

## **Distant Partners: The Coverage of the Koreas in Poland**

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*This study analyses North and South Korea's coverage as framed by the main Polish press titles from 1989 to 2019. The main method applied is a computational textual analysis of press articles based on frequency, correlations and co-occurrences. The purpose is to map the topics of the examined articles in the context of relations between Poland and the two Koreas in various areas, predominantly political and economic relations. Emphasis is placed on the impact the carmaker Daewoo's investment in Poland in the mid-1990s had on bilateral Polish-South Korean relations. First, the authors argue that Korean issues in the Polish press, mainly in the second half of the 1990s, particularly concerned economic affairs. Secondly, they argue that after Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, the country's interest in the two Koreas decreased, and since that time has remained at a more or less constant level. Finally, the authors discuss the outcome of the research in the context of the main developments in Polish-Korean relations, taking into consideration the results of a Polish public opinion survey presenting the international linkages between national public opinion and foreign policy.*

*Keywords: Korea, Poland, Polish-Korean relations, press*

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## 1. Introduction

Poland, like other post-communist states, has a longstanding tradition of cooperation with Asian countries, a consequence of the interest taken by the USSR in the Far East. Being a member of the Soviet bloc, however, Poland developed relations mainly with those states from the region that supported communism. For Polish-Korean relations, this means that initially Poland established relations only with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and with the Republic of Korea only after the end of the Cold War. Thus, 2018 marked the seventieth anniversary of Polish-North Korean relations, and 2019 the thirtieth anniversary of relations between Poland and South Korea. These two anniversaries provoked us to examine how the two Korean states have been perceived in Poland during the last three decades – that is, after the 1989 breakthrough in Poland – within the context of the bilateral contacts between Poland and the two Koreas.

A state's image internationally is crucial to building its brand, increasing its position, exercising soft power and achieving what can be gained through successful public diplomacy (Ayhan, 2018, 2019; Cull, 2008; Gilboa, 2008; Marczuk, 2019; Melissen, 2005; Nye, 2004). That is why research on foreign news and media coverage is important. We focused narratives on the two Koreas in the years 1989/90 and up to 2019 taken from the main Polish press titles. Before 1989, the Polish press was concentrated and centralised in terms of both ownership and production processes (Kowalski, 1988). The first independent Polish daily, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, was launched in 1989 and has remained one of the country's leading newspapers, today of a liberal orientation. Another top daily is *Rzeczpospolita*, a former regime newspaper that became independent after the political changes of 1989 and is now considered centrist. The third most influential title is the weekly *Polityka*, established in the 1950s, now independent and liberal-leftist (Lara, 2007). First, we chose to examine these three newspapers because they are at the top of the Polish press, are the most representative and influential, and were all published during the analysed period. Other Polish newspaper and periodicals have not been published constantly during the last three decades. Second, we chose *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka* for their large audience – these publications have been the newspapers with the largest circulation in Poland. In particular, the largest readership is that of *Gazeta Wyborcza* – its initial print run was about half a million copies (in 1989); it later increased to 511,000 copies, and in 1999 again increased to 569,000. In 2012, however, it decreased to 300,000 copies (Konopka, 2012, p. 58). In 2019, the average print run of *Gazeta Wyborcza* was 90,000 copies. This daily has also been one of the most popular newspapers in Europe. For a long time *Gazeta Wyborcza* was at top in Poland, followed by the second daily we chose, *Rzeczpospolita*. In the early 1990s its circulation was about 200,000 copies, after which it increased to 287,000 (in the mid-1990s), but then declined steadily in the 2000s (to 244,000 copies mid-decade) (Konopka, 2012, pp. 56–57). Currently that figure is about 70,000 copies. Regarding *Polityka*, in 1995 it changed its layout, and from 2004 and 2010 became the leading Polish opinion-forming weekly, with a circulation of almost 200,000 copies (2004), which later decreased to 143,000 copies (in 2010).

Now its average print run is about 127,000 copies (Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa, 2020). According to the current Polish readership survey, *Gazeta Wyborcza* remains one of the most frequently read daily newspapers, with a readership of 674,000 (2.2%), while *Rzeczpospolita* has a readership of 162,000 (0.5%), and the weekly *Polityka* – 523,000 (1.7%) (Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa, 2020). The third reason why we chose to examine these three newspapers is that, although they do not particularly focus on Korean, or more broadly, Asian affairs – all three of them contain an expanded foreign section, and so they address a number of international problems, including Korean issues.

This paper concerns the coverage given to North and South Korea by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka* from 1989–2019. We offer a computational textual analysis based on frequency, correlations and co-occurrences in order to map the topics of such articles, set in the context of relations between Poland and the two Koreas. We discuss the images of North Korea and South Korea in Polish public opinion, as framed by the media. This is of significance, since by the early 1990s knowledge about Korea, and South Korea in particular, was very limited in Polish society. We employ the concept of frame analysis developed by sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), according to whom an audience, that is, public opinion, perceives its surroundings through the lens of what Goffman calls its primary framework. This primary framework, or primary perspective, has been described as “(...) rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful” (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). In other words, an audience’s views and opinions on various topics are formed in a process that involves locating, perceiving, identifying, and labelling “(...) a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences” in the audience’s mind. Framing is therefore applied when a political elite seeks to convince the public of the worth of its policy vision, for instance, in the sphere of foreign policy (Entman, 2004). More specifically, this concept may also be understood in terms of constructing and processing the media discourse (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). However, understood in this way, frame analysis seems to be a vague or “scattered conceptualization”, as observed by Robert M. Entman (1993), and is closely linked to agenda setting theory. This theory, developed in the early 1960s and the 1970s, examines the role of the media in affecting public opinion over the long term, and particularly, how a set of topics (i.e. an agenda) is formed and then “imposed” on the audience as something they should deem significant (Cohen, 1963; McCombs, 2004; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In this way, public opinion seems to be “led” by the media. Agenda setting theory gained a number of advocates, such as James W. Dearing and Everett M. Rogers (1996). Its critics, though, have emphasised that agenda setting theory should be accompanied by a set of determinants that encompass, for instance, political advocacy, or have reproved the qualitative methods used in research into the activities of the media (Scheufele, 2000). What is more, recent studies have argued for the importance of how a state builds its image, and the media are seen “(...) as the essential channel for people to get information on international issues, contribute heavily to national image projection” (Xiufang & Chitty, 2009, p. 3).

