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SELF-MENTION AND ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS OF (NEGATIVE) EVALUATION IN LINGUISTICS ACADEMIC REVIEWS: A DIACHRONIC INSIGHT

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Abstract. The paper is a small-scale exploratory study of self-mention and engagement markers in the reviews published in a reputable Serbian academic journal *South Slavic Philologist* during the 1920s. Using Hyland's (2005a; 2005b) classification, we identified context-prominent mechanisms of author self-reference and reader inclusion in fifteen academic reviews of diverse disciplinary contributions. The reviewers explicitly present their assessments and position their claims as expertise-based and unarguable. Readers are invited to participate, pose questions and consult other sources in the field just to reach the same conclusions the authors had reached previously. The dialogue the reviewers initiate with readers serves to point out shared values or expertise that leads to the impression that readers and reviewers also share (negative) perspectives on the matters the reviewed material raises. The findings might indicate some of the stylistic preferences of academic communication (in this journal) at the time.

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Introduction

In the last decade and a half, LSP and ESP pedagogy in particular gained much from the explorations of academic review genres. While the “sacrosanct” (Salager-Meyer et al., 2007b, p. 109) research article has been a primary form of knowledge reporting, review formats have also found their way to genre analysts and a wider academic public. Academic journals mostly publish book reviews although, depending on the discipline, the reviews of other contributions may be produced as well. It is not rare to find reports on scientific articles, conference proceedings, special issues of journal volumes, reference literature or even thematic meetings and events. Speaking from the perspective of disciplinary practices, such reports serve to inform scientific communities of new findings or approaches. However, rhetorically, reviews are a complex web of interactions. Reviews not only respond to disciplinary literature, they critically engage with it (Hyland & Diani, 2009, p. 2; Tse & Hyland, 2006a, p. 183), summarise the content of new publications and evaluate them with respect to the established disciplinary criteria (Groom, 2009, p. 125). Interpersonal stakes in reviews are high (Hyland, 2004, p. 41) mostly because public evaluation might expose both the reviewers and their colleague-authors, potentially causing academic conflict (see Fagan & Martín, 2002–2003, p. 142 for the term). In that sense, both interaction and evaluation, seen as positioning in relation to texts and prospective readers (see Hyland, 2007, p. 91; Hyland & Diani, 2009, pp. 4–5), may involve control of and subtlety in the use of personal language in the text, a goal that might be accomplished through the balanced insertion of stance and engagement features.

Stance refers to “the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments” (Hyland, 2005b, p. 176). It includes four main categories: 1) hedges that enable a certain lack of commitment to the proposition expressed; 2) boosters that overtly convey certainty in the proposition expressed; 3) attitude markers that show an affective attitude to propositions; 4) self-mention markers that communicate the explicit presence of the writer or author (Hyland, 2005b, pp. 178–181). Engagement markers

“explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants” (Hyland, 2005a, p. 53). The classes of engagement are: 1) reader pronouns that serve to address the reader directly, mostly through second-person pronouns and inclusive *we*; 2) personal asides that interrupt the argument and provide comment on the previously stated content; 3) appeals to shared knowledge that invite the reader to recognise the information in the proposition; 4) directives that instruct the reader to perform a textual, physical or cognitive act; 5) questions that encourage the reader to investigate the issue suggested (Hyland, 2005b, pp. 182–186).

A strategic use of particular markers of stance or engagement profiles the review and the reviewer in accordance with his or her evaluation. Self-referencing devices confirm authorial integrity and authority and enable the author to gain credit for one’s own findings and stand for the opinions expressed (Hyland, 2001b, pp. 216–217). Hedges and engagement markers help create a shared evaluative context and involve the reader in the process of evaluation (Tse & Hyland, 2006a, p. 183). Through engagement devices, readers are acknowledged as disciplinary members and co-participants in an argument as well as potential critics with their own objections and interpretations (Hyland, 2001a, pp. 555–557). When compared, exclusive and inclusive *we* strategies signal the reviewer’s authority to a different extent: exclusive forms may sound more imposing as they directly convey authorial autonomy, whereas inclusive forms, with their implied reference to readers, evoke the sense of shared perspective and presupposed general acceptance of reviewer’s interpretation (Moreno Fernández & Suárez, 2011). References to general or specific audience help reviewers “construct a textual voice for themselves that gives the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the reader” (Moreno Fernández & Suárez, 2011) and show that, as disciplinary experts, they can predict potential needs of various audiences. Directives effectively instruct the reader to refer to the same or some other relevant source to support the point that has just been stated in the text and might also introduce arguments, aspects or lines of reasoning for the reader to consider and follow (Hyland, 2002b, p. 217; Swales et al., 1998). Interrogatives introduce arguments non-intrusively, involve readers and guide them towards the preferred interpretation (Tse & Hyland, 2006b, p. 783).

