



## Report from the 5th Interdepartmental Polygrapher Seminar “Course, role, and significance of the pre-examination interview in psychophysiological polygraph examinations”

Held on 24th and 25th September 2012 at Rynia near Warsaw was the 5th Interdepartmental Polygrapher Seminar on the subject of the Course, role, and significance of the pre-examination interview in psychophysiological polygraph examinations, organised by the Military Police High Command, together with the Association of Polish Polygraphers.

Participants of the seminar included members of the Police, Border Guard, Military Police, Military Counterintelligence Services, Military Intelligence Services, Internal Security Agency, Military Institute of Aerospace Medicine, Ministry of Finance, Military Academy of Technology, and representatives of academia, including the Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University College.

The main goal of the symposium was the exchange of experience and expansion of knowledge concerning the practices and binding standards in polygraph research, with a special focus on the significance of the pre-test interview.

The conference was opened by the Commander of Military Police, Major General Dr Mirosław Rozmus. The sessions were chaired by Professor Jan Widacki, Professor Ryszard Jaworski, Dr Łucjan Wiśniewski, and Lieutenant Colonel Piotr Sukiennik.

The first paper on Polygraph examinations – contemporary Polish practice was delivered by Professor Jan Widacki, who pooled together the numbers of polygraph examinations performed for investigation purposes by the Police, Military Police, and Border Guard with the numbers of criminal cases, in which he clearly proved that on average one polygraph examination is conducted in nearly 7000 investigations. The reasons for such a status quo are believed to be found both in the fact that the people running the investigations do not know how to use a polygraph, and in the low quality of the examinations performed.

In the following paper on the European roots of polygraph examinations, Professor Jan Widacki proved that, although the United States is considered to be the “home of the polygraph”, the majority of the basic research which the polygraph examination is based on was performed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe (the studies of Mosso, Ferri, Tarkhanoff, Cybulski, Benussi, and Lombroso). It was most probably Lombroso who was the first person ever to use instrumental lie detection (with the use of the hydropletismograph) in a criminal investigation, as he used his device more than two decades before Larson in the United States.

The following paper on the Selection of control questions in homicide cases by Professor Ryszard Jaworski was based on practical experience in the Reid technique that the professor uses, even though it is slightly antiquated today.

His paper was followed by Lie detection with non-instrumental methods by teachers, psychologists, and police officers – conclusions for the method of conducting the pre-examination interview presented by Martyna Huszcza and Małgorzata Wrońska. In their paper, they discussed the results of examinations conducted by three groups of respondents: police officers, psychologists, and teachers. The authors suggested that the assessment of the verbal and non-verbal symptoms of deception accompanying the statements of the examinee can be – if due caution is preserved – used in polygraphs examinations, especially during the pre-test interview.

In the following paper on the Methodological problems of polygraph examinations, Anna Ibek analysed the space of polygraph examinations covering investigation from the methodological perspective.

The paper delivered by Tomasz Rewerski on the Psychological circumstances of people subjected to polygraph examinations in the process of recruitment

for the Border Guard characterised, among others, the attitudes of people subjected to examinations, depending on personality types.

In his paper on the Specific characteristics of polygraph examination of foreigners – running tests with the participation of an interpreter, Jerzy Błachta shared the new experience he gained during the mission to Afghanistan.

Later, together with Piotr Kuźdub, he presented a paper on Non-standard question sets in polygraph tests: analysis of personal experience. Like the former paper, this too was based on case studies from the speakers' own practice.

Dr Marian Macander from the Military Institute of Aerospace Medicine presented a paper on The concept of using results of polygraph examinations in a mobile unit for securing plane crashes and accidents, in which he discussed the idea of using the results of polygraph examinations as part of the work of the committees investigating the reasons for plane crashes.

On the second day of the symposium, Ewelina Rubaj-Wiater presented a paper on The real-time system of quality control: the use of a quality control system in polygraph training, in which she described the control system of polygraph examinations performed in real time by another expert, sitting in a separate room and evaluating the course of the examination at the time it is conducted.

Dr Krzysztof Wróblewski delivered a medicine-oriented paper on The continuation of research on memory disorders in people with advanced somatic conditions.

It was followed by another paper based on practical experience: Purposeful distortion of the psychophysiological examination, with methods for the detection and counteracting of such distortions, presented by Maciej Jaroszek.

Tomasz Garsztka delivered a paper on Presentation of linguistic analysis: a case study, which was an attempt at analysing lie detection based on discourse linguistic analysis. Linguistic analysis was applied to the discourse of a suspect in a media-hyped case of a mother suspected of killing her child. The paper brought about a highly critical reaction, with charges against the author including the lack of comparative material, and the absence of justification for his conclusions.

In his paper on The questions of efficiency and admissibility of new detection tests in polygraph examination, Marcin Gołaszewski presented a report by the American Polygraph Association (Committee Report on Validated Techniques) defining the standards of examinations binding in the United States from 2013. The authors suggested the need to introduce similar standardisation of polygraph examinations in Poland.

The symposium was closed with a conclusion by its moderators – Professor Jan Widacki and Professor Ryszard Jaworski, who wrapped up the operation of the Association of Polish Polygraphers in 2011–2012, and discussed plans concerning further operations. Among the most important tasks, they mentioned the delivery of common, unified standards of polygraph examinations in Poland and joint work on the improvement of the distorted image of polygraph examinations in the media caused by the lack of thorough knowledge of polygraph examinations, both in public opinion, and in investigating bodies and courts. The conference proved that the level of polygraph examinations in Poland – although somewhat denigrated by investigating bodies and courts – is constantly rising. Moreover, the number of unique experiences in the field (e.g. concerning polygraph examinations conducted with participation of an interpreter) is growing as well.

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