We find the above theoretical approaches relevant for investigating Polish press narratives on Korean issues, based on the observation that characteristics such as style, focus and essence of press news affect the agenda (Wanta and Hu, 1993). Press narratives thereby “(...) shape our social reality by selecting and publicizing specific issues” (Bulkow, Urban &

Schweiger, 2013, p. 1). For the purpose of our research, we understand the agenda as a set of issues, i.e. topics (that we call a map of topics), that have been addressed by the press and presented to the public as crucial in the context of Polish-Korean relations. We also pay attention to the role of a country's image abroad, that is, to how the two Koreas were presented to Polish public opinion. Our approach is based on our belief in the special role the media have in framing perceptions of foreign affairs (Dalton, Jung, Willis & Bell, 2016).

Firstly, we argue that Korean issues in the Polish press (in particular, in the second half of the 1990s) concerned mainly economic affairs, that is, press reports concentrated mainly on Poland's economic cooperation with South Korea. In this period, Poland transformed its economy to a liberal one, and opened its market up to foreign investors, such as the South Korean carmaker Daewoo, to which the Polish press devoted a lot of attention. Secondly, we argue that after 2004, that is, after Poland's accession to the European Union (EU), Poland's interest in the two Koreas decreased, and since that time has remained at a more or less constant level. What is more, Polish policy towards the two Koreas has been framed within the EU's policy towards the region. We test these two claims by analysing articles published during the period in question. In the final part of the paper, we discuss our findings in the context of the main developments in Polish-Korean relations, and Polish public opinion survey results showing the international linkages between national public opinion and foreign policy (Rosenau, 1969). We also check whether the framing mechanism was reflected in the data from the Polish public opinion survey, i.e. whether the media influenced the Polish audience by shaping their views on Korea. To this end, we also look at findings by Robert Putnam (1988) on the entanglements between domestic and international politics, that is, we debate how international political decisions (in our case – the results of Polish and Korean contacts) reverberate at the national level (that is, among Polish society). The main research questions we aim to answer concern the main events in Polish-Korean relations, the frequency of articles related to the Koreas, and the main Korea-related topics, that is, the agenda that was of interest to the Polish press. Additionally, when necessary to a better interpretation of the results, we conducted a qualitative discourse analysis based on a textual analysis of the press reports we investigated.

The purpose of the paper is to study the image of the two Koreas through the lens of the main Polish press titles after the 1989 breakthrough and up to 2019. This is done in the context of the main developments in Polish-Korean contacts, taking into consideration the historical experiences of Poland and, in the Cold War era, the initial focus on North Korea.

## **1.1 The context: main developments in relations between Poland and the Koreas**

Poland and South Korea established diplomatic relations only on 1 November 1989. But previously, Poland developed its relations with North Korea after the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), that is since 10 August 1948; Poland was the third country in the world to recognise the DPRK. Particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, the Peoples' Republic of Poland, or PRL, and the DPRK maintained close relations. The PRL supported the DPRK during the Korean War providing, *inter alia*, significant humanitarian assistance by hosting a

group of about 200 North Korean children who – as a result of the war – had become orphans. Kim Il-sung, who visited Poland on 2–6 July 1956, paid a visit to the orphanage. In total, up to 1959 about 6,000 North Korean children came to the PRL, and about 500 North Korean students, as well. Interestingly, between 1955 and 1956, 575 foreigners studied in Poland, of whom 365 came from the DPRK (Burdelski, 2010). But the crucial event in the history of PRL–DPRK relations was the Polish contribution to the Neutral Nations’ Supervisory Commission (NNSC) to Korea (along with representatives from Switzerland and Sweden) after the armistice concluded on 27 July 1953. Along with other members, Poland was responsible for supervising the armistice and the peace (Gnoinska, 2009).

Obviously, relations between the PRL and the DPRK were possible because of the policy conducted by the two regimes, and their ties with the USSR. Poland also supported North Korea in its reunification claims. Up to the early 1980s, the two countries maintained good relations, but this changed in 1989 when Poland transformed into a democratic state and established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea. During the following years, Polish–North Korean relations remained lukewarm both at the level of diplomatic missions and in terms of the political dialogue. Another problem that arose in bilateral relations was North Korea’s withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2003 (Bober, 2011). Since 2004 Poland’s policy towards North Korea has been shaped within the framework of EU policy. In the 2000s, the EU addressed two key points: firstly, providing humanitarian assistance to North Korea, and secondly, focusing on the elimination of nuclear weapons (Lee, 2005). Eventually, from about 2014–2018 some North Korean workers were employed, *inter alia*, in the Polish shipyards, and due to their very poor working conditions they were referred to as “slave labourers” in the media. This problem was addressed by the United Nations, which, in 2017, banned the employment of North Koreans.

At the same time, Poland strengthened its relations with South Korea. After the end of the Cold War and the adoption of a pro-Atlantic and pro-European orientation in its foreign policy, in the 1990s Poland both discovered and was discovered by South Korea. But the financial crisis in Asia in 1997–1998 weakened the existing economic cooperation due to the bankruptcy of *chaebols* – groups of great companies – that had been investing in Poland (Tolentino, 2000). In the years that followed, Poland and South Korea concluded a strategic partnership during a visit to the Republic of Korea by the Polish President, Bronisław Komorowski in October of 2013, a year devoted to enhancing mutual contacts.

From the outset, Polish–South Korean bilateral relations were mainly of an economic character, as Poland had to transform into a liberal economy and became open to foreign investors. Apart from Japan and China, South Korea has been the leading economic partner for Poland in Asia, and Polish–South Korean economic relations have concerned mainly trade exchange and investments. Important Korean investments in Poland include Daewoo Group’s investment in the mid-1990s, and in the years that followed – investments by LG and Samsung as well, mainly since 2005 (Hwang, Lee & Kawai, 2008). Interestingly, since 2016 Polish Airlines LOT has been operating direct flights between Warsaw and Seoul. The main document

that has determined these bilateral contacts is the above-mentioned Polish-Korean Strategic Partnership of 2013, and its associated Action Plans for the years 2014–2016 and 2017–2020.