In this paper, we analyse the rhetorical distribution of self-mention and engagement features in function of (predominantly negative) evaluation in the reviews published in a long-established linguistics journal *South Slavic Philologist* throughout the 1920s. We will attempt to provide a short account of authorial presence and reader reference uses that, in our opinion, contribute to the rhetorical strength of academic criticism.

Methodology

The Journal

Južnoslovenski filolog [*South Slavic Philologist*] (or *JF/SSP* further in the text) was founded in 1913 and, with some interruptions, has maintained continuity in publishing ever since. The focus of the journal was on the Serbo-Croatian language in relation to other South Slavic and Slavic languages.⁴ As one of the main publications in the domain of philology, *SSP* has remained faithfully associated with the institution of the highest academic integrity in Serbia, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (formerly known as Serbian Royal Academy). According to the current official Editorial policy of the journal, today it accepts submissions dedicated to linguistic theory, Slavic philology, history and dialectology of South Slavic and other Slavic languages.⁵ In addition to original articles, submissions may be critical review articles, book reviews, chronicles, and similar contributions. The latest categorisation of scientific journals issued by the authorised Ministry classifies it as an international scholarly journal, which is one of the most prestigious national scientific rankings (Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovations, 2022⁶). From the outset, reviews have been an integral separate section at the back of the journal. The section appeared under different names: in the 1920s the label was *Kritika* [*Critique(s)*], whereas *Prikazi i kritika* [*Reviews and Critique(s)*] is in current use.

Reviews in the 1920s

Reports on the contemporary literature published both in the country and abroad were important for this journal from the day it was established. The diversity of the forms that reviewed recent publications in separate and prominent sections of *SSP* speaks for itself. *Critique(s)* included reviews of monographs, journal issues, individual articles, various collections, transcripts of monuments and reference linguistic literature. *Notes* contained announcement-like, concise and a couple of sentences-long summaries or evaluations of various publications. Later on, the *Bibliography* section substituted *Notes* but with more comprehensive lists of and details on chronologically and thematically organised references. As for stylistic features, in her paper published on a centenary of *SSP*, Dragičević

⁴ As the editors wrote in the foreword to the first volume (transliterated): „(...) ipak mi nismo još imali časopisa kojemu bi bio jedini zadatak — proučavanje našeg jezika u vezi sa ostalim južnoslovenskim i drugim slovenskim jezicima (...). Tu prazninu (...) treba da popuni 'Južnoslovenski Filolog'. “[...] we still did not have a journal whose only assignment would be — the study of our language in relation to other South Slavic and Slavic languages (...). 'South Slavic Philologist' should fill this gap (...).” (Стојановић & Белић, 1913, p. 2).

⁵ Available at: <http://www.isj.sanu.ac.rs/izdanja/casopisi/juznoslovenski-filolog/>

⁶ Available at: <https://nitra.gov.rs/tekst/sr/67/kategorizacija-naucnih-casopisa.php>

(Драгићевић, 2013, pp. 42–45) observed that in the first volume of the journal, criticisms across different genres were explicit, sharp, with sparingly used positive commentaries. This confirmed the authority of the reviewers and the journal that with strict procedures and criteria acted as disciplinary gatekeepers. In those times, the opinion of the reviewer seemed to influence the opinion of the academic community. Given the short time span between the publication of the first and subsequent *SSP* volumes, we assumed the same characteristics would be identifiable in the 1920s corpus.

Corpus Compilation⁷

We chose the 1920s because, even though the publication of the journal officially started in 1913, due to the global political and socio-economic situation, this was the earliest period in which *SSP* was published on a more or less regular basis⁸ (1921–1928/1929). The number of reviews increased gradually in each new volume. However, among all authors, A. Belić and S. Kuljbakin wrote the majority of the reviews in the 1920s. To illustrate the point, the two authors, authorities in their respective fields, wrote eleven out of sixteen reviews in the 1924 volume, eight out of ten reviews in the 1925–1926 volume and ten out of fourteen reviews in the 1928–1929 volume. This influenced our choice of corpus and we selected the reviews written only by the two authors in question.

