ENGLISH AND SERBIAN ACADEMIC DISCOURSES ANALYZED IN THE LIGHT OF 'EXPLICIT REFLEXIVITY' PARAMETERS[1]

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Abstract

The parameters of 'explicit reflexivity' have been used as an analytical tool for examining English and Serbian academic research articles in order to depict their characteristics concerning this language phenomenon. Since the employment of discourse reflexivity in academic writing is seen as the writer's readiness to facilitate the readers' path through the text, its presence in the two academic discourses will be interpreted in the light of Hinds's language typology (1987), which distinguishes writing cultures with respect to the writer's vs. the reader's responsibility for successful written communication. Therefore, the degree of the writer's awareness of his/her role in the process of communicating will be mirrored by the number of reflexive elements identified, and the two types of discourses will be described on the same basis.

Key words

explicit reflexivity, academic writing, research articles, written communication

1   Introduction

Discourse reflexivity, a linguistic phenomenon which is often referred to as metadiscourse, has attracted the attention of linguists for the last twenty years, mostly for its cultural and generic variety, but also for its significance in teaching academic English for international communication. Namely, the proper use of discourse reflexivity by non-English academics enhances the intelligibility of their writing by making it more explicit and clear, which is central in multicultural encounters. However, some non-English academic writers (as is often the case with those from the Serbian academic community) are not aware of this fact, and neither are they prepared to change their writing habits shaped within their writing cultures, although they may considerably differ from the ones that exist in the target writing culture, i.e. in the Anglo-American manner of academic writing.

The first step which should be undertaken in order to make non-English academic writers alert to the linguistic phenomenon under consideration is to provide them with some data on the basis of comparing the presence of discourse reflexivity in English academic discourse to that in the academic discourse of

their writing culture. This very idea underlies a small-scale research project designed to investigate English and Serbian academic discourses and compare them by means of discourse reflexivity parameters. The information about the differences and similarities between the two discourses concerning this subject may represent a landmark to Serbian academic writers when getting ready to write in English for the international academic community.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to present the results of the above-mentioned research, but at the same time to draw the readers' attention to the term 'discourse reflexivity', which is largely suppressed by the term 'metadiscourse', commonly used to label "a large, heterogeneous agglomeration of linguistic phenomena" (Ädel 2006: 3).

Metadiscourse is defined as 'text about the text' or 'talk about talk', which depends on the discourse investigated, whether it is written or oral. It comprises the linguistic material which signals the presence of the author as he/she helps the reader "organise, classify, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material" (Vande Kopple 1985: 83). In short, its role is "to signal the writer's communicative intent in presenting propositional matter" (Hyland 2005: 20).

There is no doubt that metadiscourse plays an important role in academic discourse as well, and along with other forms of metadiscourse in mediated, public, and private interaction, participates actively in the social construction of communication practices (Craig 1999, 2005). The same can be said of discourse reflexivity, although it seems that the area covered by this term is somehow under-researched, in contrast to a vast number of other investigations concerning either metadiscourse itself, or different metadiscoursal notions, such as 'text connectives', 'hedges', 'validity markers', etc. (Vande Kopple 1985, Crismore 1989, 1990, Crismore & Farnsworth 1990, Mauranen 1993, Markkanen, Steffensen & Crismore 1993, Hyland 1996, 1998, 2000, Ventola 1998, Valero-Garces 1996, Crawford Camiciottoli 2003, Dahl 2004, Ädel 2006, Blagojević 2008, Toumi 2009, Bunton 1999). For this reason, before we define discourse reflexivity, which is the subject of our research, it is necessary to illuminate the discerning line between metadiscourse and discourse reflexivity, as well as to explain the notion of 'explicit reflexivity'.

