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Dialogue with Tradition in Historical Advertising Discourse. Polite Forms of Address

1. Introduction

The aim of the article is to show how the attitude toward the readers was expressed in historical advertising discourse in the context of the principals traditionally applied at the time pertaining to linguistic politeness, the changes they underwent and the development of the advertising discourse itself.¹ In the analysis, we focus primarily on describing the ways readers were addressed.

The research is limited to a period spanning from the second half of the 19th century to the first four decades of the 20th century, during which professional advertising, the advertising industry, the first advertising agencies and the media themselves – the press, radio and cinema – were undergoing a process of development.

In the collected source material, the two oldest texts are dated to ca. 1850 – the first text is an advertising leaflet, “D.E. Friedlein’s bookshop in Kraków at Główny Rynek N° 237”, and the second, from 1855, was labelled “Price list of vegetable, fodder and forest seeds, grasses and flowers in Kazimierz Rutkowski’s trade in Główny Rynek in the corner house at ul. Sienna 15 in Kraków.” In the second half of the 19th century, commercial advertisements began to appear regularly in the press; for example, in the journal *Czas*, inserts were first

1 The issue of politeness as one of the key aspects of historical advertising discourse is described in more detail in the book *Reklama handlowa w dawnym Krakowie. Praktyki komunikacyjne* [Pałka 2022]. In it, the author uses diverse illustrative material and discusses the linguistic phenomenon selected for analysis, focusing her attention primarily on the relationship with tradition – the traditional rules of the language etiquette of the time, including the principles of mercantile courtesy and commercial epistolography.

systematically published in the 1856 editions, and in *Józefa Czecha Kalendarz Krakowski* (*Józef Czech's Kraków Calendar*), beginning with number 50 in 1881. Moreover, the end of the 19th century brought a significant increase in publishing initiatives, which in Galicia resulted from a change in the press law, because, as Jerzy Jarowiecki explains, “The Constitution of 1867 proclaimed freedom of the press within the limits of the applicable laws and abolished the concession system. On 9 July 1894, the publishing deposit was abolished, followed by the abolishment of the stamp fee on 1 January 1900”; this fee was included in the price of each issue of the newspaper [Jarowiecki 2003: 18]. The year 1939 marks the terminus of research in the undertaken scope, naturally as a consequence of the outbreak of the Second World War, which abruptly ended the transformation process in advertising discourse in Poland,² and in particular, reversed the effects of the most intense period of change in advertising, which covered the 1930s. During this period, we see the strong influence on commercial advertising of such phenomena as the development of the nationwide press, graphics, photography and poster art, as well as the emergence of radio and film discourse.

The source material consists of texts from Kraków, i.e., those for which Kraków was the site of the commercial activities conducted by the advertising companies that produced the content and/or place the place where the printed matter was published and distributed. Hence, the corpus of the source texts includes documents associated with everyday life – ephemeral printed materials stored in the collections of the Jagiellonian Library, the Kraków Museum and the National Museum in Kraków. These include advertising leaflets, postal advertising, posters, placards and advertising posters, brochures, company catalogues and information brochures (containing product descriptions without price information), price lists and catalogues with product price lists, as well as corporate printed matter such as letterhead, envelopes, notes, bills, packaging, company handbags and labels and other promotional printed matter: invitations, letters, thematic booklets (e.g., recipes, guides), calendars and brochures, etc.

2 This article emphasises the institutional dimension of discourse and adopts a broad understanding of this concept as: 1. the highest unit of organisation of communication being a model or convention, placed in the sphere of abstraction; 2. a collection of texts constructed from the perspective of specific social positions and constituting the basis for a system of standards, strategies and patterns of behaviour which determines the forms of communication [cf. Grzmil-Tylutki 2000: 12–15; Zimny 2008: 122–123]. It is also recognised that advertising discourse, following Halina Grzmil-Tylutki, “finds its expression in existing discursive formations (documents), which are the articulation of the communities that comprise them” [Grzmil-Tylutki 2000: 108]. Importantly, we recognise that advertising discourse was born and developed within the context of commercial discourse [cf. Sujowska-Sobisz 2013, 2015], and over time, specifically in the early 20th century, it became one of its specialised varieties.

In addition, the corpus includes a radio advertisement for the company “Herebewo” and printed advertisements from selected Kraków periodicals, i.e., the magazines *Ilustrowany Kuryer Codzienny* and *Czas*, as well as those found in address books and calendars.

