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for Slovenian**

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NON-INSTITUTIONAL AND GRASSROOTS PRESCRIPTIVISM FOR SLOVENIAN

This paper sets out an analysis of prescriptivism as a mode of usage problem resolution in the Slovene speech community. ‘Prescriptivism’ is defined in line with contemporary research. First, it is briefly contextualized in opposition to institutional normative guidance in Standard Slovene. Second, terminology and methodology for studying non-institutional and grassroots prescriptivism are presented. Given that they are relatively new for speakers of Slovene, an analysis of their early stages, namely usage guides and interactive internet discussion of usage problem, is performed. A survey of grassroots prescriptivism is performed to understand why speakers of Slovene might consider this option as opposed to institutional guidance.

KEYWORDS: prescriptivism, Slovene, usage guide, grassroots prescriptivism, non-institutional prescriptivism

Besedilo prispeva k razumevanju preskriptivizma kot dejavnika razreševanja normativnih zadreg za govorno skupnost govorcev in govork slovenščine. Predstavljen je termin ‘perskriptivizem’ v luči sodobnejših raziskav tega pojava; ta je kratko umeščen v kontekst naproti institucionalnemu razreševanju normativnih zadreg v okviru programa knjižnega jezika, potem pa sta predstavljeni terminologija in metoda raziskovanja neinstitucionalnega ter samoniklega preskriptivizma. Ker sta slednja v slovenščini razmeroma nova pojava, je opravljena analiza njunih zametkov zanjo, natančneje priročnikov za rabo ter spletnega interaktivnega razreševanja normativnih zadreg. Raziskava primerov zatekanja k samoniklemu preskriptivizmu pokaže, kdaj in zakaj se govorniki in govorce slovenščine najverjetneje zatekajo k takšnemu razreševanju normativnih zadreg namesto k institucionalnim orodjem.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: preskriptivizem, slovenščina, priročnik za rabo, samonikli perskriptivizem, neinstitucionalni perskriptivizem

1 INTRODUCTION

Recent work in standardization studies has shown that the relationship between prescription and subsequent speech is not straightforward and that studying prescriptivism may form part of linguistic explanations of language use (e.g. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2011; 2020; Ayres-Bennett 2021). For the most part, such work examines usage guides as structurally coherent, usually book-length prescriptive interventions with their own history and audiences (see Straaier 2018) and their effects on the speech community in which they emerge. For Slovenian, metanormative studies are plentiful but almost exclusively pertain to *institutional* usage guidance: the objects of study include among others the Academy (the Fran Ramovš Slovene Language institute at ZRC SAZU), dictionaries, and orthographic rules created by the academy known as *pravopis(i)* (Verovnik 2004; Žaucer and Marušič 2013; Dobrovoljc 2018). Although this is the dominant mode of usage guidance for the Slovenian speech community, it is certainly not the only one. Following the proposed early-20th-century trends of colloquialization (Mair 2006, 185) and anti-official stance (Bogoczová 2021, 72), we propose a twofold research question: how is a usage problem addressed by non-institutional prescriptivism for Slovenian and when/why might the Slovenian speech community turn to non-institutional guidance?

First, prescriptivism is defined and contextualized briefly within the Slovenian speech community. Then, three examples of emergent non-institutional prescriptive monographs, namely Cedilnik 1995, Pertot 1997 and Kocmut 2012, are evaluated in terms of how well they correspond to a prototypical usage guide. Finally, grassroots prescriptivism (Lukač 2018; see chapter 4 for definition) as a form of non-institutional usage guidance for Slovenian is examined by means of a survey of prescriptive activity in language-oriented Slovenian Facebook groups.

2 PRESCRIPTIVISM AND ITS PLACE IN THE SLOVENIAN SPEECH COMMUNITY

Prescriptivism generally *follows* the codification phase within the classical standardization model (e.g. Haugen 1972, 249–252 and Joseph 1987, 53–54). Following the establishment of Carniolan as the selected H-variety in the 19th century (Orožen 1996, 123, 132, 160, 162, 168), the 20th century brought about the formation of the part of the Academy dedicated to lexicography and standard language maintenance, as well as the official standard dictionary (SSKJ), the grammar of standard Slovene and eight separate *pravopisi* alongside the currently relevant SP 2001.¹ With institutionalization came the adoption of a scientific base for linguistic normativity from the Prague Linguistic Circle focussing on dynamic stability and intellectualization (Hávránek 1983; Garvin 1993).

