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Ontological Approach to the Producent's Authorship in Academic Writing

Abstract –The necessity to operate with the informational and dialogical components of the professional linguistic text caused a research which resulted in this article. As far as every text belongs to its author (producent) he/she consciously or unconsciously mark his/her attitude towards certain text elements, and coordinate the markers with the ideas implied. The producent's authorship is expressed in the text by means of personal and possessive pronouns. These markers of the authorship are characterized by the unnecessary synonymic pragmatics, and therefore they appear in their full variety not only in the text as a whole, but also inside any text fragment.

Preface

I have recently read an article (Chih-Hua Kuo, 1999) where the author explores some aspects of the personal pronouns use and their role in scientific journal articles. The paper presented an empirical study of personal pronouns in scientific journal articles. Viewing written text as interaction, the study investigated how the use of personal pronouns might reveal writers' perceptions of their own role in research and their relationship with expected readers as well as the scientific-academic community. First-person plural pronouns had been found appearing far more frequently than other types of personal pronouns. The further analysis of first-person plural pronouns suggested that they could have a number of semantic references and perform multiple functions in the journal article. Examples from sampled texts showed how writers used strategically exclusive ' 'we' 'to refer to writers themselves or inclusive ' 'we' ' to refer to either writers and readers or the discipline as a whole for different communicative purposes. I do not intend to criticize either the approaches or the results of the above mentioned work, yet I suppose there is quite a deal of more complicated factors of the communicative role of the personal pronouns in the academic text as well as the fact that the paradigm of those pronouns is presented in richer format in the scientific text.

Therefore we have undertaken another research in which we analyzed academic written texts represented by linguistic journal articles issued in 1999 – 2000 in "Language & Communication" and other sources. The analysis

undertaken brought us to the conclusion that the phenomenon of the producent's authorship is far more complicated than just "the communicative purpose of scientists, i.e., to publish the findings and results of their research in the form of journal articles… ,"and cannot be revealed by the analysis of only "specific lexico–grammatical forms such as personal pronouns and their discourse functions" (Chih-Hua Kuo, 1999: 135). On the contrary it (the producent's authorship) appears to be a systemic element of the dialogic structure of the text as a communicative event and finds its explicit form not only in the whole paradigm of personal pronouns but also in other ways of textual stereotypes.

Authorship aspect as a target for a linguistic investigation

The authorship aspect, as a stereotypical systemic explication in scientific writing, has not been analyzed in any complex work from the communicative, cognitive or discursive points of view. Although there is increasing interest in exploring interaction in discourse, most research on interaction has focused on spoken discourse, particularly conversation. Recently, some studies have explored interaction in written text. For example, Smith (1985) demonstrates the importance of global text function and audience level as contextual variables determining text structure, Beaugrande (1984, 1991, 1997) analyzed discourse from various points of view, giving much importance to its communicative, dialogical and social function, Bazerman (1989) explores written text from the angle of shaping the position of the actual writer. We should agree that some fundamental works do exist in this field of speech interaction, but we also have to consent that these works do not embrace the whole sphere of research problems that might appear.

The problem of authorship in scientific communication appears to be a more-than-one-dimensional phenomenon for it comprises several notions that are very different in origin. From one side we may talk on the judicial or legal authorship which deals with the system of copyrighting and the necessary demand and formulas (citing format, references and so on) determining some necessary and some optional factors of written scientific text. From the other hand every text has the person who produced it – its writer (producent) who consciously (or unconsciously) marks his or her attitude towards some (important for him/her) text elements referring these elements to his/her own thoughts, ideas, viewpoints. Here one can mean the intellectual authorship, which can be judicially identified (when suspected illegal) only by means of an expert investigation. And in some cases this authorship has been assigned to more than one person. Such precedents do exist and illustrate the possibility of the contemporary or parallel processes in cognizing the world. We do not target our paper at "expertizing" the texts under analysis. We are interested in responding the question how the Producent's Authorship (PA) works and actually appears from the formal and structural position, unconcernedly the moral and judicial norms and conventions.

Producent's explicit authorship

If we take the authorship component as an integral part of the semantic load of the text, it is quite

important to emphasize its extensive variability of the signs through which this **producent authorship** (**PA**) actualizes in the academic communication. It (PA) is marked by the textual components represented by the author (producent, writer) as the informational units associated with his/her name or belonging to him or her. It (PA) in academic communication, represented in this way, proposes some compound of views, models, arguments and opinions, declared as his/her (producent's) own, that appear in the text in evident ways:

(1) The only answer that **I can give** to the question, how do you know? (e.g., that «Women are female» is analytic) is to give other linguistic characterizations («woman» means adult human female) or, if pushed by the insistent how -do-you-know question beyond linguistic characterizations altogether, to say «I speak English».