2. Contexts of linguistic polite forms in historical commercial advertising

The polite communication practices used in the advertising texts under consideration should first be compared to the general rules of the etiquette model in place at the time, which outline the principles of mercantile courtesy. Elżbieta Umińska-Tytoń, who examined 19th- and early 20th-century models (until 1918) of linguistic politeness based on rules of style for elite Polish conversation, concluded that its linguistic patterns included: marking a communicative distance between the speaker and the listener, complimenting the listener, and placing the speaker in a subordinate, even servile position in relation to the listener [Umińska-Tytoń 2011: 245–248]. Additional elements of polite speech continued to play an important role in this model, with two opposing tendencies coexisting: the first was the simplification of etiquette in terms of the formulae and structures used and a departure “from Baroque-era strongly amplified formulae in which the ornamented etiquette layer often dominated over their verbal nucleus” [Pawłowska 2014: 218; cf. also Cybulski 2003: 240–249]; the other – amplification of the verbal part “by means of honorific phrases [...] such as: *I am a servant* → *I am honoured to be a humble servant*; *please* → *I dare to ask*, [...] *forgive* → *deign to forgive*” [Pawłowska 2014: 219–220]. The 19th century was also a period of important changes in the ways of addressing the audience; this was connected with the disappearance in the use of traditional old Polish forms of address such as: “(w)asan/acan(i), waćpan, aspan, waść, aśćka, (w)asindziej, asińdźka, jegomość, jejmość, mosan (sire, his lordship, my lady)” [Umińska-Tytoń 2011: 132, see also 133–136], while using instead (unknown before mid-18th century) simpler polite forms of address such as: *sir, madam, miss, ladies and gentlemen* [see Przybylska 1999: 115–116; Stone 1989; Rachwał 1992], as well as aristocratic (*baron, count*) or professional (*president, director*) forms of address along with attributive terms (such as *honourable, his enlightened, dear*, etc.) [see Umińska-Tytoń 2011: 245–248].

Later, during the Second Republic of Poland, the pre-war model of polite patterns typical of elites was maintained, while efforts were also made to simplify and democratise the rules of language etiquette, with criticism being directed at the use of extensive forms to address readers, in particular, attributive terms such as “*high, great, dignified, dear, gracious, honourable*” [see Łoś 1919]. There was also a demand for use of the pronoun in the third person singular (*sir/*

madam) instead of *you* – even toward people of lower rank in the social hierarchy. These phenomena, based on interwar parliamentary discourse, were described by Mirosława Sagan-Bielawa, who claimed that “one can risk saying that after the First World War the ‘sir lost his lordship’ [cf. Cybulski 1994: 38], which closed a certain stage in the evolution of etiquette, initiated by the social processes in the 19th century” [Sagan-Bielawa 2019: 154].

In regard to the principles of mercantile courtesy, let us mention that it is burdened in the Polish culture with less than positive connotations, such as unnaturalness, exaggeration, insincerity, self-interest, and being subject to momentary fashions [see Kita 2005: 129–130; Marcjanik 2015: 119; Młynarczyk 2008: 295–297; Pałka 2022: 199–201]. Experts studying this type of politeness, based on their own experience and memoir literature, claim that the features of mercantile courtesy include respecting and emphasising a communicative distance toward the customer, showing a willingness to be attentive but not servile, avoiding excessive compliments, defiant behaviour toward the buyer and communication insincerity, for example, in the form of persuading the customer to purchase something that they cannot afford to buy, something that does not suite their taste or is less valuable [Barbasiewicz 2013: 111, cf. also Rościszewski 1921: 111–113].

The polite language patterns present in historical commercial advertisements should be further considered in the context of the relationship between the author and readers in an advertising text. This relationship prototypically translates into the roles of the advertiser and advertisee, who in historical advertising discourse, due to its strong connection with the local urban space,³ corresponded to a specific seller or service provider known in a given commercial community (a particular company) and a specific locally functioning customer. Thus, the prototype advertiser – advertisee relationship in commercial advertising reflects the characteristics of the linguistic interaction between the seller and the customer in face-to-face interactions, e.g., during a commercial conversation [see Pałka 2009, 2010]. Such a relationship may then be individual or collective (based on the number of sellers and/or customers), sporadic (non-durable) or frequent (persistent). Its features include asymmetry (the superior position in the communication situation is assumed by the customer, while the subordinate

3 Research on the old advertising discourse shows that “also locality is an important determinant of the operation and specificity” of the commercial community in the period in question. The local character of commercial advertising is related to the direct reference of the advertising entity to a specific place (known to customers/advertisees) in the city space, but also to a specific person (known to customers/advertisees) who is the owner or founder of the local enterprise” [Pałka 2022: 305].

one, by the seller), institutionalism, a lack of familiarity and weaker social bond between interlocutors. Consequently, the specificity of relations between the seller and the buyer directly determines the formality of the communication situation and entails the necessity to use the official variety of the Polish language.

Finally, let us mention that expressions of linguistic politeness in commercial advertising also depend on the type of medium chosen to convey the advertising content and on the determinants of the genre pattern used for the speech.

3. Official ways of expressing attitudes toward the addressee of an advertisement

In the advertising discourse in question, the most popular polite form of addressing readers is *P.T.* “*pleno titulo* – with a full title according to dignity.” This form was frequently used in advertising texts of all kinds, appearing as a form of address both in press advertisements and advertising leaflets, as well as in company prints, catalogues and price lists. *P.T.* emphasises the official, non-casual and institutional nature of the author–reader relationship and shows that the advertiser is making sure that the readers do not feel offended by the use of an improper polite form of address they are entitled to, or by not using it at all.