When considering Polish-South Korean relations, we have to attend to two issues that have been significant for bilateral contacts. Firstly, not only the economic but also the social dimension of those relations, that is, we need to emphasise the impact of the Daewoo Group's investments in Poland in the 1990s, which was the first such spectacular foreign investment on the Polish market after the 1989/90 transformation. In changing from a central-planned economy to a liberal one, Poland, like other countries, tried to modernise its car industry. This led to the acquisition of the FSO automobile production plant (*Fabryka Samochodów Osobowych*, hereinafter FSO) by Daewoo in the mid-1990s as part of the globalised strategy of the Korean auto industry as represented in particular by Daewoo and Hyundai (Kim & Lee, 2001). Besides the economic challenges this change entailed, there were also social consequences for both the FSO staff and, more broadly, for Polish society, which at that time going through “shock therapy” as the process of privatisation was referred to (Jastrzab & Wawrzyniak, 2017; Pavlínek, 2006). The Daewoo investment was seen by the Polish authorities of the time as a way to modernise the Polish automotive industry. Therefore, when the Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski visited South Korea in June 2002, he talked with President Kim Dae-jung on, among other issues, the Daewoo problem. Developing mutual economic cooperation was also discussed in December 2004 when President Roh Moo-hyun visited Poland.

Second, Poland's accession to the EU meant that economic relations were thereafter formed within the framework of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) concluded between the European Union and the Republic of Korea. The FTA came into force in July 2011 and was ratified in December 2015. It is called the EU's first “new generation” trade agreement due to the very broad range of provisions that it encompasses, such as labour and environmental standards (Campling, Harrison, Richardson, Smith & Barbu, 2020). The conclusion of the FTA means that South Korea is now a strategic partner both for the EU and its Member States, including Poland (Michalski, 2018; Nicolas, 2009). It has also affected how South Koreans perceive the EU, with an increasing number of reports on the EU in the Korean media (Zhang, 2010).

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Sampling**

Regarding sampling, our study explores Polish-language press articles published in three Polish newspapers from 1989/90 to 2019. Although there have been other newspapers on the Polish market, we limited our analysis to the three main and the most influential newspapers, namely: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka*. We focused on these newspapers partly because they offer access to their digital archives. Digital access to articles starting from 1989/90 was possible only in the case of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, while *Rzeczpospolita*'s digital archive dates from 1993, and that of *Polityka* from 1998. We also had to limit our research to the digital archives of these newspapers because they are the only easily accessible databases – neither the Polish Press

Agency nor the National Library in Warsaw yet not offer digital access to the press resources. Obtaining digital content enabled us to run a systematic analysis of content. We used the same criteria for each of the archives, since we wanted to achieve a replicability that would allow us to maintain the methodological rigour necessary to identifying the sources we employed. We started our research from the year 1989, since this was the moment when Poland transformed into a democratic country and the first Polish independent newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, began to be published; also, in 1989 Poland and South Korea established diplomatic relations, and so we decided to examine serious press articles on the subject (excluding very brief, anonymous press agency reports as being insignificant for the purpose of our study).

We collected our data set in mid-2019. It included articles that contained such terms as: Korea politics (in Polish: *Korea polityka*), Korea economy (*Korea gospodarka*), Korea culture (*Korea kultura*), Polish-Korean (*polsko-koreański*) in both their titles and content. Initially, we found a few hundred of matches in all three databases, that is: 646 in the *Gazeta Wyborcza* archive, 250 in the *Rzeczpospolita* archive, and 861 in the *Polityka* archive. We then repeated the search, focusing on the most relevant results, removed any duplicates, merged the results, and obtained a final data set containing 1,761 articles together with their titles and date of publication.

## 2.2 Analytical method

The analytic methodology we adopted for this paper is a computational content analysis of the data collected. This method, which employs an advanced computational process and statistical approaches, has been widely utilized to take a monitor trends over time or extract substantial implications from “big” data. The popularity of this analytical technique has increased steadily, and the method is now applied across disciplines. For example, a computer-assisted text analysis approach enables many political scientists to infer political policy and positions (Laver, Benoit & Garry, 2003; Lowe et al., 2014), while political communication researchers can check the news media’s tone on a certain topic by using news data accumulated over a long time span (e.g., Papacharissi & de Fatima Oliveira, 2012; Terman, 2017; Young & Soroka, 2012). Computer-assisted context analysis or text analysis opens up novel opportunities for researchers when it comes to grasping social or political phenomenon with more advanced empirical means, such that these days, computer scientists and economists also conduct in-depth analyses of data that were once within the sole remit of social scientists (e.g., An et al., 2011; Getznow & Shapiro, 2010; Godbole, Srinivasaiah & Skiena, 2007).

Unlike the latest trend of computational content analysis (e.g. topic modeling), we approached our text data with a more exploration-oriented goal. To do so, we used a program R package called ‘udpipe’<sup>4</sup> where a text analysis can be conducted on multiple languages. This package was uniquely valuable to our research, since our data set was in Polish. We were able to

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<sup>4</sup> The package manual site: <http://ufal.mff.cuni.cz/udpipe> [Accessed: 29.04.2020]. The udpipe package is “a trainable pipeline for tokenization, tagging, lemmatization and dependency parsing of CoNLL-U files.”

parse a given text data by lemmatization, tokenization or word-class tagging (e.g. nouns, adjectives), and to conduct a frequency analysis and co-occurrences and correlations analysis between two words (entries), with options for visualisation.

To file the analysis results, first we employed simple descriptive statistics, and our findings in particular relied on a metadata analysis of the set of articles, using such data as newspapers title, year of publication, and article title. These data enabled us to analyse the frequency of publication, that is, to find the total number of articles published per year by each newspaper. In addition, we analysed the most commonly used nouns and adjectives, both in article titles and content. We then prioritized these according from most frequent to least frequent.

The second step was to use deduction and an explanatory analysis to identify the most commonly addressed topics by the articles we examined. To do so, an analysis of noun frequency in article titles and content proved very helpful, but we also examined co-occurrence frequency, that is, combinations of nouns and adjectives, both in article titles and content. Lastly, we analysed the correlation coefficient of article content, that is, the degree to which two terms fluctuated together. Then, we scraped the data which were not relevant or invalid to map a plot of the most common topics. We decided to focus on those topics we found most relevant in order to find answers to the questions posed – inspired by the topic modeling method used in, for example, communication science (Gunther & Domahidi, 2017; Sevin, Metzgar & Hayden, 2019). In this way, we searched for “knowledge about knowledge, or »metaknowledge«” (Evans & Foster, 2011, p. 721) useful to studying the developments and context related to our research.

To better explain the results we obtained using the quantitative method, we also applied, to some extent, a qualitative analysis. To do so, we analysed the contents of press reports related to the problems we addressed during our investigation in order to illustrate the context of our research.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1 Frequency analysis**

##### **3.1.1 Publication frequency**

We began our research by exploring a volume of Korea-focused articles published every year starting from 1989 (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, or GW), 1990 (*Rzeczpospolita*, or RP) or 1998 (*Polityka*, or P) up to 2019. The total number of articles we found from those years that concerned either North or South Korea was 1,761. The number of articles published by each newspaper during the analysed period is shown in Figure 1. The largest number of articles was published by P (almost 41.8% of the total), followed by GW (36.6%) and RP (21.5%).