(Searle).

(2) **I know** that in baseball after hitting the ball fair, the batter runs in the direction of first base, and not in the direction, say, of third base or the left field grand stand. Now what sort of knowledge is this? On what is it based? How is it possible? Notice that it is a general claim and not confined to this or that instance of baserunning behavior. **I have never done or even seen** a study of baserunner behavior, and **I have never looked** the matter up in a book.

(Love)

The text verbalized "from the first person angle" forms, in some extent, direct producent marking system of the actual semantic components and allows to distinguish explicit author's elements in the stream of the text. Markers like: *I can give…, I know…, I have never done or even seen…, I have never looked…* positively perform some coherence between both the text itself and its cognitive components with the author of the text, and the whole structure allows us to verify the authorship aspect of the work. Contemporary stereotypes in academic communication show a firm tendency to use the whole pattern of personal pronouns as markers of textual and intertextual dialogic interaction. Therefore nowadays the use of the first person pronoun does not contradict the standard academic style:

(3) To illustrate the applicability of Foucault's concepts of power and discourse to the framing of the female subject in the press, **I have chosen** a series of news stories and editorials which appeared in the Vancouver Sun between 22 and 24 November 1982 (Anon 1982a,b,c).

(Alexander)

(4) **I am acutely conscious** of the fundamental soundness of Taylor's argument, in that as **I attempt to evaluate** his discussion, **I am aware of** the pull of the various rhetorical games which he has identified. **I do not wish to set off** down one of these garden paths.

(Davis)

(5) **Before I examine the history** and development of Russell's theories of denotation and investigate their relation to contemporary linguistic thought **I should like to demonstrate** briefly my thesis that Russell's move in `On Denoting' was towards the linguistic.

(Green)

(6) **I have dwelt** on this example because **I believe it is important** to show that if we follow the procedures of logic, the statement first quoted above can be demonstrated to be logically true.

(Wolf)

It's quite evident that the use of the 1st person pronoun as a marker of PA has some particular characteristics. As far as the semantic and cognitive component does not possess subjective value and therefore is dialectically segregated from the author (we should here mention that academic text is primarily targeted at describing the actual world and its immanent features), the subjective producent's component mainly relates to the semantic parenthesis like: '*Before I examine the history.., I have chosen.., I have dwelt…*' and modal elements like: '*I believe it is important.., I am acutely conscious.., I should like to demonstrate…*'.

From the Grammar viewpoint such parenthetical introductions are organized in the principal or the first subordinate clauses while the main cognitive part is actualized in the second or third ones. This situation can be actually observed in the text written by Wolf: '***I have dwelt** on this example because **I believe** it is important to show that if we follow the procedures of logic, **the statement first quoted above can be demonstrated** to be logically true*'. If we examine the other above mentioned examples we can assert that this stereotype is followed in most cases: the cognitive dominant part appears in subordinate grammatical position. This fact shows that such a sequence of grammatical and cognitive functions originates in style and has some particular pragmatics. It might turn out that the use of modal and parenthetic structures permits the author to focus the readers attention on the most important cognitive elements displayed in the final part of the sentence and supplying them with authorized and, in a way, subjective characteristics.

These semantic-structural interrelations of the producent and the object of the investigation in fact form quite obvious specific features of the explicit PA. It might be pointed out that the structures of the kind possess distinct dialogic pragmatics. These elements provide the existence of the addressent's unit in the text. This unit appears to be either subject-marked or object-marked or ambiguently marked in its actual or semantic meaning. This existence is possibly targeted at returning the disciplinary written text into the borders of a local communicative interpersonal communication, decreasing the distance between the writer and the reader and forming "trusting" "face-to-face" interrelation. Such academic text personification not only brings additional colorings, but also combines the participants of the communication (the author and the potential reader) into a kind of common dialogic situation increasing rhetorical and hence explanatory power of the text.

From the other hand, such PA explications can be taken as forms of declared cognitive or intellectual "ownership" upon this or that model or theoretical construction. In this case the author, in some way provides (or creates an illusion of providing) his/her "rights" upon that or this authentic text (or a part of text), or marks the affiliation to these "right". We consider it rather important to point out that the existence of such explications depends, obviously, on the personal characteristics of the author as an individual language (and style) user. In this connection we should admit that this marker (1st person singular pronoun) is frequently but not totally used in this function. It appears in 64% of the texts analyzed (sf. Table1) and the data varies within different disciplines.