2 Text/Discourse reflexivity and explicit reflexivity notions

The two terms – metadiscourse and discourse reflexivity – derive from the two approaches to metadiscourse, as Mauranen (2007, 2010) explains it: the first one defines metadiscourse as a broad category and considers *textual interaction* as fundamental to this category (commonly referred to as the integrative or

interactive model) and the second one defines metadiscourse as a narrow category and considers *reflexivity* as fundamental to this category (referred to as the non-integrative or reflexive model).[2]

For most linguists nowadays, the term discourse reflexivity is used to signify the notion of metadiscourse, but treated in its narrow sense – it excludes interpersonal categories such as attitudinal and validity markers that appear in the traditional models of metadiscourse (Vande Kopple 1985, Crismore & Farnsworth 1990). However, there are linguists who try to make some kind of a compromise between the two terms, such as Toumi (2009) by coining the term 'reflexive metadiscourse', used as a narrow-approach model for the investigation of metadiscourse. This model classifies all metadiscoursal elements into reflexive and non-reflexive ones. Thus, the elements which belong to reflexive discourse are those which are traditionally labelled as 'text connectives', 'code glosses', 'illocution markers' and 'commentaries' (Vande Kopple 1985, Crismore & Farnsworth 1990), and qualify as reflexive, while 'validity' and 'attitude markers' are non-reflexive because "they refer to the internal state of mind of the writer as an experiencer in the real word, or as a writer of other texts" (Toumi 2009: 66). A close inspection of the elements included in reflexive metadiscourse and discourse reflexivity shows that these are just two synonyms used for exactly the same linguistic issue.

The term *text* (later – *discourse*) *reflexivity* was, for the first time, used by Lyons (1977: 5) to signify "the capacity of natural language to refer or to describe itself". The same term has been used by Mauranen (1993) who explains why it seems to be preferable to use the term metatext: while reflexivity refers only to the text itself, i.e. 'the object text', and "is investigated in its role in the formation of the current text", the term metatext may refer to other texts as well (Mauranen 1993: 145). The same author also argues in favour of this term because the notion of text reflexivity is "reminiscent of the traditional distinction in modal logic between *de re* and *de dicto* modalities, that is, the distinction between whether expressions refer to facts denoted by propositions or to the propositions themselves. Reflexivity is thus in some sense parallel to *de dict*o expresions" (ibid.).

Thus, discourse/text reflexivity is defined as "the cover term for the self-reflexive expressions used by the writer to negotiate meaning in a text. It is the writer's explicit commentary on his/her own ongoing text. It marks the writer's awareness of the current text as text or as language, of him/herself as writer, and of the potential reader as the reader of this text" (Toumi 2009: 66). Its function is to support the propositional content of a text by making it coherent, legible and persuasive to readers in accordance with the writer's intention; thus, "…

reflexivity helps discourse achieve two main purposes: to make discourse more explicit and precise, and to manage discourse strategically" (Mauranen 2010: 19).

The term discourse reflexivity has its synonymic form – 'explicit reflexivity' Mauranen (1993: 152), and this form will be used hereafter alternatively with the term 'discourse reflexivity'. It should be noted here that "explicitness is a degree concept rather than a dichotomy". This means, that although there are a lot of signs of the author's interventions in the text concerning the text *per se*, such as the specific typography used in order to stress something, *explicitness* refers here exclusively to explicitness in *wording* – using words *per se* (Ädel 2006: 27).

3   Methodology of the research

For the purpose of this research, explicit reflexivity is used as an analytical tool for examining English and Serbian academic research articles (RAs) in order to reveal their characteristics concerning this language phenomenon. As a result, we expect to get a clearer picture of the differences and similarities that exist between the two discourses. This may become a starting point in describing the two discourses on the basis of explicit reflexivity parameters engaged in them.

The theoretical background of this research is Hinds's 'new language typology' (1987), which might be considered too simplistic for its rough classifying method, but still worthwhile to be taken as a starting point for analyzing academic discourses cross-culturally. According to this typology, writing cultures are distinguished with respect to the writer's vs. the reader's responsibility for successful written communication, concerning the fact that "... there are different expectations with regard to the degree of involvement a reader will have, and that this degree of involvement will depend on the language of the reader" (Hinds 1987: 141). This means that Hinds distinguishes 'the reader-oriented vs. the writer-oriented' type of discourse: in some writing cultures the responsibility for the successful communication between the writer and the reader rests with the writer and he/she should make his/her writing as clear as possible, not only by conveying the propositional content in a logical and explicit way, but also by employing a variety of language markers to serve this purpose. In the reader-responsible writing, on the other hand, it is the reader's duty to find his/her way through the text, which means that he/she is the one who is responsible for understanding the writer's ideas and intentions.