As for the corpus size, we selected random⁹ fifteen reviews (two to three per each volume¹⁰) of different contributions such as monographs, grammar books, textbooks, journal articles. When determining the size of the corpus, we took into account the following factors:

1) the planned scope of the study: the study was not meant to be extensive; it was rather aimed to identify a limited set of rhetorical devices and functions that should be attested in larger corpora to gain precision and level of generalisability;

2) the real-time requirements of the study: data interpretation was based on the context-dependent and (admittedly) time-consuming rhetorical mapping of the texts; an a priori attribution of rhetorical functions to individual lexemes was excluded (see Hunston, 2022, pp. 30–31 on the corpus size and annotation);

3) our relative acquaintedness with the corpus: in this concrete case, the corpus compilers are the corpus analysers (see Koester, 2010).

4) the relative attestedness of the small-sized corpora in literature: several important studies of book reviews have confirmed so far that rhetorical patterns

⁷ Research data is available at: Research data, Negative stance and engagement – Google Drive.

⁸ *SSP* was not published from 1914 to 1921.

⁹ Random in the sense ‘out of all the reviews written by the A. B. and S. K.’, not random as in ‘out of all the reviews published’.

¹⁰ Volume 7 was excluded from the selection as it contained no reviews.

may be identified in a relatively small-sized corpus of ten to twenty reviews per language or time period (Junqueira, 2013; Moreno Fernández & Suárez, 2009; Shaw, 2009).

Analytical Procedures

Subsequently to the compilation of the corpus, the reviews were coded. The code implied the abbreviation for the journal (SSP), its volume (variable) and the number of reviews for that particular year (variable).

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the model for the analysis of stance and engagement features was Hyland's (2005a; 2005b) classification which was the basis for developing an initial framework of the items we should take account of in the analysis. This particular classification was selected due to its attestedness in a number of contexts and genres (see for instance Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2021; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012). We examined the corpus: a) qualitatively, primarily with respect to the rhetorical function the markers fulfilled in the discourse of the selected reviews; and b) independently, with individual instances of markers located manually in the texts and interpreted both intra- and inter-sententially. We modified the initial Hyland's classification-based framework with respect to some formal traits of the Serbian language that is morphologically more complex than English. In that sense, apart from the explicit pronouns and verbs, we integrated the corresponding non-enclitic and enclitic forms. Additionally, given that some of our examples were beyond the category of Reader pronouns, analogously to Hyland's Self-mentions (2005b) and for descriptive purposes only, we introduced the term Reader-mention. The features and their functions we present herein are the result of mutual (inter-rater) qualitative adjustments.

Forms and Functions of Self-mentions

In our corpus, the reviewers introduce themselves as the authors of (negative) evaluation using the first-person singular personal pronoun (*ja [I]*), as well as by the first-person singular possessive pronoun (*moj [my]*)¹¹ and possessive pronoun for all persons that refers to the first-person singular as well (*svoj [my]*).

The use of the first-person singular personal pronoun *ja [I]* emphasises the reviewer's disagreement with the attitudes conveyed, interpretations offered or methods applied in the reviewed material. The impression is that the reviewers confirm their responsibility and, at the same time, their expertise, particularly when the semantics of the accompanying expressions that boost the meaning is taken into account:

¹¹ Serbian and English use different terms for the same parts of speech. In this case, possessive pronouns in Serbian are termed possessive adjectives in English.

(1) *Ja mislim* da u pretpostavljanju tako generalnog oblika toga procesa on nesumnjivo greši (...).¹² [*I think* that in assuming such a general form of that process he is undoubtedly wrong (...)].¹³ (SSP3/1, p. 137)

(2) *Ja uopšte ne mogu da primim*, govoreći praktički, da se posle geografske podele, t. j. posle materialne podele jednog plemena na više grupa (...) mogla produžiti i dalje epoha njihova jezičkog jedinstva. [*I cannot accept* at all that, practically speaking, after geographical separation, i.e., after material separation of a tribe into multiple groups (...) the epoch of their linguistic unity could continue.] (SSP3/1, p. 138)

(3) *Ja se ne mogu složiti* ni sa jednom od ovih tačaka. [*I cannot agree* with any of these points.] (SSP4/3, p. 229)

The reviewers also compare the reviewed texts with their own publications, underlining thus their authority in the field and proving their argument unflawed:

(4) *Ja sam* god. 1917 u svojoj knjizi (...) *iskazao mišljenje*, da je osnova (...) dialekata srpska (...). I sada *sam*, pročitavši sve ono što navodi g. C.¹⁴ o ovom pitanju, *ostao pri svom starom mišljenju*. [In my book (...) in 1917 I provided the opinion that the basis of (...) dialects is Serbian (...). And now, having read everything Mr C. had stated on this matter, I did not change my opinion.] (SSP2/1, p. 156)

(5) *Moje mišljenje* (...) pisac navodi po *mojoj* gramatici 1915 god. (30 str.), dok je trebalo da navede ono što *sam*¹⁵ o tome *rekao* 1922 (...). [The writer provides my opinion (...) according to my grammar book written in 1915 (p. 30), while he should have provided what I discussed about that in 1922 (...).] (SSP8/2, p. 200)

Occasionally, reviewer-attributed claims are mitigated at first but strengthened later on in the sentence.