Table1

Author	Marker existance	I	We	My/Our	vol./P.	M.per P.
Alexander R.	*	2	23	7	14	2,28
Angles J., et al	*	0	41	7	32	1,5
Baker G.	*	0	37	4	31	1,32
Boers F.	*	1	7	0	11	0,72
Botha R. (a)	*	2	0	0	12	0,16
Botha R. (b)	*	0	3	2	15	0,33
Branchadell A.	*	23	13	8	15	2,93

Bruthiaux P.	*	6	4	5	14	1,07
Charteris-Black J.	*	0	33	9	17	2,47
Chino N.	*	6	7	0	14	0,92
Clachar A.	*	5	0	0	17	0,29
Connor U. & Mauranen A.	*	0	24	20	16	2,75
Cooke D.	*	1	6	1	10	0,8
Crain S. & Pietroski P.	*	0	73	9	48	1,70
Davis D.	*	9	14	6	27	1,07
French B.	*	4	8	2	11	1,27
Gledhill Ch.	*	2	55	17	21	3,52
Green Ch.	*	0	14	10	15	1,6
Green K.	*	0	34	16	15	3,33
Grenoble L. & Whaley L.	*	0	19	2	14	1,5
Guentcheva R.	*	13	5	3	17	1,23
Harris R.	*	28	44	7	24	3,29
Henderson W.	*	4	3	1	7	1,14
Imbens-Bailey A. & McCabe A.	*	0	17	3	22	0,90
Inghilleri M.	*	6	0	2	16	0,5
Jahn J.	*	9	11	1	26	0,80
Jasso-Aguilar R.	*	35	2	9	20	2,3
Kuo Ch.	*	0	51	8	18	3,27
Kuteva T.	*	1	39	3	16	2,68
Lin F.	*	97	262	37	57	6,94
Love N.	*	0	19	5	17	1,41
Lyn H. & Savage-Rumbaugh E.	*	0	5	1	19	0,31
MacDonald M.	*	0	34	16	15	3,33
Miller-Ockhuizen A. & Sands B.	*	0	26	11	13	2,84
Mortensen C.	*	47	40	13	18	5,55
Ostermann A. & Dowdya J.	*	0	57	37	21	4,47
Parkinson J.	*	17	11	5	19	1,73
Pratt I. & Francez N.	*	0	220	32	36	7
Rajagopalan K.	*	22	23	18	45	1,4
Silva R.	*	18	9	4	18	1,72
Sullivan A.	*	43	73	41	18	8,72
Sullivan N. & Schatz R.	*	2	11	11	15	1,6
Templea V., Sabat S., Kroger R.	*	16	13	10	18	2,16
Toolan M.	*	25	46	26	12	8,08
Valle J. (b)	*	44	12	8	28	2,28
Valle J. (a)	*	49	13	8	28	2,5
Vann R.	*	4	4	7	11	1,36
Wolf G.	*	14	172	29	17	12,64
Worthama S. & Locher M.	*	0	54	14	14	4,85
Zucchi S. & White M.	*	1	168	23	48	4
Whole	**100%**	**0,54**	**1,81**	**0,50**	**1022**	

The traditional 1st plural personal pronoun 'we' also marks in a particular way the elements of the producent authorship:

(7) Without implying that these are the only kinds of facts that exist in the world, **we need to distinguish** between brute facts such as the fact that the sun is ninety-three million miles from

the earth and institutional facts such as the fact that Clinton is president. Brute facts exist independently of any human institutions; institutional facts can exist only within human institutions. Brute facts require the institution of language in order that **we can state** the facts, but the brute facts themselves exist quite independently of language or of any other institution.

(Love)

Here, by the way, this 'we' (***we need to distinguish…, we can state…***) has positively got additional communicative, cognitive and rhetorical characteristics as: the function of sharing the disciplinary authorship with other subject of the dialogue (like those who have the same or similar opinion on the problem under research), or the rhetorical "involving" of the reader into the virtual dialogic situation which the producent is creating in his/her text. The use of the whole pronoun paradigm should mean that each of its elements might have functional particularities, otherwise the author's pragmatics of the use of both the elements (I/we) in one text would be unclear or spontaneous (quite a rare phenomenon in the academic text):

(8) **Could we give** an account of semantic content that is fully compatible with the explanatory framework of natural science? What would a positive, or a negative, answer to this question entail for the study of mind and language? Subsequent to this transcendental question is a separate question - which **I shall call** the empirical question - of how semantic content does relate to the rest of the natural world, or of how semantic content is best accommodated within naturalistic discourse.