In the Anglo-American writing tradition, there is an attitude that "successful writing in English is *reader-friendly*. It must fit together logically, be signposted to guide readers, and take their likely responses and processing difficulties into

account" (Hyland 2005). However, since the Serbian writing tradition operates under different norms and favours writing conventions which are closer to those evidenced in creative writing even when argumentative prose is concerned, there is a justified assumption that Serbian academic discourse might cherish a completely opposite writing style from the one maintained in English academic writing (Blagojević 2005, 2006, 2011, 2012). The logic which underlines our research and connects Hinds's language typology and explicit reflexivity notion can be explained as follows: since the employment of explicit reflexivity is the writer's deliberate activity directed towards readers and intended to facilitate their path through the text, it makes sense to interpret it in the light of Hinds's language typology – the number of reflexive elements in a piece of academic writing will indicate the degree of the writer's awareness of his/her role in the process of communication. This will allow the researcher to present an aspect of Serbian academic discourse, which may, as is the case with a large number of language characteristics, become 'visible' only when compared to similar discourses from other languages.

4   The research method and material

For the purpose of applying the contrastive analysis as a central method in examining the presence of explicit reflexivity elements in the two discourses, the same type of academic genre – research articles were chosen from humanities and hard sciences, an equal number of RAs written by English and Serbian authors, thirty in each language from six academic disciplines: humanities (sociology, psychology and philosophy) and hard sciences (chemistry, geology and biology).

In order to make the planned comparison valid in all its instances, each of the compared components was carefully chosen and made equal in numbers: the two-part corpus had approximately 180,000 words each, with each of the articles comprising 5,600 to 6,300 words. The data obtained by qualitative analyses were statistically treated and compared in order to draw a conclusion relevant for the description of English and Serbian academic discourses in terms of the discourse reflectivity notion.

The decision to apply quantitative analysis as an adequate method for obtaining the results which are in accordance with the aim of our research rests on the very nature of the examined elements. Namely, a close inspection of the reflexive items in the two languages has revealed that these items are realised by the same types of language devices. The only difference in their formal realisation concerns the number of items by which reflexive units are expressed in the two

languages, due to some language-specific characteristics. Thus, whereas English requires the use of noun or personal pronoun in front of the verb, verbs in Serbian contain inflectional endings which make personal pronouns become optional elements (English: *I consider*; Serbian: *Smatram*).[3] This fact, nevertheless, does not deter the existence of parallel forms by which reflexive units are realised in the two languages. The parallel forms by which reflexivity is expressed in the two languages, alongside the same repertory of the reflexive items used by academic writers from the two writing cultures have made the comparison of reflexive items extracted from the two examining materials possible by means of applying quantitative analysis.

Since the final stage in the research required the counting of reflexive elements sorted out from the two materials, the approach applied here was the one chosen between the two major approaches commonly practised in counting the linguistic elements: word-based, i.e. to count every single occurrence of reflexivity elements in each of the two examined materials, and sentence-based, i.e. to count the number of occurrences per sentence. The empirical work on the examined articles proved the presence of more than one reflexive element per sentence, so we counted manually all occurrences of reflexive items that appeared in academic articles and summed them up for each material respectively. After that, the number of all occurrences in the two materials was divided by the number of the articles from one and from the other corpus, in order to get their rate per academic article.

Finally, it should also be noted that the two scientific areas (humanities and hard sciences) were deliberately chosen in order to minimize their discipline-specific characteristics and to make it possible for the analyst to focus only on cultural inclinations exhibited by the two groups of academic writers.

5   The model applied in the research

The model designed for this research is based on the one proposed by Mauranen (1993), though slightly modified in order to obtain such results which will be interpreted strictly from the point of view of their contribution to constructing an overall picture of the type of academic discourse under consideration. Mauranen's model was also simplified so that the fine distinction of reflexivity expressions into those of high explicitness and those of low explicitness[4] was abolished, for not being particularly significant to the ultimate goal of the research.

The model applied to this research material contains three broad categories of reflexive elements,[5] classified as:

1. References to the text (e.g.: *In this article …*, *In conclusion…*, etc.; *U ovom radu ..., U zaključku...,*).
2. Discourse actions (e.g. *As mentioned earlier…*, *We shall demonstrate in the next section…*; Kao što je rečeno…, *Pokazaćemo u sledećem odeljku…,*).
3. The writer's overt presence in the text (e.g. *I will support the idea …*, *Let us consider…*; *Ja sam zagovornik ideje…, Hajde da razmotrimo…*).