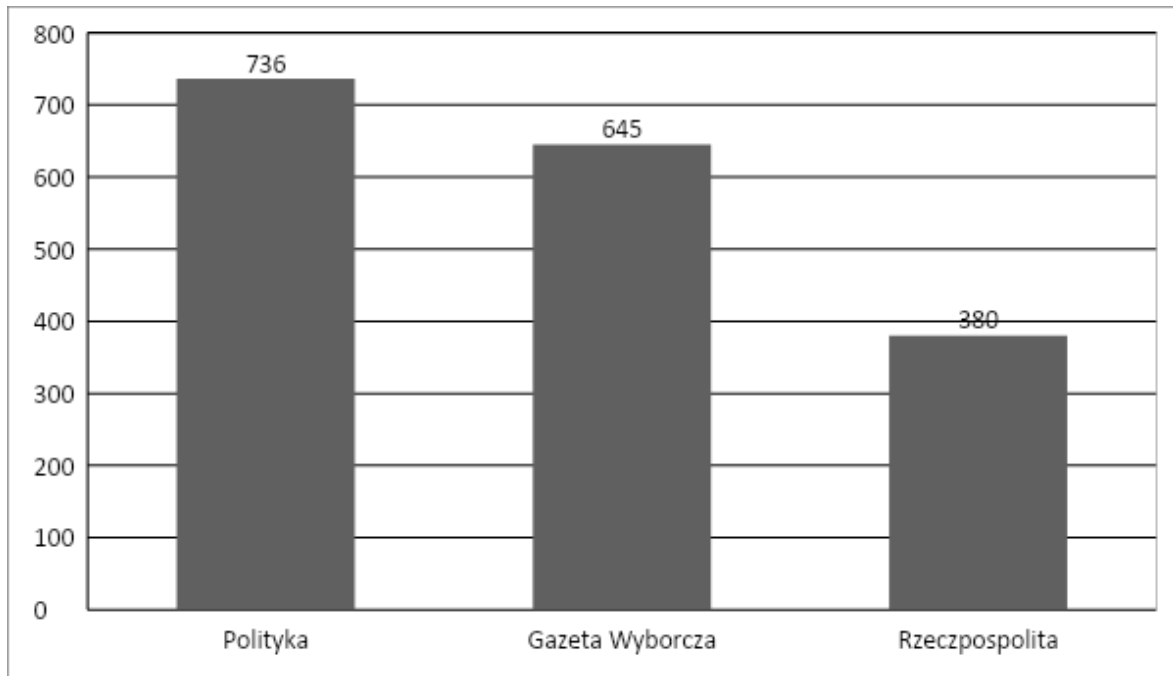


Figure 1. Number of all articles on the two Koreas published by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka*, 1989/90–2019.

Regarding publication frequency, i.e. the number of articles per year published by all three newspapers, this is shown in Figure 2. The greatest number of articles – 116 – were issued in 2000, which was almost 6.6% of the total amount of the entries, while in 2002 there were 103 articles published, 5.8% of the total number. The year 2000 was significant, as was reflected by the frequency of press articles. First of all, in 2000 the Korean Daewoo carmaker declared bankruptcy, and the Polish press focused on the situation at its Polish branch, Daewoo Poland. This issue was mainly addressed in the social-oriented GW. The prospects of increased unemployment and the collapse of the Polish automotive industry were of the highest importance, and therefore of interest to the press. Moreover, in 2000 Madeleine Albright visited North Korea as the first US Secretary of State to ever do so. The main issue on the table was North Korea’s nuclear programme, an important question in the international discourse. Lastly, in 2000, the heads of state of both Koreas met during the first inter-Korean summit since the Korean War of the 1950s. Both Albright’s visit and the summit were perceived as historic, resulting in their receiving a lot of coverage in the press.

In the years 1989/90–2003, that is, up to Poland’s accession to the European Union, the percentage of relevant articles was 39.2% of the total, while in the years 2004–2019 that figure increased to 60.8%. We observed that the frequency of articles per year published by each newspaper varied. GW published texts on Korea-related topics quite consistently during the analysed period; RP does not offer access to their digital content prior to 1993, and P does not offer access to their digital archive for the years 1991–1997. Figure 3 shows the article

publication frequency of all three newspapers from 1989/90–2019. Worthy of note is that, between 1989/90 and 2003, GW published about 70% of all its Korea-related articles, RP about 35%, and P only about 17% of its total production in the whole analysed period. From Poland’s accession to the EU up to 2019, those figures were: GW – about 30%, RP about 65%, and P about 83%.

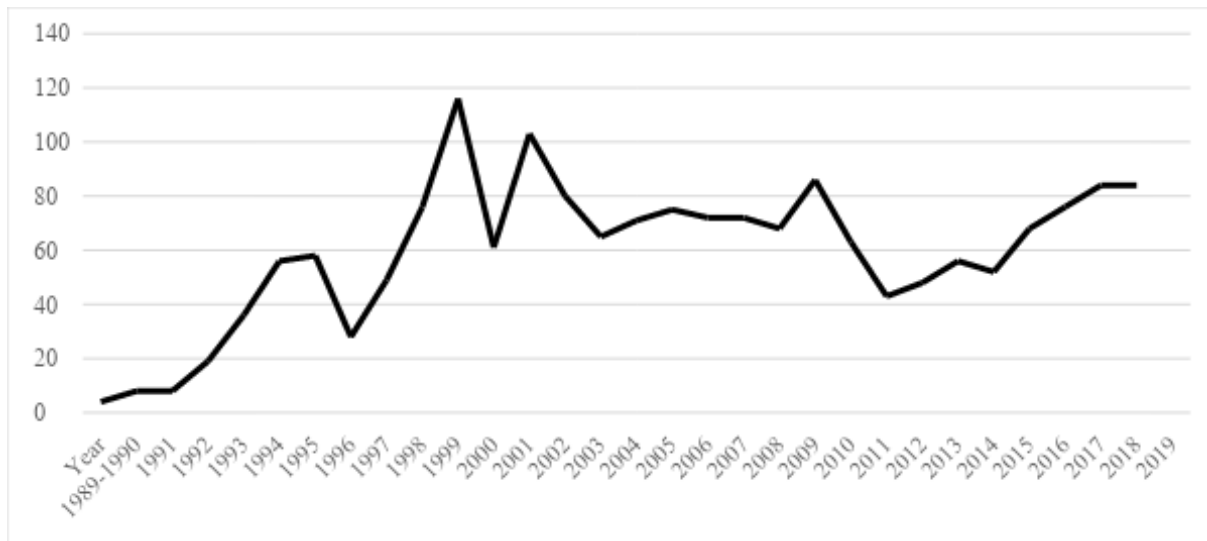


Figure 2. Number of all articles per year published by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka*, 1989/90–2019.