Cameron (1995, 6–11) recognizes that in even the most descriptive linguistic work there is implicit prescription involved simply because of the authority that linguists carry as language scientists. While a full discussion is beyond the scope of this paper, Cameron’s influential argument states that linguists, by observing consensus norms of the speech community by describing, also legitimize this consensus in a way that could not have been done before without the input of scientific legitimacy (7–8), thus implying adherence to the norm. In other words, prescription and description are never fully separable, or indeed, prescription can never truly be done away with. ‘Prescriptivism’, then, is not something a linguist can choose to associate with or not: “In theory, ‘prescriptivism’ could refer to any form of linguistic regulation, but in practice it is strongly associated with those forms that are most conservative, elitist and authoritarian.” (9)

Most contemporary work in the studies of prescriptivism (see, among others, Pillière et al 2018, Ayres-Bennett 2021, Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020) follows Cameron 1995 by recognizing descriptive vs. prescriptive is not a binary variable, accepting that some degree of prescriptive activity is inevitable in a speech community, and studying the interdependence of prescription and description in linguistic works

¹ SP stands for *Slovenski pravopis*, ‘Orthography of Slovene’.

(see, for instance, the project *Bridging the Unbridgeable*). Prescriptivism is therefore not necessarily understood as conservative and elitist from the contemporary perspective. It follows from this that the terms ‘prescriptive’ and ‘prescriptivism’ can be used to describe the normative work of academies since it falls well within the scope of linguistic – and they have been, frequently, for example in the case of the *Académie Française* (see Curzan 2014, 5, 71; Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020, 7, 21, etc.) In Croatia, where the Academy’s linguistic work resembles the Slovenian case more closely, the methodological framework referring to language regulation as “prescriptivism”, has also recently been successfully applied (see Starčević et al 2019; Kapović 2022). Given that the Slovenian Academy rejects the term ‘prescriptivism’ when applied to its normative activity, and because institutional usage guidance is not the topic of this paper, we will refrain from using the term “institutional prescriptivism” out of respect. However, considering all of the above, we believe that it is the common intention to resolve usage problems of both the Academy and non-institutional usage guides, which may be labelled prescriptive *sans* reservation, that offer at least a starting point for a common contextualization.

Within the last twenty years, most of institutional normative guidance has been digitalized, made searchable (SSKJ and SP 2001 first in 2003 (Dobrovoljc and Bizjak Končar 2013, 120)) and integrated into the user-friendlier *Fran* portal. This makes them readily available to anyone with the knowledge of how to use them. However, while mutually supporting knowledge of existence and availability have rendered SSKJ and SP 2001 very powerful sources of normativity for Slovenian speakers, issues typical of institutional sources persist. The (lack of) speed with which ZRC SAZU is accepting novel forms and the well-documented problem of difficult-to-understand rules of orthography (Gantar and Krek 2009, 154; Žaucer and Marušič 2009, 450; Verovnik 2004, 253; Lengar Verovnik 2018) have alienated parts of the speech community. An online advisory service of ZRC SAZU called *Jezikovna svetovalnica* was subsequently established so that people may enquire about their usage problems. The answers appear in digital form and are searchable by keyword, making them trusted

and useful resources for advice about usage problems not resolved by SSKJ or SP 2001; recently, they have been compiled in book form (Dobrovoljc et al 2020). *Svetovalnica* therefore resolves the issue of comprehension and offers reliable and informed usage guidance. At the same time, it is naturally unable to provide instantaneous resolutions which people may demand.

This is where non-institutional prescriptivism comes in: as will be discussed below, various non-institutional sources of prescriptive activity have emerged in the past 30 years. Institutional usage guidance differs from non-institutional prescriptivism, among other things, in the level of expert consensus it demands and the decidedly non-prescriptive intention (but see Cameron 1995, 6–11), and some of non-institutional prescriptivism did espouse problematic guidance (Verovnik 2004, 253). For more information in this topic, the reader is referred to e.g. Dobrovoljc and Bizjak Končar 2013 etc. However, given that non-institutional resources do exist, there is obviously an audience for them. In what follows we return to the manner in which they address usage problems and why (and when) they might be used instead of institutional resources. When applicable, comparisons with institutional usage guidance will be made.