The semi-copulative¹⁶ verb *izgledati* [to appear] introduces less forceful criticism, whereas the adverb *suviše* [too] preceding the adverb of negative meaning intensifies evaluation:

¹² The original examples provided are transliterated from the Cyrillic script. Translations are given in square brackets.

¹³ The italicised elements denote the specific category of markers or, in some cases, the accompanying expressions that contribute to the interpretation.

¹⁴ Due to the space constraints, we provide only the initials of the authors mentioned in the original examples.

¹⁵ Serbian is a pro-drop language and pronouns are omitted when the language context clarifies the referent. In this case, the enclitic (nonemphatic) form of the auxiliary emphatic verb *jesam* [emphatic do] semantically includes the subject.

¹⁶ In English, the terms “copula” or “linking verb” would be used for these verbs.

(6) (...) *izgleda mi*¹⁷ da je *suviše* malo rečeno o članu (str. 38). [(...) *it appears to me* that *too* little has been said about the article (p. 38).] (SSP4/3, p. 233)

Similarly, another semi-copulative verb introduces blunt criticism conveyed by adjectives:

(7) *Meni*¹⁸ *se čini* da je teorija g. I. *veštačka* i *neverovatna*. [*It seems to me* that the theory by Mr I. is *artificial* and *unbelievable*.] (SSP5/3, p. 314)

Sometimes evaluation is made less categorical by means of conditional in the form of advice and solutions suggested by the reviewer. Alternative interpretations are subtly contrasted with the suggestions made by the author of the reviewed book:

(8) (...) ako je to jedini primer uopšte, *ja bih* ga *tumačio* kao pogrešku (...). [(...) if this had been the only example observed in general, *I would have interpreted* it as a mistake (...).] (SSP3/3, p. 178)

(9) (...) *ja ne bih prevodio* perifrazičnom rečenicom kao g. M. (...). [(...) *I would not have translated* it as a periphrastic sentence as Mr M did. (...).] (SSP4/3, p. 234)

The reviewers use explicit self-referencing when announcing the organisation of the text and the focus of the arguments and evaluations that will ensue. This seems to be a straightforward strategy that serves the reviewer to firmly establish presence and inform readers in advance of the aims he will attempt to achieve throughout the text:

(10) (...) to *ću*¹⁹ u interesu daljeg raspravljanja ovog pitanja *prodiskutovati* tvrdjenja kn. T. i *pokazati* njihovu vrednost za naše pitanje, naravno, po *mome* shvatanju. [(...) *I will* for the sake of further consideration of this matter *discuss* the claims by Prince T. and *demonstrate* their value for our question, of course, the way *I* see it.] (SSP3/1, p. 131)

(11) Interesantni material g. M. *ja neću pratiti* redom (...); već *ću* u napomenama *svojim izneti* i *svoje* primedbe (...). [(...) *I will not discuss* interesting material by Mr M. in order of appearance (...); instead *I will* also *state my* objections in *my* notes (...).] (SSP4/3, p. 230)

¹⁷ This is the enclitic Dative Case form of the first-person singular personal pronoun *ja* [I].

¹⁸ *Meni* [to me] is the non-enclitic Dative Case of the first-person singular personal pronoun *ja* [I].

¹⁹ This is a singular pronoun pro-drop omission and the use of the first-person singular enclitic of the auxiliary *hteti* [will] instead. In Serbian, the enclitics of *hteti* are used for the future tense formation.

Finally, in our corpus we came across rare examples of the first-person plural personal pronoun (*mi* [*we*]) that refers, we would say based on the context cues, exclusively to the reviewer. *We*-forms mainly remind readers of the actions the reviewer already performed within the text and introduce evaluation either immediately:

(12) U nekim slučajevima, *kao što smo*²⁰ *kazali*, pisac govori o glasovnoj promeni onda kada *u stvari imamo*²¹ *posla sa nezavisnim leksičkim ili morfološkim variantama*. [In certain cases, *as we said*, the writer talks about phonological alterations when *in fact we deal with* independent lexical or morphological variants.] (SSP3/3, p. 179)

or through praise-criticism pairs:

(13) Ali (...) *sva su* pitanja opšte prirode, koja *smo* *gore nabrojali*, *razgledana* u knjizi K. *dosta pažljivo*, katkada *čak i suviše iscrpno*. *Obrnuto*, centralno pitanje ćirilске paleografije (...) *razmatra se i suviše kratko* (...). [But (...) all of the general questions, that *we listed* above, *were discussed* in K/C's book *very carefully*, even *too extensively* at times. *On the contrary*, the central issue of the Cyrillic paleography (...) *was too shortly discussed* (...).] (SSP8/1, p. 189)

Reader Pronouns/-mention

The context revealed that readers are mostly referred to by means of the first-person plural personal pronoun (*mi* [inclusive *we*]) and the corresponding first-person plural possessive pronoun (*naš* [*our*]). It appears that in this manner the reviewers identify themselves with readers and indicate that the criticism shown throughout the review is or should be actually shared.