The terminology used in this model was mostly borrowed from Mauranen's model, but with some modifications, such as: 1. the term which appears as 'discourse labels' in the mentioned model was replaced by the term 'discourse actions' (to make it more dynamic in comparison to the term 'references to the text', which is static by its nature), 2. the expression 'Addressing the reader' was replaced by the expression 'The writer's overt presence' (due to the extension of this category with the aim of obtaining more data of the writer's overt interventions concerning his/her readers), which is possible to achieve by means of:

1. referring to himself/herself as the writer of the text;
2. inviting the reader to take part in the unfolding material (either alone or together with the writer).

The category from Mauranen's model named 'Addressing the reader' was extended in this way in order to gain more data which may contribute to the establishing the degree of *writer's friendliness* towards his/her reader (Leńko-Szymańska 2008), an approach in academic writing which is commonly realized by employing a sufficient amount of reflexive elements in the text.

6   Identification and classification of reflexive expressions into categories

The identification of reflexive elements in the examined material and their sorting out from it was not an easy task at all. These elements rely heavily on the context, so that some of them which appeared to be reflexive at first sight were discarded after revisiting the examined material. This fact showed that explicit reflexivity elements may rank among the context-dependent phenomena.

The similarity between reflexive and non-reflexive elements made the task even more complicated and required an underlying criterion for separating reflexive from non-reflexive elements. Hence, a reflexive unit was recognized as such, only if it referred *exclusively* to: 1) the current text (not the others mentioned within the text[6]); 2) the current writer; 3) the current reader. All other instances, in spite of the same linguistic forms in which they appeared, were considered to be discourse-external units, belonging to the propositional content, and therefore not identified as reflexive units.

The next problem we faced during the research was concerned with the classification of reflexive expressions into categories, or better to say, with the decision-making regarding the category in which they would be included. There were certain hesitations while distributing the reflexive expressions which contain personal pronouns referring to the author of the text, followed by different kinds of verbs: they could have been classified either in the category labelled as discourse activities, but also within the category denoting the writer's overt presence in the text. This kind of problem was solved by taking into consideration the semantics of the verb connected to a personal pronoun in the following manner: the reflexive expressions in which a personal pronoun was followed by the verbs of illocution or movement were included in the category of discourse activities (as in Examples 1a and 1b), while those in which a personal pronoun was followed by a verb of mental activity *(to recognize, to think, to contemplate…; smatrati, misliti, zaključiti)* were included in the category of the writer's overt presence (as in Examples 2a and 2b):

(1a) *Having sketched the relation, operative in "le mythe interrompu", between "interruption" and "being in common", I now turn to an essay written several years earlier, "Le voix libre de l'homme".*

(1b) *Sada ćemo navesti dva specijalna slučaja gornje jednačine koja su interesantna za istraživanje o kojima je bilo govora u prethodnim odeljcima.*

(2a) *Thus, we may argue that the socialization and acculturation of time and nature go some way but not far enough towards adequately theorizing the contemporary social condition.*

(2b) *Stoga smatramo da je za predviđanje uspeha u nastavi potrebno utvrditi posebnosti svakog nastavnika I stepen integrisanosti njegovih svojstva, a ne tragati za psihološkim profilom univerzalno uspešnog nastavnika.*

7   Categories of explicit reflexivity

Before we present the data acquired from the examined material, it will be useful to discuss briefly the three categories of discourse reflexivity elements, explain their main functions and present some examples from the research material as illustrations for each category.

7.1 References to the text

References to the text serve, as Mauranen (1993) puts it, to indicate the

writer's awareness of the text as a product of writing activities, and at the same time, to induce a similar awareness in the reader. They specify either the whole text or its parts (*introduction, next section, conclusion,* etc.; *uvod, u delu koji sledi, zaključak*), or particular parts in the text (signified by means of adverbs of place or time, such as *here*, *now; ovde, sada*):

(3a) There are the *"techno-power brokers", so defined <u>in this paper.</u>*

(3b) <u>*U tekstu*</u> *se razmatra recepcija otpora neokolonijalizmu u evropskoj i domaćoj javnosti.*

(3c) *A key goal of <u>this first section</u> is to elaborate the concept of care, a task which we regard primarily as centering upon the enhancement of the concept's capacity to analyse both welfare state variations and change and development.*