3 *PRAVILIS* AND OTHER BOOK-FORM ‘USAGE GUIDES’

Traditionally, some of the most prevalent prescriptive texts aside from institutional publications have been usage guides, which can be described as books of prescriptions and proscriptions² pertaining to various language structures usually written by non-academics

² These terms refer to different modes of usage guidance, namely imperative (“say this”) and prohibitive (“do not say this”) respectively (see Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020 throughout). They are useful in differentiating between various normative tools; for instance, grammars tend to be prescriptive, even exclusively so in the 17th century (e.g. Nevalainen 2003, 143), whereas usage guides tend to be proscriptive (Nevalainen 2003, 146; Battistella 2005, 47), although, as mentioned in the introduction, prescription can hardly be completely separated from description even in the best linguistic work, and not all usage guides are exclusively proscriptive (see analyses in Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020). Notably, electronic language tools such as spellcheckers are also proscriptive (i.e. their effect is a red squiggly line under a misspelled word); given how text editors

for laypeople in order to ‘improve’ their speech (cf. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2011; 2020; Straaijer 2018, 18–20). These print-medium language tools originated in the 18th century in the UK before exploding in the 19th century. According to Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2020, 35; see also Milroy and Milroy 2012, 158–159), their rise is attributable to the precarization of social status as an effect of the industrial revolution in the UK, and large-scale immigration in the USA. In other words, usage guides seem to be connected to rising and waning levels of linguistic, and other, insecurity – the idea behind the tool is to help secure one’s precarious social position by assimilating one’s speech to traditionally secure social classes’ prestigious lect (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2011, 293; 2020, 184). Here, we wish to know what the properties of a prototypical usage guide are, and how non-institutional books intended to help speakers of Slovene ‘improve’ their speech correspond to them. To this end, three such books are surveyed.

According to Robin Straaijer (2018), a usage guide, while comprising of elements belonging to genres as disparate as dictionaries and style guides, appears to have a definitional set of characteristics. Its purpose is to bring its target audience’s speech in line with its set of guidelines, therefore it must have a normative intention. It consists of various usage problems (25) perceived as such by its author, who organizes them in some way – most frequently alphabetically or by topic (23). The list which thus emerges has three important properties (cf. 28–29): it contains linguistic structures that are actually being used; these structures are fairly widespread, i.e. they do not belong to idiolectal, regional or esoteric speech (see also Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020, 41–43); and the structures must be considered problematic in some way by at least some speakers (cf. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020, 46–47). These are not intended to be necessary and sufficient semantic criteria for defining usage guides, and usage guides differing in scope and comprehensiveness may exhibit various other properties. However, they are described as category-central (prototypical) properties of a usage guide and we will accordingly evaluate membership of the usage guide category in

with built-in spellcheckers are used ubiquitously, it seems useful to differentiate between the normative modes of SSKJ and Microsoft Word’s spellchecker.

terms of the presence or absence of these properties as features. In other words, we will be looking for normative communicative intention, resonance with a speech community's communicative needs, and comprehensiveness with which it tackles speech within a community. In addition, we ask whether non-institutional usage guides make any reference to institutional ones, and how.

Pravipis (a pun on *Pravopis*, *pravi* 'real, correct', and *pis* < *pisati* 'to write') is a booklet of 113 pages excluding front and back matter. The usage problems are grouped into twenty headings such as commas (11–23), noun conjugation issues (52–62), the dual (65), and false friends (76–78). The final heading comprises the use of words which the author advises against on grounds of either "falsehood" or "markedness". Each such item is paired with the more "correct" option, and the pairs are neatly assembled into tables.

In the introductory text, the author relinquishes the claim to exhaustiveness (Kocmut 2013, 7), explaining that she instead included into the usage guide the mistakes she has frequently come across during the five years she had until that point spent as a proofreader. Those that "are so common and ubiquitous that I simply call them 'classical mistakes'" (ibid.) She emphasises that *Pravipis* is "practical" and intended for those who "often face questions about orthography, syntax, and language in general, but who don't have the time to consult relevant resources every time they need an answer". The source of normativity is thereby ceded to institutional usage guidance, but Kocmut states that *Pravipis* will fulfil a niche role in Slovene normativity: it "does not want to mix with expert literature [...] or appear more learned than it actually is", offering instead "simple language, with simplified explanations accompanied by [...] my own [the author's] way of tackling language problems or explaining them to those asking for my help" (8). As can be seen, this is a usage guide by a language professional who wishes to eradicate the high-currency elements of usage she perceives as erroneous, written in a way which a layperson is able to understand, and legitimizing its stance by referencing the author's experience with correcting written texts. The normative mode is prescriptive, but also sometimes proscriptive, as in "Predlogov ne kopičimo." "We do not

bundle up prepositions.” (67). Institutional resources such as SSKJ are mentioned only infrequently (e.g. p. 96) and given the author’s explicit desire to “not [...] mix with expert literature” (8), *Pravipis* seems to present itself as a self-contained list of usage problems with a normative intention – very much in line with Straaijer’s (2018) set of definitional characteristics of a usage guide.

