Tropical medicine expert who brought patience and skill to the fight against malaria (Friday March 9, 2007)</p>	<p>8. Laurie Baker Architect inspired by Mahatma Gandhi who pioneered low-cost, 'eco-friendly' housing in India. (02 Apr 2007)</p>

The order in which the aforementioned examples are arranged is not accidental, for it presents types of expressing value judgements occurring in obituary headlines from the most axiologically explicit, i.e. where value judgements are embedded in the semantic structure of linguistic means, to the most axiologically implicit, i.e. in which valuations are only implied and/or presupposed by the text. As mentioned above, the comprehension and evaluation of the content of headlines exemplified above require not only the reader's linguistic competence, but also general knowledge of the world as well as cultural competence, which refers to the hierarchy of values characteristic for a given culture in which one lives. Taking into account all these remarks, let us try to analyse the aforementioned examples.

The first three examples from each column of the table represent the least prototypical type of axiological assessment of the subject described in the subheadings of obituaries. That is, these examples illustrate the direct, explicit evaluation of the subject by systemic means such as the adjectives: *superb*, *virtuoso*, *outstanding*, the superlative form of *fine* and *great*, as well as nouns: here the noun *eminence*. All the aforementioned lexical items, functioning as linguistic means of expressing values, belong to purely evaluative lexemes, i.e. lexical items which primarily evaluate given entities in positive or negative terms

without specifying the aspect of this evaluation, that is, the kind of values with regard to which an entity is assessed, e.g.: hedonistic, vital, cognitive, ethical, spiritual values (see Laskowska 1992). That means the axiological charge of purely evaluative lexical items does not stem from given connotations, which, though socially conventionalised, form an additional component of the meaning, but this charge constitutes the essential and main component within the semantic structure of purely evaluative linguistic entities. The presence of linguistic means of explicit valuation justifies the systemic, semantic and direct character of evaluation present in the aforementioned headlines.

Another three examples from *The Guardian*, i.e. those from 4 to 6, as well as two illustrations from *The Telegraph*, i.e. from 4 to 5, also represent direct, systemic evaluation, but, this time, it is emphasized that given positive or negative value judgements do not belong to the writer of the obituary but rather to others who knew the subject to whom the obituary is dedicated. The evaluation from the others' perspective is expressed by participial clauses, which modify the nominal heads referring to subjects being evaluated, e.g.: *champion **considered by many to be the greatest of all time**, leader **widely praised for...**, Sports writer **admired for...**, Ambulance driver **awarded the Croix de Guerre for...***

Nevertheless, such an explicit, systemic valuation occurs relatively rarely in obituary headlines. As mentioned above, the evaluation which prevails in headlines of obituaries is pragmatic, which makes use of inferences drawn from the text as well as connotations pragmatically motivated. The evaluation based on implications generated by the text of subheadings can be recognised in all other examples presented in the table above, which are placed under scrutiny in the subsequent paragraphs.

Although some headlines seem to present only pure facts from the subject's life without any explicit valuation of those facts, the very choice of propositional content of them may actually induce the reader to evaluate the subject with respect to given positive or negative value judgements formulated on pragmatic grounds, such as general knowledge of the world, cultural competence as well as individual experiences.

The headline of the *Guardian* obituary of David Halberstam constitutes another example of how axiological potential of obituary headlines is conditioned by the selection of propositional content and linguistic choices made by the author and thus it deserves a detailed description. The headline in question consists of two parts, namely the noun phrase, in which the nominal head is pre-modified by the present participial, i.e. *A Pulitzer-winning reporter*, and a simple clause *he questioned the official line about the Vietnam war*. These two parts can evoke both connotative valuation and that implied by the text (see Puzynina 1983, Laskowska 1992) respectively. The noun phrase *A Pulitzer-winning reporter* tends to be ascribed positive values with respect to perfectionism, which stems from positive connotations of the verb *win* occurring here in the form of

present participle *winning*, which is, in turn, modified by the proper name *Pulitzer*, which signifies here a prestige reward and consequently evokes positive connotations. Thus, the positive values assigned here to the noun phrase stem not only from positive connotations of the Pulitzer-reward, but also from the image schema SOURCE-PATH-GOAL (Johnson 1987, cited in Krzeszowski 1997) according to which reaching a goal tends to be judged positively, and in the present example this positively regarded goal is implied by the expression *Pulitzer-winning*.