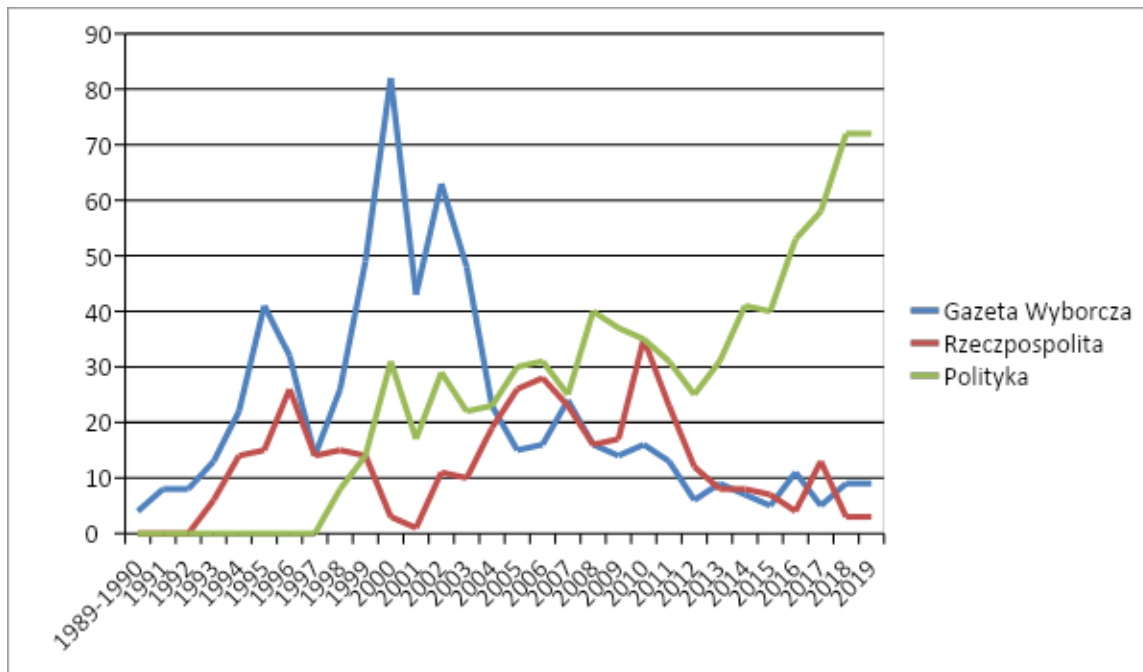


Figure 3. Number of all articles per year published separately by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Polityka*, 1989/90–2019.

The reasons for the differences in the number of publications shown in Figure 3 is related to, on the one hand, the political orientation of the newspapers and, on the other hand, their audience. The frequency of publications on the two Koreas depended on the attitude of the newspapers towards the domestic situation in Poland, and Korea-related topics were reported with reference to the situation in Poland. This was particularly evident in the mid-1990s in the case of the Daewoo investment. In the early 1990s, when GW began to be published, it focused primarily on civic, social and economic problems, and continued that editorial policy during the years that followed. In about the year 2000, as stated above, the main issue for GW was therefore the collapse of Daewoo Poland. This explains why at this time the number of GW publications related to Korean issues was high. Regarding RP, and particularly P, they were not interested in social issues as much, since they targeted other audiences, namely intellectuals (and – in the case of RP – managers). RP and P concentrated on political and economic problems. When in the ensuing years the overall number of Korea-focused articles decreased, it was P that continued to address Korean issues such as North Korea’s nuclear testing programme (more often than GW or RP). This was due to the newspaper’s editorial policy of enhancing its foreign section and publishing more international reports.

### 3.1.2 Most common nouns and adjectives as well as co-occurrences and correlations analysis

We then conducted a frequency analysis of the most common nouns and adjectives, followed by co-occurrences and correlations. First, we identified the top ten most commonly used nouns and adjectives. Next, with those results we set up an analysis of the titles of all the analysed articles, again taking into consideration both noun and adjective frequency, as well as co-occurrences (excluding correlations, which in this case were not relevant). The outcomes are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1

*Ten Most Common Terms in All Articles, 1989/90–2019*

Nouns	Adjectives	Co-occurrences	Correlations
Country	South	World war	Feng shua
World	North	European Union	Deuterium tritium
War	American	Human right	Monetary Found
People	Global	Cold War	Soft power
Job	Polish	South Korea	Materialistic determinism
State	Foreign	North Korea	Pigs
Market	Political	New technology	Science fiction
Economy	Korean	Place of work	Table Tennis
Business	European	Foreign policy	Think Tank
Politics	Economic	Atomic bomb	Joint Venture

*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

Table 2

*Ten Most Common Terms in the Titles of All Articles, 1989/90–2019*

<b>Nouns</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Co-occurrences</b>
Korea	North	North Korea
Economy	New	Atomic Korea
News	Korean	Korea train
World	Polish	Korea break
War	South	Free trade
History	Atomic	Jong II
Jong	Economic	Bomb Korea
Rockets	United	Polish economy
Miracle	Discreet	New president
Samsung	Main	Korea rocket

*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

We set out to answer the question of what main areas of Korean affairs were addressed by the press, that is, what subject were covered and how often. We analysed the outcomes in a broader context to indicate which domains were of interest to the press. By interpreting the most common terms in all articles, we found, first of all, that reports primarily addressed political issues (including military affairs), followed by economic issues (results of the noun analysis).

Second, the problems analysed concerned South Korea more than North Korea, and were presented in a global context, that is, they encompassed US-Korean relations and Polish-Korean cooperation (so including in the EU context) (adjective analysis). These findings were next confirmed by the co-occurrences and correlations analyses. Our analysis of the most common terms in the titles of all the articles revealed that most attention was given to the economy (noun analysis). The adjective analysis showed that, apart from economic issues, military issues were also significant (in the context of North Korean nuclear tests), and this was confirmed by the co-occurrences analysis. In particular, these problems concerned North Korea.