The reviewer might assume the reader shares specific knowledge with him:

(14) Mislim da se tome (TOJ INTERPRETACIJI)²² *sve protiv* *što znamo*²³ o slovenskim jezicima. [I think everything *we know* about the Slavic languages opposes that (INTERPRETATION).] (SSP3/1, p. 138)

(15) Pisac članka navodi još kao zap.-slovenske osobine (...). Međutim *mi znamo* da reč (...) postoji u *našim* južnim dialektima (...). [The writer of

²⁰ This is a plural pronoun pro-drop omission and the use of the first-person plural enclitic of the auxiliary *jesam* instead.

²¹ This is a plural pronoun pro-drop omission and the use of the first-person plural present tense of the lexical verb.

²² All caps words in parentheses are inserted by the authors of this paper to facilitate understanding.

²³ This is a plural pronoun pro-drop omission and the use of the first-person plural present tense of the lexical verb.

the article also lists (...) as West Slavic features. However *we know* that the word (...) exists in *our* Southern dialects (...).] (SSP5/1, p. 301)

or even expertise and authority to be able to jointly reconsider the material under review from different angles, pose questions and reach expert (negative) conclusions about it:

(16) Najzad, ako je to severozapadna crta, *šta ćemo* sa kašupskim koji ima slobodan akcenat (...)? [Finally, if that is a Northwestern feature, in what way *should we consider* Kashubian that has free stress (...)?] (SSP2/1, p. 151)

(17) *Vidimo*, dakle, da jedno L. (...) zaista nije moguće. [So, *we can see* that one L.'s (...) is not really possible.] (SSP3/3, p. 186)

Inclusive forms are also used to indicate that the material is somehow deficient as it does not offer insights into certain issues relevant in the discipline. The reviewer sides himself with the whole scientific community, including potential readers of the review:

(18) Ali ni jedne reči o tome kod g. L. *ne nalazimo*. [But *we find not* a single word about this in Mr L.'s work.] (SSP3/3, p. 176)

(19) To sve *ne možemo naći* u ovoj knjizi. [All this *we cannot find* in this book.] (SSP3/3, p. 182)

A seemingly less personal and more distancing strategy the reviewers use is mentioning readers in general or even particular groups of readers as the source of criticism. It appears that evaluation is softened at first; however, given both the content of the ensuing comments and the highly personalised wider context of the reviews, we would say these expressions perhaps were not intended to be particularly mitigating.

(20) Što se tiče objašnjenja ove građe, njemu bi se svakako mogle staviti svakojake napomene, primedbe i želje; tako da ono zadovoljava *stručnjaka čitaoca* u manjoj meri, nego li ono istorisko objašnjenje (...). [As for the explanation of this material, various notes, objections and wishes could certainly be attached to it; so (IT COULD BE SAID THAT) it satisfies *an expert reader* to a lesser extent than that historical explanation (...).] (SSP3/3, p. 176)

We also observed an example in which the reviewer disagrees with some imagined readers of the reviewed book.

(21) I tako će se desiti da joj *mnogi naučnik* (...) bude zahvalan za kakav detalj [...] *što smo*, s tačke gledišta opšte strukture jedne knjige ove vrste, *mi morali osuditi*. [And so it will happen that *many a scientist* (...) will be grateful to it for some detail (...) that, from the point of view of the general structure of a book of this kind, *we had to condemn*.] (SSP4/2, p. 224)

Personal Asides

Personal asides are most frequently comments in brackets that briefly interrupt reviewer's narration to make room for some additional observation or reaction. The tone might be different from the rest of the sentence: asides are usually explicitly expressive, evocative and ironic. The reviewer's surprise or doubt regarding the reviewed material seem to be more intensified with the exclamation mark that contributes to the sense of immediacy and signals the importance of the suggested points to the reader:

(22) Sa srpskim dialektima samo su ovo slične crte (...) (*ovo poslednje g. C. smatra u srpskome kao bug. uticaj!*).¹) [To Serbian dialects only the following features are similar (...) (*this last feature Mr C. considers as Bulg. influence in Serbian!*).¹)]