(Sullivan)

(9) Following Castell's views, **I recognize** that identity is an important resource for the articulation of movements of resistance that attempt to counter the socio-economic inequalities and the dehumanization of culture that an unchecked globalization may cause.

If we accept as a goal the preservation of Galician identity, **we must carefully define** the terms of that identity.

(Valle)

On the one hand, the text does not contain any explicit evidence of the difference in the functional characteristics of the opposition **I/WE**, therefore an illusion that the use of the dual pronoun marker is sporadic might appear, but, on the other hand, the implied difference in their meaning still exists. Sullivan, in particular, demonstrates in a way split attitude towards the phenomena described. The matter of this "splitness" reflects the idea that the **I**-component marks more special, singular or individual ('*which I shall call the empirical question*') element of the disciplinary model, while the **WE**-component marks more common, generalized or theoretical disciplinary framework ('*an account of semantic content that is fully compatible with the explanatory framework of natural science*'). Valle marking his individual viewpoint with the **I**-component, shifts the right of the final decision of the model under discussion to those generalized "us" by means of the **WE**-component. This functional delimitation of the communicative instruments in the disciplinary dialogue both deepens the rhetorical abilities of the text and supports the idea of the institutional characteristics of the academic communication where every communcant (writer or reader) belongs to a professional group and represents the group by means of communicative or social activity which is sometimes explicit in the text (*Our (i.e. the linguists')*):

(10) … (Adopting a different interpretation would not affect the following discussion.) **I shall** also sometimes not distinguish between evaluation measures and evaluation procedures, as Chomsky did.

Our (i.e. the linguists') task would be relatively easy if we knew what an evaluation procedure is **before we set off** to find the grammar for a language. In that case, **we would simply need** to apply the evaluation procedure to the many possible grammars and choose among them accordingly.

(Lin)

The pronoun WE, as the producent's authorship marker, appears in the majority of the texts under research: it was not found in only 3 of the 50 texts which counts less than 6% (see table 1).

Similar function can be addressed to the possessive pronouns (in some terminology possessive adjectives) **1st Sng/Pl** (*…my impression is.., …our linguistics …*):

(11) … The genre most likely to be expected of undergraduate science students in their course work is the lab report (Braine 1989), although **my impression** is that other genres such as descriptive and explanatory essays are expected of students in examinations.

(Parkinson)

(12) **So my first point is** that this would be a deplorable way to approach the history of linguistics ...

(Harris)

(13) We need a practical example. Both researches have identified `watery metaphors' though they do not call them thus. **My interests take me back to the subject.**

(Lin)

(14) Searle's theory of language exemplifies the dilemmas that attend theorising about language in a culture that has adopted a certain conception of the natural sciences and their role in **our cognitive and epistemological scheme of things.**

(Love)

(15) Much the same pressure is exerted on us as members of the academy, to leave politics out of **our linguistics**, to conceal it within ...

(Davis)

These markers (***My interests originate.., …in my restricted sense.., …my aim is that.., … my interpretation is intended to serve.., …my discussion of integrationist interpretations…, … our cognitive and epistemological scheme of things…, … our linguistics…***) semantically connect the text with the PA. It is also evident that these PA markers are aimed at expressing the idea of some "belongness" rather than at personalization or dialogization. This fact originates from their possessive semantics. Possessive forms in the function of PA markers are also quite frequent in the academic communcation: there were only 4 (from 50 analyzed) that avoided these markers.

Therefore we can state the following characteristics:

- academic text contains quite evident markers that can be associated with the idea of the explicit PA;

- these markers comprise the personal pronouns referring to the text producent through the grammar subject or the possessive attribute corresponding to particular cognitive text elements;

- the whole paradigm of the personal and possessive pronouns of the English language is used in the English academic text.

Producent's implicit authorship

On the other hand the producent's authorship is not necessarily marked in the text, or it can be marked implicitly by means of semantic and syntactic forms without explicit personal or subjective belongness:

(1) **With some condensing for the sake of brevity**, **three interpretations can be identified**: the rhetorical interpretation, the normative interpretation, and the games interpretation.