What is important is that the abbreviation *P.T.*, as a vocative phrase initiating contact, is addressed – as evidenced by the context of the statement (polite pronouns used in the text: *sir, madam, ladies and gentlemen* or other nouns and verb forms of address in the third or second person plural) – both to the individual reader, e.g., “**P.T.** Below we allow ourselves to list the lowest wholesale prices for utensils [...] and we expect the Honourable Sir [...] to find these prices UNBEATABLE.” [“Price list of tools accessories. B. Steigbügel, Kraków [...]” 1933/1934: 2], as well as to a group of readers, for example “**P.T.** We are pleased to inform Automobile Drivers about the opening of the premises, selling of car parts and accessories in Kraków [...]” [advertising leaflet from the company Auto – Centrum Gucwa”, no date].

This polite form of address may also be part of vocative phrases with a complex structure: {form *P.T.*} + {title noun – a personal name referring to a specific target group of the advertising message}, e.g., *P.T. Farmers!* [press advertisement of the company “ANT. BODUCH about wholesale and store of seeds [...]”, IKC 14 June 1921: 6], *P.T. Skaters (/female skaters)* [advertising leaflet from “Sharpening Shop ‘Brus’ ul. Karmelicka 16, outhouse”, no date], *P.T. Military, State and Private Officials, Pensioners and Students* [advertising leaflet from the “Library, reading room of science and fiction books ul. św. Jana 8”, no date]. Such complex forms of address serve to strengthen the factual and persuasive function of communication, and their strength lies in attracting the attention of a specific group

of readers who identify themselves with a specific and directly named group of consumers of the product or service. A similar role to that of vocative phrases is played in the advertising message by apostrophic forms initiating contact, typically exclamatory statements, similar to appeals, with the following structure:

1. *To + P.T.* + {nominal term to name a certain group of people or a specific target group of readers of the advertisement message}, e.g., *To P.T. Consumers!* [advertising leaflet from the “Kraków City Gas Plant” containing a notice about a changed tariff, no date];
2. *To + P.T.* + {attributive term} + {nominal term to name a certain group of people or a specific target group of the advertisement message}, e.g., *To P.T. Dear Public* [postcard advertising services provided by the company “Stanisław Ziemiński Pracownia Futer Kraków, Kościuszki 13”, no date];
3. *Important to + P.T.* + {nominal term to name a certain general group of people or a particular community of profiled consumers}, e.g., *Important to P.T. Merchants and Agricultural Clubs.* [press advertisement from a factory producing wooden products, IKC 14 June 1921: 6],

Let us add that the Latin polite form *P.T.* may also be used toward individuals or groups as a pronoun of address, as illustrated by the following quotes: “Since it has come to our knowledge that **P.T.** intends to change their apartment, we will allow ourselves to offer our services [...]” [postal advertisement in the form of a letter with an offer from “Biuro Spedycyjne i Komisowe ‘Hermes’ Kraków, Stolarska 13”, no date]; “To P.T. Owners of Real Estate! I would like to kindly inform **P.T.** that I do all tiling work [...] I remain at **P.T.**’s disposal [advertising leaflet containing a notice about the offer for Jan Kurek’s services, no date]. In the texts of the commercial advertisements under analysis, the abbreviation *P.T.* is also often part of complex forms of address in which in the right-hand context, it is accompanied by a nominal term – naming a general community such as *the public, readers, customers, (female) customers, clientele*, or a specific group of consumers, for example “I am pleased to inform **P.T.** the Public that I have opened the first mechanical wool factory in Galicia [...]” press advertisement IKC 28 August 1912: 6], “It is recommend to **P.T. Engineers, Architects and Gentlemen Citizens**” [“Stefana Mikulskiego Wielka Księga Adresowa dla Królewskiego Stołecznego Miasta Krakowa i Królewskiego Wolnego Miasta Podgórze” (“Stefan Mikulski’s Great Address Book for the Royal Capital City of Kraków and the Royal Free City of Podgórze”) year’s issue: 7, 1912: 34]. In addition, an attributive term may be added to this structure – *dear, my, his*, for example “We are pleased to inform **Dear P.T. Customers** that today the men’s clothing shop “SZYK” was moved from ul. MIKOŁAJSKA 12 to a new location at ul. FLORJANSKA 7” [advertising leaflet from the Men Clothing Shop “SZYK”, no date]; “I am hereby honoured to inform the Dear Public and **my P.T. former**

Customers that on 19 December 1933 I took over the former cafe “Ziemiańska” [...] and I am running it under my own professional management under the business name ‘KAWIARNIA CENTRALNA’ [advertising leaflet – notice about a change in the owner of the company “Kawiarnia Centralna”, ul. Szczepańska 1, 1st floor, owner Karolina Górka, approx. 1933]; “We draw the attention of **Dear P.T. Merchants** to our way of packing, completely identical with the Russian [...]. The tea is compact in this packaging [...]” [“Tea wholesale price list of the company Szarski i Syn in Kraków”, interwar period: 2].