This example is followed by a footnote which offers an illustration from the reviewed book and another exclamative comment by the reviewer that practically mocks writer's explanation: „(...)“ . . . *To je, dakle razlog!* [„(...)“ . . . *So, that is the reason!*] (SSP2/1, p. 152)

(23) Ali stvar nije u tome (*možda g. L. i ne priznaje epohu zapadnoslovenske jezičke zajednice*). [But this is not about that (*perhaps Mr L. does not even acknowledge the age of the West Slavic language community*).] (SSP3/3, p. 182)

Sometimes the whole sentences conveying attitude could be interpreted as an additional and emphatic comment as in the following:

(24) *Izgleda da g. C. misli da su poljski jezik i bugarski stvorili ovu (...) akcentuaciju pre dolaska bugarskih Slovena na Balkansko Poluostrvo! Nije potrebno takvu tezu ni obarati, jer je ovakav način naučnog mišljenja prava metodološka anarhija.* [It seems that Mr C. thinks that Polish and Bulgarian languages created this (...) accentuation before Bulgarian Slavs came to the Balkans! It is not even necessary to refute such thesis, as this manner of scientific reasoning is a proper methodological anarchy.] (SSP2/1, p. 153)

In order to corroborate his or her assessment, the reviewer might use directives to point out that, if consulting other sources as well, readers might find evidence by other authors in the field that the reviewer's claims are true:

(25) (...) čega u drugim slovenskim jezicima u ovom smislu nema (*isp. osobine srednjebugarskih ili srednjemakedonskih spomenika u izmeni nosnih vokala*). [(...) which is a feature in this sense absent from other Slavic languages (*comp. the features regarding alterations of nasal vowels in Middle Bulgarian or Middle Macedonian monuments*).] (SSP3/1, p. 133)

Appeals to Shared Knowledge

Shared knowledge implies that readers are already familiar with the information the reviewer comments. The appeals of this kind are predominantly used to show that the author of the reviewed material presents arguments that are unfounded in comparison with those accepted and well-established within a disciplinary community. In our corpus, two types of constructions introduce such a contrast.

The reviewers use the construction with reflexive and impersonal third-person neuter singular past tense verb *misliti* [*to think*] that semantically requires implicit collective subject. The verb is combined with time adverbial *dosad* [*so far, up till now*] that emphasises that validity of the fact in the past is “challenged” by the statements of the author of the book made in the present:

(26) *Dosad se mislilo* da Supr. kodeks, kao i drugi najstariji spomenici ćirilski, pripada 11 veku. Ako je pisac došao do drugog zaključka, trebalo je da svoje odvojeno mišljenje brižljivo obrazloži. Među tim od takvog obrazložavanja u knjizi g. M. nema ni traga. [*So far it has been thought that Codex S., together with other oldest Cyrillic monuments, belongs to the 11th century. If the writer had reached a different conclusion, he should have carefully elaborated on his separate opinion. However we find not a trace of such elaboration in the book by Mr M.*] (SSP6/2, p. 268)

Additionally, this category includes examples with the adverb *poznato* [*familiar, known*] as in:

(27) *Kao što je poznato*, u prvom delu kodeksa (legende), menjanje њ u e javlja se vrlo često (...). Pisac, oslanjajući se na zadnju legendu br. 48 (...) u kojoj se e mesto њ jakog javlja vrlo retko, misli da su ti primeri (...). [*As is known, alteration of њ into e is very frequent in the first part of the Codex (legend) (...). The writer, relying on the last legend no. 48 (...) in which strong њ is very rarely substituted with e, thinks that those examples (...).*] (SSP6/2, p. 270)

Directives

The majority of directives in our corpus are the abbreviated forms of second-person singular imperative such as *v./vidi* [*s./see*], *isp./isporedi* [*comp./compare*] and *up./uporedi* [*comp./compare*]. The reviewer instructs the reader to refer to the specified content of the reviewed material in order to be able to detect the same aspects he brings up in the review. Readers may also be explicitly directed to consult the reviewer’s references or references by their colleagues that are examples of the appropriate interpretation in contrast with the one the author of the reviewed material provides:

(28) Drugim rečima, kn. T. misli da je (...) samo adverb. Međutim to nije tačno: (...) je toliko isto i pridev koliko i adverb. *Isp. na pr. pridevske oblike koje navodi S. u svome rečniku (...).* [In other words, Prince T. thinks that (...) is only an adverb. However that is not true: (...) is an adjective as much as it is an adverb. *Comp. for ex. adjectival forms that S. lists in his dictionary (...).*] (SSP3/1, p. 136)