(Davis)

(2) **The integrational sign bears** a symbiotic rather than an adversarial or `heterocategorial' relationship to time. In other words, **it exists in, not outside of**, time. This does not mean that a sign cannot evince a certain permanence. **But its permanence is itself time-bound; it exists within a (relatively) enduring context.**

Such a context should not be confused with the relatively enduring nature of a Saussurean synchronic state. **A synchronic state is an intra-linguistic state which is not context- or time-bound**. Within such a state, **the properties of the sign are determined by** intra-state factors which, while the state exists, are shielded from temporal and contextual influence. In this sense **the sign exists `hetero-categorially'** with respect to context and time: **it is in no way dependent on them.**

(Wolf)

The shift of the function of the grammatical subject from the author of the text to the object of the research makes the authorship component less evident, but the focused argumentative component and dialogically organized polemic situation together with communicative modality allows us to talk of the authorship belongness of particular text fragments.

Constructions where the marker of the main object under research functions as the subject of the sentence (The integrational sign…) or the principal grammar construction (…the properties of the sign are determined…) quite possibly have some characteristics of PA component. Besides these constructions look as cognitively more valid while having no evident association with the individual point of view and therefore they frequently are more rhetorically effective. Deindividualization and depersonification provide certain prove which is usually supplied with corresponding modal configurations (*Such a context **should not be confused** with…, **it exists in, not outside of**, time…, … it is **in no way dependent** on them*).

From the one angle PA identification in the constructions of this kind is complicated and not sure as far as it is not marked, from the other angle the same unmarked state does not allow us to state the absence of the PA. The only textual evidence of the meticulous producent's attitude towards such

elements remains the above mentioned linguistic or semantic modality:

(3) **Such facts are significant**. For in the course of language acquisition children are exposed to finitely many strings of words, each of which presumably conveys a single meaning in the conversational context.

(Crain and Pietroski)

(4) … However, by material adequacy, the two questions are equivalent, since knowing the answer to one is the same as knowing the answer to the other. Hence, by formal adequacy, **they must be assigned the same value**. This rules out the above interpretation, **since 'yes' and 'no' cannot be the same entity**.

(Nelken and Francez)

(5) The world of syntactic theorizing **could not be more different**. **Every new approach has tended to** reject fundamental aspects of its predecessor.

(Newmeyer)

The constructions supported with the linguistic *(…they must be assigned …, … cannot be the same entity …, … could not be more different …)* or semantic modality *(…Such facts are significant., … Every new approach has tended to …)* can be also identified as PA marked. Cognitive pragmatics of the academic text, as an informational structure designed to be sent from one communicant to the other, allows to define the above mentioned elements as markers implying the PA.

Even more obvious markers (in the constructions without I, We, Our, My…) can be observed in the elements associating PA elements with the text itself:

(6) **The main question** addressed **in this article** is whether it is worthwhile to refer to the literal sense or origin of an unfamiliar figurative expression as it is encountered by a language learner in her/his specialised reading. **To answer this question**, Cognitive Semantic tools were applied to reading economic discourse. **The hypothesis** that an enhanced metaphoric awareness on the part of language learners can be beneficial to their specialised reading **was put to the test in a small-scale experiment**

(Boers)

(7) **Our research is intended** to extend our awareness about what constitutes a good proposal and how writers go about the process of writing one.

(Connor and Mauranen)

(8) **It was decided to** gauge the link between animacy and inanimacy and the economy and the market respectively by using the Economics section of the Bank of English to identify the range and frequency of verbs with which they collocate. **The results shown in Table 4** are for all collocations for the pattern economy+verb and market+verb; that table shows only those verbs which occurred five or more times in the slot immediately following the noun.

(Charteris-Black)

(9) **This paper is intended to support** the conclusion that such a fear is somewhat an illusion.

(Pietarinen)

The author in this case provides the PA explication in a kind of secondary way. This scheme comprises features of both explicit (I, We, Our, My…) and implicit PA marking loosing no validating and rhetorical features typical of the implicit way of marking PA.

Conclusions

Formal variety and productive characteristics of the PA markers are possible to be both identified and characterized in the following way:

- PA in the academic writing is expressed in the text either explicitly or implicitly.

- PA in the academic writing can be marked by means of the whole paradigm of the personal and possessive pronouns as well as by means of the secondary explication through transferring the LA marker from the author to the text itself.

- PA in the academic writing is realized implicitly by means of transferring the principal grammatical functions onto the main research object and its rhetorical or modal focus.

- The PA markers reflect a non-synonymic pragmatics and therefore can appear in the text (or text fragment) in their full variety.

- The dialogic function of the PA markers in academic writing comprises the identification of the author as a person researching and creating the new information, on the one hand, and on the other hand the PA markers involve the reader into the dialogic situation of adjoined cognition in the function of an active participant.

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