(3d) <u>*U drugom delu rada*</u> *govoriće se o načinima merenja kauzalnih atribucijai dace se prikaz jednog instrumenta.*

(3e) *Particular social maps are institutionally propagated, they are based on an implicit notion of a median social character and they involve a particular understanding of the correct ordering of social time. This last is understood <u>here</u> in terms of a schedule of identities.*

(3f) <u>*Ovde*</u> *nije mesto za dalju raspravu o problemima određivanja religije i religioznosti i značaju pojedinih indikatora za merenje religioznosti, niti diskusiju sporenja oko procesa sekularizacije u savremenoj epohi.*

7.2 Discourse actions

Discourse actions have the function of indicating some of the author's activities within the discourse, either already undertaken, as in the expressions: *As noted earlier…, As suggested above*; *Kao što je rečeno…, Kao što smo gore naveli*, or to be undertaken in the sections of the text that follow, as in the expressions: *I shall show below…, As it will be seen in the next section*; *O čemu će biti reči kasnije..., Kao što ćemo videti u deliu koji sledi.*[7]

As seen from the examples identified in the research material, discourse actions could be formally realized in three ways:

1) by the verbs of illocution *(to discuss, to conclude, to summarize, to illustrate;* raspravljati, zaključiti, rezimirati, ilustrovati*,)* in active and passive constructions (4a, 4b)

2) by the combination of personal pronouns (*I/we; ja/mi*) which refer to the writer of the text (4c, 4d) and the verbs of illocution or, occasionally, verbs of movement (*I now turn to*…; *Sada prelazim na*…)

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3) by the combination of the nouns (*paper, article,* etc.; *rad, članak*) which refer to the written product (4d, 4f), and the verbs of illocution.

(4a) *As will be discussed later, this antibody coverage was also sufficient to provide rapid binding of analytic to the column, with greater than 99% of the PHP being extracted from a sample in as little as 6s.*

(4b) *Najpre ćemo uporediti parametre standardizovanog uzorka.*

(4c) *Thus we conclude that the activation energy for the loss of F is highly relative to that for the loss of CF2.*

(4d) *Ako sam prethodno rečenim obrazložio svoj izbor teme, sada bih prešao na njeno razmatranje.*

(4e) *The paper will briefly describe the main minerals present in UK coals and their environmental impact.*

(4f) *Stoga ovaj rad ima za cilj da pruži kompleksnu analizu raspodele cinka pri sadašnjem načinu prerade sekundarnih mesinganih sirovina.*

By employing the two categories of reflexive units (references to the text and discourse actions) within an academic text, its author provides his/her readers with some important guidelines through it and helps them both to orientate through the text and to follow the author's intentions.

7.3 The writer's overt presence

The writer's overt presence in the text is realized within the text either by the use of personal pronouns *I* or *we* (the choice between the two options is one among cross-cultural issues[8]) by which the article writers signpost themselves as their authors, or by the use of rhetorical strategies by which the authors invite their readers to think over the presented material:

(5a) *I would almost risk positing this as the highest "practical principle" of Nancy's thought.*

(5b) *No, sada nemam nameru da govorim o razmerama nihilističke krize na kraju ovog veka, već ću se samo ograničiti na opasnost potiranja slobode i suverenitieta u momentu kada se povezivanje sa svetskom moći u procesu tzv. neliberalne globalizacije, tendencijski nagoveštava kao proces fašizacija sveta života.*

(5c) *Note that focusing on this problem will bring a new perspective in dealing with it.*

(5d) *Kakve zaključke možemo izvesti na osnovu analiziranih rezultata istraživanja?*

By these options, an article writer tries either to shift the reader's attention to himself/herself as a writer, i.e. to draw the reader's attention to his/her actual existence (as in 4a), or to shift it from the propositional content to the process of reading (4b).