The next part of the subheading consists of a simple clause *he questioned the official line about the Vietnam war*. This clause seems to convey only pure information about the attitude of the subject to the government stance on the Vietnam war without any explicit assessment of this attitude. Nevertheless, the lack of any value judgements on the linguistic level of the present clause does not mean that the whole clause is deprived of any axiological potential. In fact, given value judgements, though not expressed explicitly or intended by the author of the text, can still be implied by the very text, here the clause being part of the obituary subheading. The reader is able to recognize these implications on pragmatic grounds mentioned above. The noun phrase *the official line about the Vietnam War* implies that besides the official line there is some hidden one that might be more consonant with the truth than the official line. Such a supposition may seem quite probable to the reader especially given the context that this official line is questioned. This implication that there are two lines about the Vietnam war functions here as a presupposition, since it still remains unchanged after negation *he doesn't question the official line*. Recognizing this presupposition may result in negative cognitive and ethical values ascribed to the semantic content of the phrase *the official line about the Vietnam War*.

Nevertheless, the whole relation set by the verb *questioned* between the subject *he*, which refers here to the Pulitzer-winning reporter, and the object, i.e. *the official line about the Vietnam war*, tends to evoke positive cognitive and ethical values according to the common sense rule: being against something negative (here the official line which may imply some concealment of truth) is likely to be judged in rather positive terms (here with respect to ethical values-justified by the subject defending the truth hidden by official line on the Vietnam war- as well as cognitive and social values- the subject willing to reveal the truth to the public). Thus, the possible evaluation implied by the present subheading can be explicated as follows:

X (David Halberstam) objected to Y (the official line of Vietnam war) and that, i.e. his objection, may be judged positive with respect to ethical, cognitive and social values.

The connotative valuation and that based on implications can also be noticed in other examples mentioned above. For instance, the headlines of the obituary presenting Ian McGregor in *The Guardian* (Friday March 9, 2007), i.e.: *Tropical*

medicine expert who brought patience and skill to the fight against malaria, clearly illustrates the way in which linguistic choices made by the obituary writer imply a given axiological interpretation. The axiologically relevant linguistic choices in the present example refer to vocabulary, i.e. lexical items such as *expert* and abstract nouns: *patience* and *skill*, as well as to the whole clause *brought patience and skill to the fight against malaria*. We could imagine that the author could have made other choices of vocabulary and phrases used in the present subheading. For example, instead of presenting the subject as a *Tropical medicine expert* he could describe him just as a doctor who specialises in tropical medicine. The author, however, chose the lexeme *expert* to emphasize a highly professional knowledge and skills of the subject in the field of tropical medicine. In other words, the noun *expert* strongly implies a positive evaluation concerning one's ability to do something with respect to perfectionism as well as cognitive values.

Another linguistic choice made by the writer in the present subheadings concerns the presentation of subject's achievements and accomplishments in a form of a relative clause with the verb phrase *brought patience and skill* that is axiologically charged with regard to positive values. The whole relative clause, i.e. *who brought patience and skill to the fight against malaria*, implies a positive assessment of the subject's actions with respect to perfectionism, which is justified by patience and skill applied to the fight against malaria. All those assessments represent axiological potential of the propositional content of the present subheading, that is justified by an existing general knowledge of the world, according to which we assess malaria in negative terms as a disease, we perceive fighting against something negative as a positive action, and such terms like *patience* and *skill* are also ascribed positive connotations through social and cultural convention. All those connotations, as well as the implications drawn from the text, shed a positive light on the subject of the present subheading and consequently represent a positive pragmatic evaluation. This kind of evaluation, i.e. implicit, based on given connotations and inferences drawn from the text can be also recognised in the subheading introducing Peter Semmens in the obituary from *The Telegraph* (03 Apr 2007) where he is presented as a *train expert and author who supervised the building of the Railway Museum at York*. Lexical entities, i.e. the noun *expert* as well as verb *supervise* also evoke positive assessment of skills of the subject and consequently belong to the lexical choices which bear pragmatic axiological consequences.