After the publication of SP1990, several books were published which retold its rules in a less technical language (one that contained less linguistic terminology), provided more examples, and generally tried to make them easier for their readers to understand. Several of them were organized as textbooks, most of them even containing exercises with keys. Cedilnik’s (1995) *Cikcak po pravopisu* was chosen for a closer reading not only because it comprises the elements just discussed (the organization of its chapters mirrors the one by SP1990, there are exercises with keys, and even some stock characters amusing the reader with their jokes and accentuating important grammatical issues), but also because the author explicitly mentions the needs of her target audience in her treatment of usage problems. Cedilnik was “a popular teacher of both children and adults” (Cedilnik 1995: 5) who “had been giving seminars [on language use] in the years prior to the publication of this guide” (blurb). She addresses her work to people working with the “administrative-official code” and names female secretaries specifically as potential beneficiaries. More specifically, the work “features the new rules from [SP1990] adapted to the needs of those employed in private companies, institutions, public administration, etc.” (5) The normative mode is prescriptive, not proscriptive, e.g. “V naselbinskih imenih **pišemo** vse sestavine z veliko začetnico [...]”³ (21). From all this, it can be concluded that 1) superior normative authority is ceded to SP1990, an institutional resource, and the author wishes only to convey its rules in a more userfriendly manner, and 2) as with *Pravipis*, the author probably considered the usage problems she encountered during her work as a language professional, and decided which usage problems to include based on her intuition pertaining to actual problems her target audience faces in their daily lives.

³ “All parts of eonyms **are to be** capitalized.”

Whereas N. Pertot's *Pomagajmo si sami* also cedes superior normative authority to SP1 990 (Pertot 1997, 11), it nevertheless stands out as a prescriptive list of usage problems because the author, a schoolteacher for many years of the Slovenian minority in Italy, draws heavily from her experience as a language professional and takes the needs of the speech community into account with every usage problem in her work. In the Acknowledgement, she reveals that several persons of standing "steered [her] towards writing it" (179), so she must have enjoyed at least some recognition within the regional Slovenian cultural elite.

Pomagajmo si sami is organized into three parts. In Pertot's words, "In the first and second parts I point out the errors which are the most frequent and persistent in these parts. The third part, on the other hand, is more grammar-oriented and also perhaps better organized." (10) "In these parts" clearly refers to the expatriate Slovenian speech community in Italy, and this introduction strongly suggests experience with "persistent" errors of her students had been the guiding principle while compiling the guide. The first part (84 pages) is dominated by interference errors caused by Italian, mostly on the levels of syntax and orthography, while several chapters are dedicated to toponymy. The second part (21 pages) comprises mostly of interference errors on the levels of semantics and phraseology, specifically collocations. The third part, described as "more grammar-oriented", is similar in form to Cedilnik's *Cikcak po pravopisu* in that the problems described do not predominantly originate from interference of Italian and might instead be addressed to the Slovenian speech community in general. More grammatical terminology is also employed. Throughout the text, there are intuitive lamentations of the Slovenian language supposedly deteriorating (1–2), and a set of linguistic correspondences reminiscent of the LANGUAGE USE IS WAR conceptual metaphor (3–5).

(1) »V obdobju radia in televizije pa je posebno pomembna govornjena beseda, ki se mi zdi predvsem onkraj meje **nadvse zmaličena in iz dneva dan bolj izumetničena.**« (10)

"In the era of radio and television, the spoken word, **which seems to be completely distorted and growing more artificial day by day** on the other side of the border, is of special importance.