8   Comparison and interpretation of the obtained data

The elements (units) of explicit reflexivity were collected and compared, so that the total number of identified items in the English corpus was 758, and 580 in the Serbian corpus, which makes 25.3 items per article in English, and 19.2 items per article in the Serbian corpus. The distribution of the reflexive elements within the three categories is presented in the table below:

Types of reflexive units	Number of items in ENG RAs	Number of items in SER RAs	Items per an article in ENG corpus	Items per an article in SER corpus
References to the text	123	111	4.1	3.7
Discourse actions	386	278	12.9	9.2
Writer's overt presence	249	191	8.3	6.3
TOTAL	758	580	25.3	19.2

Table 1: Reflexive expressions in ENG and SER academic articles

A greater number of reflexive units in RAs written by English writers in comparison to the number of reflexive units in RAs written by Serbian writers indicates different attitudes towards the use of these linguistic devices in the two writing cultures. The least noticeable difference is seen in respect to the use of reflective items which refer to the unfolding text, while the most prominent difference between the two groups of writers was noticed in their inclination towards the use of reflexive units which signal the author's discourse activities carried out through the text. It seems that Serbian academic writers are not commonly accustomed to using rhetorical strategies by which they either remind their readers of the issue already mentioned in the texts, or announce a new portion of material in the lines that follow. Since the employment of these strategies contributes to the coherence of the text and helps the reader follow the writer's stream of ideas and thoughts, it seems that Serbian academic articles lack this important component of a well-written academic text. As for showing the writer's presence in the text, in contrast to English academic writers, Serbian

authors are less prepared to present themselves overtly to their readers. Instead, they use impersonal language devices, such as forms in passive voice and the pronoun *one*, led by the traditional assumption that these means contribute to the objectivity to academic texts which should be made as impersonal as possible in order 'to serve the scientific truth'.

According to the data, English academic discourse seems to be closer to a "writer-responsible" type of language than is the case with the Serbian academic discourse, which, following its own conventions, exhibits more 'reader-responsibility' tendencies, a fact which is important for Serbian writers who tend to write in English for international publications. As Serbian academic discourse has not been classified in this respect yet, this research leads towards an attempt to its classification, which, definitely, cannot be established as a valid one, unless a far larger research corpus and additional parameters of investigation are included in its analysis.

9 Concluding remarks

According to the obtained data, and on the basis of previous research in this field, it can be said that text reflexivity is a linguistic phenomenon which culturally varies, and if regarded as a component which contributes to academic politeness in the sense that it is regarded within the Anglo-American writing culture, i.e. to guide readers through the text and facilitate their path through it, it can also play an important role in producing 'reader-friendly discourse'.

This fact is important for non-English academic researchers when they try to write their articles for international readership: the way English academic writers use text reflexivity in their RAs should serve as a model to them and help them approach English academic style in a more subtle way. The notion of text reflexivity is also important for teachers engaged in academic writing courses when designing their courses for university students. Not only does this notion require its inclusion in academic writing courses for its contribution to creating 'a piece of good academic writing', but it also necessitates the application of text reflexivity parameters in students' argumentative essays evaluation. Future experts and academic researchers will much benefit from these types of academic courses which supply them with valuable information and practice useful for their communication in English as an academic *lingua franca*.

Endnotes

[2] The terms *integrative* and *non-integrative* model are introduced by Mauranen (1993: 145-155), while the terms *interactive* and *reflexe* models are Ädel's (2006: 167-179).

[3] This is an example for a reflexive unit which signals writer's overt presence in the text.

[4] According to Mauranen (1993: 171-173), the expressions of high explicitness are those "by which the writer via the current text makes explicit reference to the process of communicating", while the expressions of low explicitness are those "by which the writer organizes the text and indicates functions of its part without explicitly referring to the communication process which is taking place via the text".

[5] Originally, the research included four categories – besides the three presented here, there was the category labelled as 'Internal connectors'. However, it was omitted later, according to the suggestion of Mauranen given to the author during the presentation of this paper at Brno conference – BCLSE, September 2012, as a category which does not contribute significantly to qualitative and quantitative analyses of the explicit reflexivity notion.

[6] If so, it was recognized as 'intertextuality' and is of no significance for the identification process.

[7] In the traditional model of metadiscourse (Vande Kopple 1985, Crismore & Farnsworth 1990), the first group of discourse actions were named 'Reminders' (or 'Reviews'), while the latter was named 'Announcements' (or 'Previews').

[8] A detailed study by Vassileva (2000: 1) shows that different cultures influence the way authors present themselves in their academic texts, so that the choice between the use of the first person singular and the first person plural – i.e. the *I/we* opposition – may be considered as a sign of cultural identity and viewed, according to this author, as "an exponent of deeply rooted cultural beliefs".

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