It should be mentioned that the advertisers’ use of the polite form in question (*P.T.*) is consistent with rules of that time concerning mercantile politeness. The authors of guides on commercial correspondence from the early 20th century [see Chankowski 1903: 16, 1932: 152; Kistryn 1916: 12; Fabiańczyk 1922: 8; Passakas 1924: 195, 222] recommended the use of this abbreviation in mercantile letters, including, circular letters. Henryk Chankowski writes as follows:

A letter intended to be distributed in multiple copies with the same content to different companies or individuals is called a circular letter or a circular. It is like the first business card in which a company notifies the public about its establishment or start-up. A circular letter should be clearly arranged in correct and clear language, with greater brevity than in letters which are not so official. Because of the large number of copies, circulars are usually printed. Since a circular once printed is distributed at different times, if need be, it does not include the date, but [...] instead of the title, the following letters are written: *P.T.* (*pleno titulo* – according to dignity) [...]. [Chankowski 1903: 16]

In commercial correspondence, this form should therefore be used in letters sent to the general public of suppliers or customers rather than to a single person in order to inform them of the opening or liquidation of the company or a change in the place of business or the owner of the company [cf. Passakas 1924: 195]. The form of address *P.T.* could also appear in other letters (in addition to circulars) directed to a certain community represented by the addressee, such as a society, a company or any enterprise with more than one owner [Chankowski 1903: 16; Fabiańczyk 1922: 8; Passakas 1924: 195, 222; Chankowski 1932: 152].

The authors of business correspondence guides also suggested that in commercial letters to private individuals, the title and the polite pronoun should be used along with the appropriate form of the words *sir/madam/sirs* preceded by the attributive term *honourable, highly honourable*. If there was such a possibility, it was also necessary to add to the form of address the professional title, official title, etc. the person is entitled to [Chankowski 1903: 5; Kistryn 1916: 12;

Fabiańczyk 1922: 8; Passakas 1924: 8; Chankowski 1932: 8–9; Rościszewski 1936: 20, 3]. It is significant that in the guide publications under analysis, there is a change in the requirements of the polite forms used by merchants, since as early as the beginning of the 20th century, Henryk Chankowski [1903] and Tadeusz Kistryn [1916] wrote about the necessity of using titles depending on the origin of the person and/or their position in the social hierarchy, such as: *Prince!*, *Eminence!*, *Excellency!*, *Count!*, *Baron!*, *General!*, *President!*, *Director!*, *Councillor!* [Chankowski 1903: 5–6; Kistryn 1916: 12], and the same form of address *sir*, used in the non-vocative form of the incipit function (announcing the introduction of a topic addressed to the readers): *To Sir*, should be addressed “to people in very subordinate positions, e.g., to servants, makers, etc.” [Chankowski 1903: 6]. However, in the works on the subject dated to the 1920s and 1930s, although attention is still drawn to the possibility of applying appropriate titles to selected social groups – clergy, high government officials and representatives of the authorities or aristocracy [Passakas 1924: 8], it is primarily recommended to use the official polite form: *sir/sirs*, usually preceded by the adjective *honourable* / *highly honourable* toward any addressees [Passakas 1924: 8; Fabiańczyk 1922: 8; Chankowski 1932: 7–10].

In the collected source material, the polite forms *sir/madam* appear quite frequently. In relation to the individual addressees, in advertising texts, vocative phrases initiating contact are usually used in a complex form with the structure of: {attributive term: *honourable*, *highly honourable*, *gracious*, *dear*} + {standard polite form of address *sir/madam*}. Such a form of address serves mainly the ennobling function, because these forms characteristic of asymmetrical relations imply here the elitism of the clientele, who is approached individually and who is treated with due respect and humility, for example *Gracious Madam!* [advertising print featuring baking recipes using DAWA powder of dr. A. Wander, Spółka Akcyjna, Kraków, no date], *Honourable Sir!* [advertising leaflet from the Polish State Class Lottery ‘Dar’ Kraków, Karmelicka 8/św. Anny 2”, 1936], *Highly Honourable Madam!* *Highly Honourable Sir!* [advertising leaflet from “A. Bross. Women and men’s clothing, sports clothing, gloves”, in Kraków, no date], *H.H. Madam* [advertising leaflet – notice on the opening of the “Shop for stocking mending (runs mending) and tricots mending with an electric machine ‘Vitos’”, 1937], *DEAR SIR/MADAM* [postcard addressed to a specific customer, advertising services of the “Coal Storage of Upper Silesia and Dąbrowa [...] ‘O. Wahl’ Kraków”, 1933].

The forms *lady/madam* and *gentleman/sir* are used in commercial advertising to a collective addressee in the form of vocative phrases having a simple structure: {standard polite form of address}, e.g., *Ladies and Gentlemen*

[advertising leaflet from special storehouses “H. Lichting ul. Grodzka 71, ul. Sze-wska 7, ul. Florjańska 21”, no date] or complex form: {standard polite form of address} + {title noun – a personal name referring to a specific target audience of the advertising message}, e.g., Ladies Hostesses! [press advertisement, IKC 10 May 1914: 7), Gentlemen Hosts! [advertising poster for the brand “Eternit”, approx. 1908].