We also checked whether the Polish press discourse on the two Koreas evolved. To do so, we focused on those press reports that addressed, first, Polish-(South)Korean relations. We noticed that in the 1990s press reports emphasised the “Korean economic miracle” and presented South Korea as an “economic tiger”, “the hope” of the Polish automotive industry, and thereby

the best partner for Poland. After the 2000 collapse of Daewoo Poland, this narrative became muted. Again, in 2004, after the first visit to Poland by a South Korean president (Roh Moo-hyun) since the two countries established diplomatic relations, the press highlighted the friendly relations between Poland and South Korea, particularly their economic relations. This narrative was then continued in the following years. Regarding North Korea, the press narratives predominantly emphasised such problems as poverty, famine, and the threat of nuclear tests. Poland's accession to the EU did not lead to any major change on this point, that is, press reports remained as critical as they had been before accession.

## **3.2 Topic mapping**

### **3.2.1 General topics**

The results we had previously obtained led us to topic mapping, that is, to an investigation of the most frequent topics the analysed articles covered. However, an analysis of the data shown in Tables 1 and 2 enabled us to identify a very broad range of topics, namely: political and economic relations (noun frequency analysis outcome); international relations (adjective frequency analysis); foreign and security policy (co-occurrences frequency analysis); and social and economic relations as broadly understood (correlations frequency analysis). The co-occurrences and correlations that are presented in Table 1 are relevant because they indicate the Korean problems on which the Polish press focused during the period in question. In the case of the co-occurrences, these predominantly concerned such issues as inter-Korean relations in the context of security and defence policy (mainly North Korea's nuclear tests). The correlations confirmed a particular interest of the Polish press in economic affairs (especially regarding the carmaker Daewoo) and in North Korea's domestic situation (the North Korean famine of 1994–1995).

### **3.2.2 Detailed topics**

The next step was to find and categorise the more detailed topics that were covered by all three newspapers during 1989/90–2019. We focused on a frequency analysis of the most common nouns that appeared in the articles. The results obtained allowed us to create a set of the most frequent topics. To do so, we specified the most commonly used nouns, and prioritised them according to the topics they concern. Each such set of nouns we then put into a hierarchy, from those nouns that appeared most frequently down to those that were the least frequent. The results are shown in Table 3. The darker shades of grey indicate the most frequent topics, from economy, politics, security, military and armament; the mid-tones indicate the medium amount of attention paid to social relations, relations with other countries, culture, students and education; and the lighter shades the least frequent subject of media, relations between the two Koreas, and the car industry.

Table 3

*Most Commonly Used Nouns by Topic*

Economy	market, economy, companies, development, dollar, production, money, market, growth, trade
Politics	President, government, rights, democracy, party, policy, law, minister, Prime Minister, regime
Security, military and armament	war, weapons, power, security, assistance, army, soldiers, fight, military, rockets
Social relations	human, children, cooperation, society, citizens, women, families, man, success, idea
Relations with other countries	China, affairs, talks, relations, side, West, negotiations, visits
Culture	history, culture, traditions, relations, agreement
Students and education	science, university, students, books, education
Media	media, TV, journalists
Relations between the two Koreas	Korea North, Korea South
Car industry	cars, Daewoo

*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

We then conducted a similar investigation of the frequency of adjectives, from which we were able to create a set of topics and determine how frequently they appeared. We noted, however, that this varied from the results we obtained from our analysis of noun frequency. Firstly, in this case there were fewer topics, and secondly, we put the set in a different hierarchy based on a different intensity of appearance (Table 4). Unlike the noun frequency analysis, in the adjective frequency analysis we found the highest intensity among: relations with other countries, followed by relations between the two Koreas, then politics, economy, social relations and culture, and finally security, the military and armament.

Table 4

*Most Commonly Used Adjectives by Topic*

Relations with other countries	American, United, Polish, Chinese, Western, Japanese, Asian
Relations between the two Koreas	South, North, Korean
Politics	political, communist
Economy	economic, financial
Social relations	social, public
Culture	history, culture, traditions, relations, agreement
Security, military and armament	military, nuclear

*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

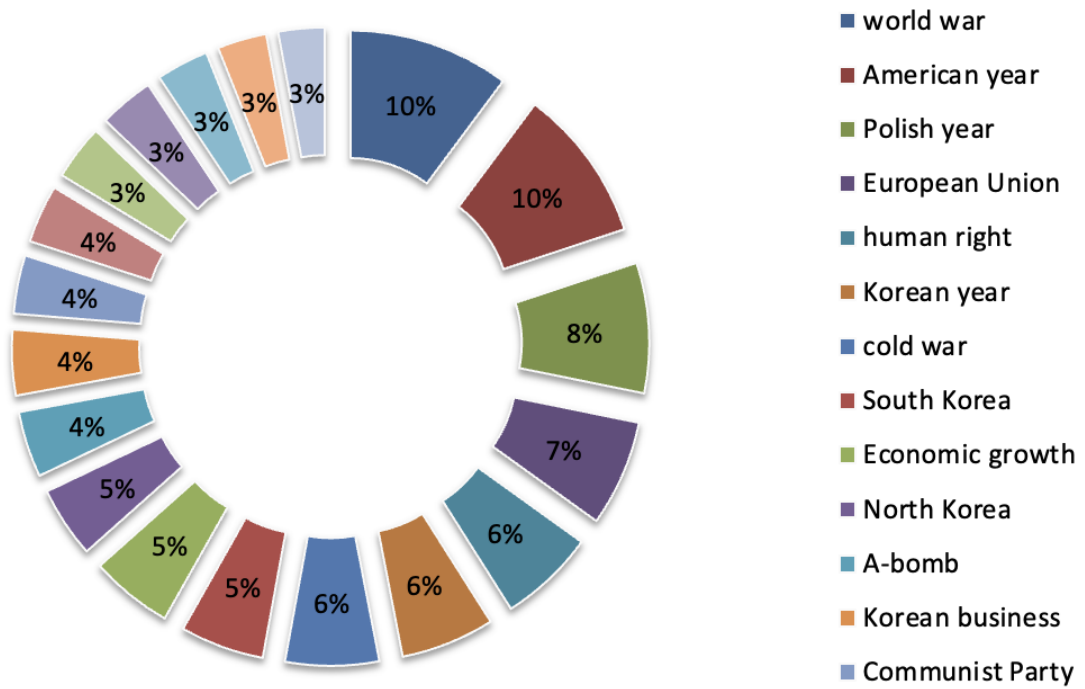
The results obtained, shown in Tables 3 and 4, confirmed our previous observation that the press focused mainly on economic issues in South Korea, and on political and military problems in North Korea. Inter-Korean relations were also of interest, although they were presented in a broader context that included US involvement in the region.