(29) (...) ali samo pisac je (HIPOTEZU) navodi bez ikakve naučne literature (...) bez ikakvih ozbiljnih dokaza (v. 138 s.); [(...) but only writer provides it (HYPOTHESIS) without any scientific literature (...) without any serious evidence (s. p. 138);] (SSP3/3, p. 189)

(30) G. M. govoreći o fiziološkoj vrednosti (...) naziva ga (...). Ja sam međutim uvek zapažao da je (...) (*isp. o tome kod mene Dialekti ist. i južne Srbije (1905) (...).*) [While discussing physiological value of (...) Mr M. classifies it as (...). I have, however, always observed that (...) (*comp. this in my Dialects of Eas. and Southern Serbia (1905) (...).*)] (SSP4/3, p. 230)

Questions

Questions that appear in our corpus are rhetorical: they do not pose a real dilemma for prospective readers but only seem to serve to briefly interrupt the reviewer's narration in order to attract the reader's attention to the actual evaluation (answer) that ensues. They convey the reviewer's disagreement or surprise with regard to the point from the reviewed material:

(31) Međutim g. L. na 6 str. svoje knjige kaže (...). *Da li ovim g. L. hoće da kaže, da se poljski jezik izdvojio (...) neposredno, nezavisno od drugih (...) dialektatskih grupa?* Ali takva pretpostavka zacemento ne odgovara onome, što naša nauka zna (...). [However, Mr L. on page 6 of his book says (...). *Does Mr L. want to say that Polish separated (...) directly, independently of other (...) dialectal groups?* But such hypothesis surely does not correspond to what our science knows (...).] (SSP3/3, p. 176)

We also observed that specific formulations contribute to the intended effect of the emphasis of evaluation. Combined question and exclamation mark in the example below underline the reviewer's bewilderment:

(32) Kao dokaz svoje teze on navodi (...). (...) *To je, dakle, dokaz da su Srbi došli na Balkansko Poluostrvo u VII veku?!* [As a proof of his thesis he states that (...). (...) *So, that is the proof that Serbs came to the Balkans in VII century?!*] (SSP2/1, p. 152)

Sequences of questions, particularly those that open with the same structure or lexeme, indicate the reviewers' disagreement not with one, but with a succession of points. The reviewer usually disproves these points further in

the segment of the text the question introduces. In that way, the questions are a lead-in to the individual arguments:

(33) *Šta je južnorusko u odlomku (...)?* — ne može se smatrati stari oblik (...) kao dokaz (...). *Ili: čim se može dokazati južnorusko poreklo (...) odlomaka?* — (...) nalazimo u starim južnoslovenskim spomenicima XI v. (...). *Ili: šta svedoči o južnoruskom poreklu (...)?* Pisac navodi ove crte (...). *Ili: šta je južnorusko u (...)?* Pisac navodi (...). [*What is South Russian in the excerpt from (...)?* — the old form (...) cannot be considered a proof of (...)]. [*Or: what can be used to prove South Russian origin of (...) excerpts?* — We can find (...) in the old South Slavic monuments from XI c. (...)]. [*Or: what is the evidence of South Russian origin of (...)?* The writer provides these features (...)]. [*Or: what is South Russian in (...)?* The writer provides (...)]. (SSP8/2, p. 198)

Discussion and Conclusion

While all published academic writing is traditionally viewed as impersonal and thus objective (Harwood, 2005; Hyland, 2002a), the reviews in our corpus seem counterintuitive in this particular sense.

Self-mentions in the reviews we analysed served to underline authorial presence and expertise, and even though the opinions introduced by the first-person forms were often mitigated by semi-copulative verbs or conditionals, our impression is that the complete commitment of the reviewer to the proposition expressed was indubitable. This is in line with the observation on the effect of explicit authorial presence in academic texts where “the use of first person (...) leaves readers in no doubt where they (WRITERS) stand and how their statements should be interpreted” (Hyland, 2002a, p. 1093). Our reviewers are confident “opinion-holders” (Tang & John, 1999) that show “an authoritative professional persona” (Li, 2021). Rarely observed exclusive *we* that generally enables less imposing tone (see Hyland & Jiang, 2019, p. 143) points to the same conclusion: the reviewers needed no safe distance for their claims.