Axiological judgments evoked by obituary headlines can also draw on connotations called up by proper names referring to the famous and highly regarded, as well as infamous and lowly regarded, people or places. Three obituary headlines taken from *The Telegraph*, namely those from the table above which present Bryan Balkwill, Laurie Baker and Joanna Buchan respectively, illustrate such a connotative valuation based on reference to well-known people

and places. The subheadings introducing Laurie Baker and Joanna Buchan are repeated here for the sake of clarity:

Joanna Buchan

Gifted radio broadcaster whose mellifluous voice was heard on Today and caught the attention of Nelson Mandela (07 Apr 2007)

Laurie Baker

Architect inspired by Mahatma Gandhi who pioneered low-cost, 'eco-friendly' housing in India. (02 Apr 2007).

These two headlines make use of the names of political and religious leaders, i.e. Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi and by doing so shed positive light on the subject's skills and/or actions. For instance, Joanna Buchan's *mellifluous voice* can be regarded in the aforementioned headline as a metonymy of her skills as a radio broadcaster and because it caught attention of such an eminent, internationally recognized figure as Nelson Mandela, this *voice*, or rather the broadcasting skills, tend to be judged in positive terms. The same situation can be observed in the subheading of Laurie Baker, where the subject is portrayed in a good light partly through reference to Mahatma Gandhi, who is presented in the present subheading as a source of inspiration for the subject and who is acclaimed internationally owing to his supreme moral and spiritual excellence.

Contrary to the two headlines described in the previous paragraph, the positive assessment of the subject within the subheading introducing Bryan Balkwill as a *conductor at Covent Garden, Glyndebourne and Sadler's Wells* does not draw on reference to celebrities internationally acclaimed, rather it makes use of the toponyms referring to famous places of excellent musical performances, which presents the skills of the subject in a very good light, for only such perfect skills allow the subject to perform in those places.

5. Concluding remarks

The present paper explains and illustrates various ways of expressing value judgements within headlines of obituaries. From the outset, an attempt has been made to describe the least common way of expressing axiological assessment, i.e. from the direct, explicit and systemic evaluation by linguistic means of expressing value judgements. Next, examples which illustrate the prevailing type of possible evaluation within obituary headlines are presented, namely the pragmatic evaluation, which can be based on given culturally- and/or socially-motivated connotations, which are evoked by various linguistic entities, as well as on inferences drawn from the text. The paper indicates the significance of the

very choice of propositional content for the axiological character of the text, here the headlines of obituaries.

The paper also shows that a residual approach to values and value judgements can be completed with cognitive notions, though these cognitive terms acquire different significance and meaning within the paradigm to which they were adjusted. The paper does not reply to all questions and doubts concerning methodological borrowings, i.e. the possibilities of using and adjusting methods of analysis of one linguistic paradigm (in the present paper the cognitive holistic approach) to another one, here the structural residual approach to the axiological properties of the language. Nevertheless, the present paper draws on the assumption that different approaches to the phenomenon of language do not constitute clear-cut theories which can be regarded as mutually exclusive, but they rather form paradigms, which can complete one another with respect to a description of given linguistic and textual phenomena. This is clearly seen in the part showing examples of valuation within obituary headlines, where an attempt is made to illustrate and explain these valuations by means of cognitive terminology.

Despite the preliminary character of remarks on axiological, linguistic and genological properties of headlines of obituaries presented here, the paper can be used as a basis for further axiological linguistic analysis of headlines as well as other types of meta-text within press articles. The paper may also be used to demonstrate the possibilities of using terminology from different linguistic paradigms for the purpose of the textual analysis.

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