### 3.2.3 Topics by co-occurrences and correlations

We then looked at the most common co-occurrences in all the articles, and identified the top twenty of those. However, we noted that only 10% of the most frequent co-occurrences had the highest rate of appearance, and there were only two of them (“world war”, “American year”); the frequency of such co-occurrences as “Polish year” or “European Union” was lower (8% and 7%, respectively), while the rest were at almost the same level (between 3% and 6%). Figure 4 shown the results. They indicate that the most frequently covered topics were: (1) politics, (2) economy, (3) security, (4) military and armament. Similarly, we next analysed correlation frequency, identifying twenty correlations that were the most closely related to each other. The results are shown in Figure 5. The analysed correlations concerned topics associated with “power”, such as: (1) economy, (2) security, military and armament, (3) politics, (4) relations between the two Koreas, and (5) sport. We thereby confirmed that both co-occurrences and correlations concerned the same topics we had previously enumerated from our analysis of noun and adjective frequency. These results also confirmed the predominant interest the press took in South Korean business activities (mainly Daewoo), and North Korean nuclear tests.



## Co-occurrences frequency



*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

*Figure 4.* Top twenty co-occurrences in all three newspapers, 1989/90–2019.

Monetary Fund	Table Tennis	Joint ventry	Barbed wire	
Power soft	Deuterium isotope	Tritium isotope	Cell phones	Isotope of hydrogen
Materialistic determinism	Premature deindustrialisation	Armored personnel carrier	Launchers placement	Economic cooperation
Pigs	Fake news	Entry visa	Anti-missile shield	Anti-missile deployed

*Note.* Authors' own translation from the Polish.

*Figure 5.* Top twenty correlations in all three newspapers, 1989/90–2019.

### 3.2.4 Topics by noun frequency

Eventually, taking account of the previous results, we focused on the main topics related to the two Koreas covered by all the newspapers during the whole analysed period. To do so, we examined noun frequency as being the most relevant, that is, we identified the most common nouns used each year in all the articles. The results are shown in Table 5. They reflect either general trends in Polish-Korean relations (e.g. the acquisition of the Polish car factory by Daewoo in the 1990s, and the situation in the early 2000s) or foreign policy developments regarding the two Korean states. The most frequent topics addressed were the economy and politics, with 30% and about 27% of the articles concerning these issues. About 17% of the articles concerned the car industry development, and about 14% – security, military and armament. Relations between the two Koreas and sport were touched on by, *ex aequo*, 6% of the articles.



Next, we decided to analyse the results mentioned above in a more detailed way, that is, to explore how certain events were covered by the Polish press. To do so, we investigated those events that were either significant for the development of bilateral relations or addressed important events in the two Koreas. To determine the frequency of these events, we analysed both the articles' titles and their contents. We found that the three newspapers were primarily interested in six main events, namely: 1) North Korea's nuclear testing programme (almost 39%); 2) EU sanctions on the DPRK (almost 26%); 3) the changes in North Korean leadership of 1994 and 2011 (about 11%); 4) the North Korean famine of 1994–1998 (almost 8%); 5) South Korea's performance in the 2002 football World Cup (about 4%); and 6) the South Korean financial crisis of 1997–1998 (about 4%). Other events that we investigated, that is, the downfall of ROK President Park Geun-hye, the first DPRK–ROK summit of 2000, the popularity of K-pop, the presence of North Korean “slave labourers” in Poland and top-level visits in Polish-ROK relations, received very scant coverage in terms of the percentage of articles. The detailed results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

*Particular Events (Frequency)*

Event	North Korea's nuclear tests	The EU sanctions on the DPRK	The North Korean leadership changes of 1994 and 2011	North Korean famine of 1994–1998 <sup>*)</sup>	South Korea's performance in the 2002 football World Cup	South Korean financial crisis of 1997–1998	The downfall of ROK President Park Geun-hye	The first DPRK–ROK summit of 2000	K-pop	The presence of North Korean “slave labourers” in Poland	Top-level visits in Polish-ROK relations <sup>**)</sup>	Total
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	109	44	3	12	14	3	5	6	1	2	1	200
<i>Rzeczpospolita</i>	49	32	5	10	5	2	3	0	0	2	0	108
<i>Polityka</i>	103	96	67	29	10	22	16	7	7	2?	0	359
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>51*</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>667</b>

\*) The articles do not concern only the famine of 1994–1998 but also address this problem after 2000.

\*\*\*) The article addresses the South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun's visit to Poland in December 2004. We did not find any coverage of the visit of Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski to South Korea in 2002.

In general, all three newspapers perceived the importance of these issues in almost the same way, i.e. the number of articles published by all of them was the highest in the case of North Korea's nuclear tests and EU sanctions on the DPRK (almost 65% of all articles concerned these events). In particular, GW devoted to these issues 76.5% of articles, RP – 75% and P – almost 55.5%. Some slight differences were observed only in the case of the North Korean leadership changes of 1994 and 2011 (a topic highlighted only by P), GW published more reports on the North Korean famine of 1994–1998, while P was less interested in South Korea's performance in the 2002 football World Cup. The reason why all three newspapers focused on the two main events (North Korea's nuclear tests and EU sanctions on the DPRK) was the international scope of the nuclear tests, which made it necessary to inform the public about them; secondly, the EU's sanctions against North Korea were related to the DPRK's nuclear programme and were imposed after the 2006 test. This issue was therefore linked to the nuclear tests, and were covered by the press together. What is more, in 2006 Poland was already an EU Member State, and the press published extensively on EU-related topics. Lastly, all three newspapers paid attention to foreign affairs and published on the main developments in this area, and the North Korean nuclear tests were seen as a crucial international problem. Surprisingly, regarding the North Korean great famine in the 1990s, this topic received little press coverage, and the majority of articles on the subject (almost 57%) were published by P. International issues that were presented by the press in the 1990s mainly concerned hard power – armaments and the like.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusion**

Without a doubt, the political consensus that is achieved by politicians in the process of international negotiations and bilateral contacts affects the situation in a state, and therefore can shape the view of public opinion about a foreign partner. The media, particularly the press, are used to not just reporting on that process, but also – to use the term applied by Robert Putnam (1988) – to “reverberate” within domestic public opinion. In this way, the press has contributed to building the images of both Koreas among Polish society during the last three decades. This is in accordance with the concept of media frame analysis by Erving Goffman (1974), and in particular with the findings by Robert M. Entman (2004). In the mid-1990s, the Polish authorities tried to present society with a new direction for the development of the Polish economy that included investments by South Korean enterprises in Poland. Press articles sought to convince the audience that this was the best choice, and Polish public opinion survey results (mentioned below) confirmed that the media succeeded in this. The media set the agenda (Cohen, 1963; McCombs & Shaw, 1972), and particular topics were next consistently presented in order to affect public opinion. The newspapers predominantly focused on the economy (Daewoo investment) and policy and military issues (nuclear tests), and returned to these topics repeatedly. What is more, this made it possible to create a positive image (Xiufang & Chitty, 2009) of South Korea among Polish readers that was expected to result in the consent of public opinion to Daewoo's acquisition of FSO. The press narratives on the Daewoo investment in Poland enabled Poles to learn more about South Korea, which generated increasing interest in Korean affairs. These findings allow us to state that the theoretical approach that we used, derived from communication studies, is also adequate for investigating international problems,

and could be applied using an interdisciplinary perspective. This observation is particularly evident if we take into consideration that studies encompassing discourse are one of the areas of International Relations (Milliken, 1999).

