

## **Ethos and voice. A rhetorical analysis of self-help books advice for women**

Maria Załęska

**Abstract:** The paper proposes a rhetorical analysis of folk-rhetoric advice formulated by the authors of self-help books addressed explicitly to women. The advice analyzed suggests how women should behave in order to persuade their superiors and colleagues of their credibility and in this way to achieve a certain status and power in their workplace. Within the rhetorical framework, such self-presentation roughly corresponds to ethos, thereby evoking theoretical distinctions between argumentative and poetic ethos. The corpus examined shows that within folk rhetoric only the poetic ethos which mobilizes the resources of *actio*, and especially voice, is taken into account. In the self-help books analyzed, the term “voice” is used with a double meaning: at the symbolic level, as the right to speak, and in the technical sense, as the ability of using one’s own vocal attributes when speaking.

**Key words:** self-help books, advice, ethos, voice, *actio*, rhetoric, pragmatics.