The following official vocative phrases are correlated in the text with the appropriate distanced adjective pronouns: *sir*, *madam*, *ladies and gentlemen*, usually accompanied by the following epithets in preposition: *dear*, *gracious*, *honourable*, *highly honourable*, and, optionally, in postposition, a nominal term to name a specific target group of the message, which is illustrated by the very numerous quotations in the material. Here are some of them:

[...] you, **Gracious Madam** must trust the baking powder. DAWA baking powder deserves this trust; in our laboratory we constantly monitor its performance. You, **Dear Madam** do not know how many chemical substitutes there are in the trade under the name “baking powder”, [...] for this reason we advise you to use only DAWA baking powder! [advertising print featuring baking recipes using DAWA powder from dr. A. Wander, Spółka Akcyjna Kraków, no date]

I am pleased to inform you, **H.H. Madam**, that on January 4 January this year I opened in Kraków at ul. Karmelicka L. 21a, the Stockings Repair Shop [...]. [advertising leaflet – a notice about the opening of a shop by Julia Gawle, 1937: 82]

BEAUTY INSTITUTE “ARIANA” managed by a former prof. of the Cosmetic University in Vienna, KRAKÓW, ul. J. LEA L. 9b. performs all cosmetic procedures. [...] You, **Highly Honourable Ladies and Gentlemen** are welcome to seek free cosmetic advice. [advertising leaflet containing an invitation to use the services of “ARIANA”, no date: 3]

[...] Therefore, with the attached order card only for you, **Honourable Sir**, please order immediately the selected lucky numbers of tickets in the luckiest betting office “DAR” Kraków, ul. Karmelicka 8. [advertising leaflet from the “Betting Office of the Polish State Class Lottery “Dar” Kraków, ul. Karmelicka 8/ ul. św. Anny 2”, 1935]

IF ANY OF YOU, **LADIES**, WANTS TO HAVE a beautiful, fashionable and inexpensive hat, come to the women’s hat shop “ANTONINA” Kraków,

ul. Floryańska L. 1, 1st floor in the outhouse. Staircase in the yard on the left. [press advertisement, *Czas* 7 October 1922: 4]

ZOFIA WĘGRZYNOWICZ Bandage and Orthopaedic Shop (only for **Ladies**) in Kraków [...]. At the request of the **Honourable Ladies**, she takes measure at homes. [press advertisement, *Józef Czech Kalendarz Krakowski na rok 1868* (*Józef Czech's Kraków Calendar 1868*): December]

We would like to draw your attention, **Honourable Gentlemen Merchants, Restaurateurs, and Agricultural Clubs** to our wines, which are easily transportable, and acquire taste and strength with ageing. [“Price List of Wines, Honey, Tea, Rum, Cognac and Plum Brandy from the company Dr. Nieć, Franičević and Pavičić in Kraków”, 1905: 3]

Is it on your way, **Ladies and Gentlemen**? [...] This comfort and solid workmanship is provided to you, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, only by our newly opened branch at ul. SZEWSKA L. 7. [advertising leaflet “Franciszek Bębenek’s Laundry – Dying – Pleating Shop”, Kraków, no date]

TOMASZ BUJAS licensed foreman bricklayer in KRAKÓW, ul. Stachowskiego 21. He performs all construction work with and without material. He recommends himself to **Ladies and Gentlemen Engineers and Architects** as well as P.T. Citizens. [*Krakowska księga adresowa na rok 1906* (*Kraków Address Book 1906*), ed. Józef Knapik, 1906: 43]

[...] has the signed honour to recommend the same for the gracious consideration [...] of **Highly Honourable Ladies and Gentlemen Writers, Booksellers, Factory Managers, Owners of Goods**, etc., for only with their great support this Institution will be able to fully respond to the stated purpose. [*Józef Czech Kalendarz Krakowski na rok 1868* (*Józef Czech's Kraków Calendar 1868*): 79]

In the context of the official polite forms of address discussed in this work and used in historical commercial advertising: *sir, madam, ladies and gentlemen*, attention should be paid to the attitude of contemporaries to the epithet *honourable*. The use of this attributive term in the form of address, in accordance with the principles of language etiquette from late 19th to the early 20th centuries, served to flatter the interlocutor, but it could also indicate the higher social rank of the interlocutor to whom such form was addressed [see Umińska Tytoń 2011: 130, 132, 138, 245]. Preceding the title or the polite pronoun with

the epithet *honourable* was also recommended in commercial correspondence guides of the time, as mentioned earlier [Chankowski 1903: 5; Fabiańczyk 1922: 8; Passakas 1924: 4,8; Chankowski 1932: 8–9; Rościszewski 1936: 20, 3]. However, Mieczysław Passakas, in the issue of “Korespondencja kupiecka” (“Merchant’s Correspondence”) published in 1924, points directly to a new standard in the ways of addressing readers, associated with the tendency to simplify and democratise the rules of language etiquette in interwar Poland.