The results of a Polish public opinion survey conducted in recent years allow us to identify international linkages between national public opinion and the way how foreign policy is conducted (Rosenau, 1969). The bilateral contacts between Poland and the two Koreas were followed by a set of political decisions that affected Polish public opinion. Among them, the earliest decision, and a key one, was the decision to start up Daewoo car production in Poland in 1995. Although Poland and South Korea established diplomatic relations only in 1989, by the mid-1990s Poles were saying that Korean investors (after the Japanese) were those from Asia who should be investing in Poland (CBOS, 1995); then, in 1996, for the first time Poles considered South Korea to be one of the most crucial countries with which Poland should cooperate, particularly in economic affairs (CBOS, 1996). Also in the mid-1990s, Poles saw Koreans in a predominantly positive way, emphasising that they were hardworking and calling South Korea the “Tiger of Far East” (CBOS, 1996a). So, there was a prevailing belief in Polish public opinion that the economic dimension was the leading field in bilateral contacts. But later, Polish public opinion became less interested in Poland’s cooperation with South Korea, and just 1% out of all cars bought by Poles were Korean (CBOS, 1997; CBOS, 1997a). What is more, in the years that followed, Polish and Korean issues were not even part of the public opinion survey – because Poland had decided to join the European Union the leading question became its relations with the EU. We noted that earlier, in the 1990s, and in particular in 1997 and 1998, the leading topic in the context of the Koreas was the FSO car factory acquisition by Daewoo. When analysing the press titles of that time period, one can observe how important this deal was to Poland. In 1995 *Gazeta Wyborcza* enthusiastically announced that “Korea attacks” when reporting on Daewoo’s proposal to invest over 1.1 billion USD in Poland (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1995). A few years later, the same newspaper briefly reported on the problems Daewoo Group was going through, and eventually, in 2000, announced there had been a “Quake in Żerań” (the district of Warsaw where Daewoo produced their cars) when Daewoo Group changed its leader and problems occurred (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2000).

The economy, and, more precisely, the car industry continued to predominate in the Polish press until 2001, that is, until the moment when Daewoo Poland got into trouble. The company’s collapse was a consequence of the financial crisis of the Daewoo enterprise, which failed in late 1999. Its downfall was mainly provoked by the Asian financial crisis, which affected a number of companies in the region. Unfortunately, although the Polish branch of Daewoo was a “distant partner” located in Europe, the company was associated with the Korean branch, which led to the gradual dissolution of Daewoo Poland, as well. Daewoo Poland’s demise also brought on the collapse of FSO, which was never rebuilt after the crisis. The dream of rebuilding the Polish automotive industry never came true. What is more, Daewoo Poland had created a number of jobs, and its downfall had serious adverse consequences for the Polish economy, contributing to rising unemployment, which was of particular concern to the government. In December 1999, the unemployment rate in Poland was 13.1%. In 2000 it was 15.1%, in 2001 17.5%, and in 2002 and 2003 20% (*sic!*) (Statistics Poland, 2020).

The highest frequency of publications was between 2000 and 2002, mainly by *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The press reports of 2000 and 2001 were focused mainly on such issues as the deteriorating situation of the Daewoo Group and Daewoo Poland, and the impact of the Daewoo crisis on the Korean economy, which at that time was rapidly growing apart from the Asian crisis. The main problem raised was whether this would affect the Polish economy, and if so, in what way. For instance, in 2000 GW warned “You owe us something, Korea” describing the visit of Polish officials to South Korea in order to convince the Korean government to provide money to the Daewoo factories in Poland (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2000a). This concern was also expressed by the Polish press in the years that followed, for instance in 2004, when the President of South Korea Roh Moo-hyun, visited Poland for the first time since the two states established diplomatic relations. GW published an interview with the President, tellingly entitled “Korea close to Poland”. Roh Moo-hyun declared: “I expect a strengthening of practical cooperation in such areas as trade and investments, as well as permanent support from the Polish side in efforts aimed at bringing peace and stabilisation on the Korean Peninsula. Also, I would like to deepen cooperation in the field of solving such international problems as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2004).

After Poland’s accession to the EU, a number of articles concerning North Korean issues appeared, and this continued up to 2008. The Polish press predominantly focused on such topics as the North Korean ballistic missiles tests. For instance, in 1999 GW reported that “They froze the rocket” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1999); in 2006 it announced that “North Korea launches rockets” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2006) and that “North Korea has a bomb” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2006a). Eventually, in 2009, it published the whole story of “How North Korea built the bomb” (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2009).

The limitations of this research are associated with, firstly, the method we used. Since we focused mainly on a quantitative analysis of titles and content, we did not address the entire range of Polish-Korean issues and Korea-related topics that appeared in the press. Instead, we chose to focus on those topics that were covered most frequently, and can thereby be seen as being the most significant. Secondly, we conducted our research using a system of keywords. This led us to quite general conclusions on the topics framed by the press. This is why we aimed to enhance the study by providing certain elements of our qualitative analysis to interpret the results in a more detailed way. What is more, when searching for articles addressing particular topics, we were forced to make subjective choices, that is, to decide whether an article fit with the keywords we were using.

Our findings show that, both in the mid-1990s and in the years that followed, the press focused predominantly on economic issues. This was due to the domestic situation in Poland (its transformation from a centrally-planned to a liberal economy) and Korean interest in the region, such as the Daewoo investment. We can also confirm that Poland’s EU accession led to a declining interest in Korean affairs by the Polish press. The range of Korea-related topics mainly concerned policy and security issues, as well as economic affairs. We can thereby conclude that



Poland and Korea, although located very far away from each other, have remained distant but good partners.

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