Engagement devices in our corpus similarly achieve authorial persuasive ends. With reader-mentions and asides, readers are addressed as equal partners in constructing arguments of negative evaluation, whereas questions, directives and appeals to shared knowledge acknowledge the reviewers’ awareness of potential objections and counter-arguments the readership might have (see Hyland & Jiang, 2019, p. 171). Inclusive forms imply a shared perspective (Moreno Fernández & Suárez, 2011) that in reality might not be shared at all, but is rather imposing and echoes the position of the reviewer’s dominance (Hyland & Jiang, 2019, p. 175). Appeals to shared knowledge and questions signal that the reviewer and the reader share professional knowledge as well as the awareness of the same

issues raised in the review (see Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2021), although we observed that, in our corpus, the information that is assumed as common may be highly specialised and the questions rather rhetorical and ironical for that matter. Directives most explicitly instruct the reader to perform textual and cognitive actions to reach the same conclusion provided in the review.

It may be argued that the interactivity presented in our corpus might be a matter of personal or academic style prominent at the time. While we do not exclude the option of personal preferences as the reviews in our corpus were authored by only two reviewers, we cautiously put this explanation aside as we do not have any empirically confirmed evidence of their style in some other publications. On the other hand, as we already mentioned, Dragičević (Драгићевић, 2013) had already observed the blunt tone of the reviews and other contributions published in the first volume of the journal (1913). Having in mind the short time span between the first volume and the volumes we took account of in the analysis, we can perhaps ascribe the function of the analysed markers to the prevalent style of academic writing in this journal at the time. This conclusion concurs with some studies that suggest similar stylistic preferences in academic communication. Salager-Meyer, Alcaraz Ariza and Pabón Berbesí (2007a, pp. 1763–1767) showed that medical book reviews written in the last decade of the 19th century openly conveyed negative evaluation unlike the reviews from the last decade of the 20th century that were either “extremely laudatory” or “opinionless”. Petrić (2010) found that the criticism in medical book reviews published in two renowned academic journals at the beginning of the 20th century was extremely blunt, even insulting for the author of the reviewed material, whereas academic reviews of the first decade of the 21st century practically contained no evaluation at all. The author reached similar conclusions in her study of literature book reviews as “in the 1900s and 1950s BR writers tended to express criticism directly, whereas in the 2000s they give preference to mitigated criticism” (Petrić, 2011). Identical shifts were observed not only in review genres, but also in research articles: from more direct and author-centred tone of the 19th century to polite, less-personal and milder expression in the 20th century (Salager-Meyer, 1998). Salager-Meyer, Alcaraz Ariza and Zambrano (2003) also observed conspicuous differences between “authoritarian and passionate” medical discourse of the earlier 20th century and “politically correct” tone of the 1990s.

Finally, we provide some limitations of the study and suggestions for further research. Focusing on a small-sized corpus of reviews from a single journal and by two (although prominent) authors makes this study limited in scope. Although the exploratory aims of the paper and the very dynamics of publishing (frequency, authors) in *SSP* influenced our choice of corpus, we believe that with the current and well-attested methodology we applied, this paper provides at least some important indications of the rhetorical features of academic reviews

written in the 1920s. As it is one of the rare studies that examined criticism in reviews in Serbian (Serbo-Croatian in this case) from a diachronic perspective, we hope prospective readers will find it contributing and incentive for further studies. Further research is needed to trace the rhetoric of positive evaluations of this period, strategies of criticism in other periods or potential similarities in the discourse of the reviews in Serbian journals in other disciplines.

Source

Јужнословенски филолоџ (1921–1928/1929). Преузето са: <https://www.isj.sanu.ac.rs/en/izdanja/casopisi/juznoslovenski-filolog/>

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Механизми ауторског самоупућивања и укључивања читаоца који доприносе (негативној) евалуацији у академским приказима из лингвистике: дијахронијски увид

Резиме

Рад испитује маркере ауторског самоупућивања и укључивања читаоца у приказима објављеним током двадесетих година прошлог века у реномираном српском академском часопису *Јужнословенски филолоџ*. Користећи се Хајландовом класификацијом (2005а; 2005б), установљени су доминантни механизми ауторског самоупућивања и укључивања читаоца у петнаест приказа разноврсних академских публикација у области лингвистике. Анализа је показала да аутори приказа експлицитно износе своје оцене, као и да позиционирају своје тврдње као стручне и неупитне. Са друге стране, читаоци се позивају да учествују, постављају питања и консултују друге изворе у датој области, чини се, само како би дошли до истих закључака као и аутор приказа. Текстуални дијалог започет са читаоцима истиче

заједничке вредности и упућеност у исту проблематику, те се стиче утисак да је и критика о питањима које приказивани материјал подстиче истоветна ауторима и публици. Напоследку, можда можемо рећи да налази указују на неке од стилских преференци у академском писању (у овом часопису) током тог периода.

Кључне речи: академски прикази; Јужнословенски филолоџ; негативна евалуација; критика; самоупућивање; укључивање читаоца; дијахронијска перспектива.



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