Giving this title [it applies to the form *Honourable Sir* – additional information by P.P.] is not necessary at all. “Therefore, in recent times, following the example from abroad, they increasingly demand that this title be removed even toward regular customers, recommending that it be replaced by the usual words “Sir, Sirs”. But since the merchants in many cases must take into account the feelings of those who are reluctant to see such a change, it is necessary that this simplification should be applied only where possible, without compromising their own interests. On the other hand, the principle adopted in commercial correspondence is that titles should be given to persons who are entitled to such title by birth, position or dignity [...]”. [Passakas 1924: 8]

Mirosława Sagan-Bielawa also writes about this phenomenon, and by analysing the stereotype of the district Polish language, discusses the features of the language etiquette attributed to the Galicians, among others. She points out that in the reception by people from outside the Austrian partition, the use of the form of address: *honourable sir* is associated with excessive politeness, considered typical of the language spoken by the inhabitants of Galicia, who were accused of clerical and “Byzantinism, not in line with the 20th century democracy” [Sagan-Bielawa 2014: 122; see Wasylewski 1930/1957: 120]. What is more, as Sagan-Bielawa demonstrates in her work, the attributive terms *honourable* and *highly honourable* were even withdrawn from use by the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Poland in February 1918, because they did not fit in with the determinants of the official style, which was supposed to be more democratic [Sagan-Bielawa 2014: 122–123]. In *Monitor Polski* we read that “in relation to private persons who are served with an order or a resolution of authorities, only the title *Sir/Madam*, without the addition of *Honourable* or *Highly Honourable* should be used [...]” [*Monitor Polski* 1918, No. 5: 2; see: Sagan-Bielawa 2014: 122].

The final way of addressing the readers to express respect for them and emphasise the official character of the relationship, is to apply collective polite forms of address to the audience with the following structure: {attributive terms such as: *dear, honourable, our*} + {title noun: either the general name of the group

of readers, e.g., *the public, readers, customers, clientele*, or a specific collective name referring to the profiled target group}. These forms occur in the collected material of advertising texts both as vocative phrases, e.g., Dear Public! [“Price list of the Königsberger’s bazaar, główny rynek No. 35 in Kraków”, 1876: 2], as well as polite pronouns, for example “We are always happy to receive and ask for the kind comments and observations of our **Dear Customers** regarding the seeds bought from us. This gives us the opportunity to select seeds in such a way as to satisfy all and any needs **our Customers** may have” [“Seed Price List Spring 1936 ‘Siew’ Seed Store Z. Przybyłowska, Kraków”, 1936: 2]; “Therefore, I draw the attention of **Dear inhabitants of the provinces** to the fact that in my store there is the best opportunity to select species, tombolas and toys. Goods that do not appeal to **Dear Public** are accepted back [“Price list of the Königsberger’s bazaar, main market No. 35 in Kraków”, 1876: 2].

The official character of the communication situation and the distance between the author and the readers are also evidenced by the verb forms of addressing the audience, in particular the predicates expressed by the verb in the third person plural, for example “Dear Customers will still **want** to honour me with their trust” [advertising leaflet from Ludwik Knapinski’s Knife and Orthopaedic Products Shop, no date], or singular (*ad formam* agreement), e.g., “Staying young and slim **will be achieved** by Honourable Sir thanks to Dr. Schlecht’s tea “Baldur”, with a good and delicate taste” [press advertisement of tea IKC 1 January 1928: 14]. Referring to the addressee with a distance and without familiarity is also used in the studied sources of verb impersonal forms, used toward the addressee, among others, in the following advertising texts: “**Prevent** it from happening, because arthritic ailments distort the joints [...] [press advertisement of Magister Wolski’s herbs “REUMOSA”, IKC 6 April 1938: 18], “**Avoid** fakes” [press advertisement of suppositories for haemorrhoids “Anusol”, IKC 3 January 1928: 6), “**In order** to see this scene in the most realistic and vivid way, these pages **should** be separated [...] [card with a photo “Eyes of the world – temple in Java” for use in stereoscope, containing on the reverse an advertisement of chocolate from Suchard S.A. in Kraków, no date], “In the summer, when milk quickly gets sour, only milk from ‘Laktol’ should be used to feed infants and children” [press advertisement of milk for children, IKC 10 May 1914: 7].

4. Ways to shorten the distance in advertising texts

Shortening the communication distance between the author and the readers in advertising texts should be associated with the need to build in this discourse a more intimate, direct relationship with the customer, referring to the “face-to-face” contacts in an unofficial situation and to symmetrical relations between

interlocutors. Such ways of addressing the audience had more persuasive power and focused the audience's attention more on the message. They also resulted from the development of the nationwide press, radio and film (cinema) advertising, i.e., the process of gradual "detachment" of the advertising message from its local context, from the prototype urban space and the commercial community in which it functioned. In the collected source material one can find numerous polite forms of address, which were aimed at warming the relations between the participants of communication and making the message perceived as more personalised and direct.

The first of the interesting examples is the use in one of the advertisements, a commercial letter from the company "Juliusz Grosse S. z. o.o. Wine and Tea Store", of an unofficial vocative phrase in relation to the individual reader: "**Dear Bibliophile**, Enclosed you will find a brochure about tea. Will you not want to see that we make blends of Herbata z Rączką (Hand Tea) known for three generations with the same care as we prepare our print? [...] Cheers JULJUSZ GROSSE SZOO" [advertisement in the form of a commercial letter addressed to the customer, enclosed with a brochure from the company "Juliusz Grosse S. z. o.o. Wine and Tea Store", Pałac Spiski Kraków, June 1935]. As the quoted passage shows, in the advertising text, the author consistently addresses the audience on first name terms using the second person singular verb form YOU, and uses an unofficial phrase to end the contact: *Cheers*, which is typical of close, informal and equal relations.

In the case of a collective addressee, the advertisement attracted the reader's attention in an equally direct way, although without linguistic signs of familiarity, as a result of the use of speech, message, announcement or vocative phrases with the form of apostrophe, e.g., *Farmers!* [press advertisement of artificial fertilizers, IKC 19 January 1928: 11], *Builders!* [press advertisement of a sawmill and brickyard, IKC 30 April 1921: 9], *Suffers from hernia* [press advertisement of services provided by M. Tilleman, specialist and inventor of medicinal bandages, IKC 2 January 1928: 13], *The Blonds!* [press release of a shampoo for blond hair, IKC 1 August 1933: 7], *CHILDREN AND PARENTS!* [press advertisement from the magazine *Grześ*, IKC 9 June 1919: 11], *Automobile Drivers!* [press advertisement of devices for electric light, IKC 30 April 1921: 11]. These phrases were usually accompanied by the exclamation *Attention!* and their function consisted primarily in sending a message directly to the readers who identified themselves with a specific, directly named group of consumers of a given product or service.

As for the verb forms of addressing another person, the forms: second person plural *you* and possessive pronoun *your* were used to shorten the communication distance in relation to the group of addressees. These forms can

occur in the text alone or in combination with vocative phrases to a specific community, e.g., “P.T. Skaters (female skaters) **Do not** believe any advertisement of various sharpeners, **come** to check out and see for yourself that the Canadian factory-made wet-sharpening method in Kraków is the true and only one [...] BRUS SHARPENING SHOP” [advertising leaflet from “‘Brus’ Sharpening Shop ul. Karmelicka 16, outbuilding”, no date]; “**DO NOT BUY BAD CLUB SUITS** because you will get good and cheap ones in the only specialised CLUB FURNITURE FACTORY in Poland Kraków, Floryańska 25” [press advertisement from a furniture factory, IKC 31 August 1924: 4], “always **have** a box of sanitary pastilles VALDA at hand” [press advertisement of pastilles sold in a pharmacy, IKC 1 January 1928: 7]. Addressing the audience on first name terms YOU – using the second person singular verb forms (usually in the imperative mood), the personal pronoun *you* and the possessive pronoun *your*, frequently encountered in the studied advertising texts (especially in the interwar period) is even more direct, e.g.:

Have **you received** the Fountain Pen for free yet, if not, **hurry** up and **buy** it or fill your supplies in only in the company ‘Papier’. [advertising leaflet from the company “Papier” Store of school and office supplies. K. Rósówna Kraków ul. Czarnowiejska 43, no date]

Zenith watch – **have** it on you always and everywhere. [press advertisement of a watch, IKC 1 January 1928: 4]

Cheap fuel!!! **Cook** with gas!! **Heat** with coke! [press advertisement for the Kraków Municipal Gas Plant, IKC 14 February 1925: 14]

Relieve yourself with Meridiol. [press advertisement of a liquid pain reliever for body rubbing, IKC 4 January 1928: 11]

Order it [tea – additional information by P.P.] today! We will send **you** any quantity. [commercial letter advertisement, “Juliusz Grosse S. z. o.o. Wine and Tea Store”, June 1935]

Morwitan burns best / **You** can buy Morwitan in every shop / It is so cheap and charming / And it protects nerves from all evil / Strangely inebriating like hashish / It will lull **you** to sleep like opium / If **you** want my heart / **Do not wait**, come quickly / **Do** me a favour, **buy** Morwitan! [radio advertisement, rhymed song advertising tissue paper “Morwitan” from “HERBEWO”, 1937]

It should be noted that the use of verb forms in the second person singular, in particular the imperative mode, has become a common language practice in the contemporary advertising discourse (after 1989 [see Bralczyk 2004: 101–102, 109–111]) and one of the communication strategies used in particular in advertising slogans, e.g., “Tymbark. “Love life,” “Bielenda. Think about yourself”, “IKEA – you rule here”, “L’Oréal. Because you are worth it”, “CASTORAMA You Build You Renovate You Arrange”, etc.

Interestingly, in the analysed commercial advertisements one can also find confirmation of the use of forms of the second person singular together with the polite pronoun *sir/madam*, e.g., “BEFORE YOU BUY THE AUTOMOBIL, SIR, PLEASE CHECK OUT THE LATEST 1912 MODELS: ‘PROTOS” [advertising poster for the brand “Protos”, represented by the company “Stanisław Grünberg i S^{ka} generalni zastępcy na Galicyę i Bukowinę. Kraków Bracka 10 – Przemysł Mickiewicza”, 1912]. The use of this form in the 19th-century elite Polish language is mentioned by Umińska-Tytoń. She explains that “this way of addressing the audience was reserved for symmetrical contacts, between people equal to one another; it was a signal of belonging to the society, treating the interlocutor as equal to their own” [Umińska-Tytoń 2011: 143]. Marek Łaziński confirms that such a form of politeness “at least until the end of the 1950s could have been a neutral form in a less careful language or in the language of the lower social classes” [Łaziński 2006: 40]. Therefore, we treat the use of this structure in advertising texts primarily as a way of shortening the distance between the author and the readers. Hence, the form *Sir/Madam* + the second person singular of the verb implies a certain closeness and familiarity in equivalent relations, for which the mere use of a distance pronoun of address is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the convention.

Concluding the considerations, let us quote the leaflet (promoting the Hild Brothers), which illustrates two main tendencies typical of the period under discussion – both to shorten the communication distance by using the second person singular verb forms, as well as to maintain traditional official character of relationship with the customer, emphasised by the form of address *P.T.* and impersonal verb forms.

P.T.

As soon as on 16 February 1934, first class lot drawing of the XXIX Polish State Lottery will take place. [...] **It is necessary** not to omit the opportunity, but to immediately start the betting by purchasing a selected ticket in the lucky betting office of Hild Brothers Karmelicka 13 in order to achieve the desired goal.

So go ahead and **try** your luck, as it is **you** that **may be** the lucky one who has been chosen by fortune. [...]

Sincerely,

Hild Brothers [advertising leaflet – “Hild Brothers Betting Office of the Polish State Class Lottery in Kraków, Karmelicka 13”, 1933–1934]

5. Summary

The polite forms of address in the studied advertising texts dated back to the mid-19th century up to 1939 show, on the one hand, a tendency to adhere to the traditional rules of language etiquette of the time, including the rules of mercantile courtesy (or more precisely, the rules of commercial epistolography) full of respect and humility toward the customer, who should be flattered and, above all, cannot be offended. On the other hand, new communication tools, resulting from the development of media, and the environment conducive to the democratisation of social life during the Second Republic of Poland, resulted in the need to simplify the language etiquette and move away from the standard rules of mercantile courtesy and to develop other and more direct ways of communicating with the addressee in advertising messages. Thus, the feature of the growing advertising discourse, as evidenced by the source material presented, includes a multitude of possibilities in terms of traditional and official, as well as new and more familiar ways of addressing the audience, which is typical of the period under consideration. It is significant, however, that this diversity – formality, impersonality, directness and informality – could be used simultaneously not only in a single edition of a given newspaper, but also in the same advertising text.

Translated by Ewa Kisiel

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- Price list – “Cennik Przyborów szkolnych. B. Steigbügel, Kraków, ul. Szewska L. 3. Hurtownia papieru i przyborów szkolnych. Własna fabryka brulionów, zeszytów i bloków rysunkowych” (“Price list for school accessories. B. Steigbügel, Kraków, ul. Szewska L. 3. Wholesaler of paper and school supplies. Own factory producing notebooks, copybooks and sketchpads”) [BJ 222411, RARA III, XXVIII/102].
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Patrycja Pałka

Dialogue with Tradition in Historical Advertising Discourse. Polite Forms of Address

The aim of the article is to present how in historical advertisement discourse the sender (the advertiser) expressed an attitude towards the recipient in the context of tradition of that time related to the principles of language politeness. In the analysis, the author focuses on describing the forms of address used. The research encompasses a period spanning from the second half of 19th century to 1939, a period directly connected with the development of professional advertisements, the advertising industry, the first advertising agencies and the media – press, radio and cinematography. The sources used to write this paper include a wide variety of materials that comprise a large collection of texts representing various forms of advertisement, including press adverts, leaflets, postcards, posters, placards and notices, packaging materials, labels, folders, company catalogues and information brochures, price lists, company paper products (forms, envelopes, notes, and bills), and other promotional printed materials (e. g. invitations, letters, and thematic cook books), as well as radio advertisements. The analysis shows both that polite communication practices in historical advertising texts are characterised by a tendency to conform to traditional language politeness norms, including those specific to trade, and that the emergence of new communication tools and the democratisation of social life during the interwar period led to a need to simplify language etiquette and trade politeness norms, as well as to develop more familiar ways of addressing the audience in advertising discourse.

KEYWORDS: discourse; advertisement; trade; language politeness; forms of address; Kraków; 19th century; interwar period.

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