- (2) »Te posebnosti moramo sami gojiti in ohranjati [...] **Na žalost** pa se izgublajo tudi v naši zavesti.« (38)
 “It is important to nurture and preserve these exceptions [...] **Sadly**, they are disappearing from our consciousness.”
- (3) »Nad slovenščino bomo **delali manjše nasilje**, če bomo uporabljali [...]«
 “We will **commit less violence** over Slovenian if we use [...]”
- (4) »[...] ki na nas nenehno **prežijo** iz italijanskega sveta [...] v osrednji Sloveniji pa **se spopadajo** z angleščino [...]« (143)
 “[...] that **prey** on us from the world of Italian [...] while they are **battling** English in central Slovenia.”
- (5) »To so prave **pasti!**« (147)
 “Those are proper **traps!**”

	Communicative intention	Needs of the speech community	Scope (diatopic)	Scope (dias- tratic)
<i>Pravipis</i>	prescriptive	addressed	Speakers of Slovene in general	Mostly formal style
<i>Cikcak po pravopisu</i>	Pedagogical and prescriptive	addressed	Speakers of Slovene in general	Limited to administrative-official code
<i>Pomagajmo si sami</i>	prescriptive	addressed	Mostly focussed on Slovenian minority in Italy	Mostly formal style

TABLE 1: The presence of prototypical usage guide properties in the three books

Based on TABLE 1, we conclude that it is *Pravipis* that corresponds best with a prototypical usage guide among the three non-institutional guides for Slovene taken into consideration. *Pomagajmo si sami*, which appeared before *Pravipis*, also corresponds well and would

be a contender for the first genuine Slovene usage guide were it not designed principally with the Slovenian minority in Italy in mind.

4 ONLINE GRASSROOTS USAGE GUIDANCE FOR SLOVENIAN

With widespread access to the internet, the requirements to publish one's writing have become much less exclusive. While usage guide writers tend to be language professionals with some history in publishing (see Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2020, 69–79), it is reasonable to expect that the genre would have evolved beyond the one-author-one-publisher print format. Attention is thus turned to “grassroots prescriptivism”, a term coined by Morana Lukač to describe prescriptive efforts “initiated by lay members of the general public, especially in contrast to top-down prescriptivism that is carried out institutionally” (Lukač 2018, 5). It refers to the part of non-institutional prescriptivism comprised of user accounts and groups on new media platforms organizing usage guidance in an interactive manner unfathomable in past times.

The difficulty entailed in obtaining a solution to usage problems from SP 2001 and the lack of speed with which *Svetovalnica* provides solutions to them are perhaps the driving forces behind Slovenian speakers' congregation in virtual places designed to provide answers, commentary, and recommendations regarding usage problems they post. Initially, the bulk of this prescriptive activity was carried out on blogs (see Žaucer and Marušič 2009, 452–453), but it has by and large shifted to Facebook groups in the last decade, where the posts are usually commented upon within seconds. Social media, especially Facebook, have frequently been researched as spaces of usage problem resolution, not only for English but also for decidedly non-global languages such as Corsican (Jaffe 2021, 460–467) and Luxembourgish (Belling and de Bres 2014, 85). For Slovenian, groups dedicated to usage problems mushroomed on Facebook between 2011 and 2013 before *Fran*, and therefore the easily searchable and accessible copy of SSKJ and SP 2001, was created in 2014.

Category	Advertisement	Matters of interest	Usage problem (question)	Usage problem (third-party error)	Lament of state of Slovenian
Amount	20	8	39	20	13
Average no. of comments	1.05	2.63	14.21	9.40	13.08

TABLE 2: Content of posts from *Za vsaj približno pravilno rabo slovenščine* (July 2022; N = 100)

TABLE 2 presents the contents of posts found in the first 100 posts from the Facebook group *Za vsaj približno pravilno rabo slovenščine*, one of the more active groups in which users can post questions and opinions pertaining to usage problems they might encounter. Disregarding advertisements, the following categories were identified: usage issues, further separated into questions (48%, ex. 6) and usage that the poster deems erroneous and wants others to comment on (25%, ex. 7), lamentations of the bad state Slovenian is supposedly in (16%, ex. 8) and ‘other’ (dictionary entries, memes, etc.) See additional examples in Chapter 5 as well.

- (6) »Mi zna kdo razložiti razliko mentalni-miselni? Hvala vnaprej!«
 “Can someone explain to me the difference between ‘mentalni’ and ‘miselni’? Thanks in advance!”
- (7) Zelo me moti, ko mnogi v pogovoru uporabljajo »ne rabiš delat« namesto »ni ti treba delat«.
 “I really grinds my gears when many people use ‘ne rabiš delat’ instead of ‘ni ti treba delat’ in their conversations.”
- (8) »Kaj bomo storili z dajalnikom, ki ga novinarji Radia Slovenija nenehno zlorablajo[?]«
 “What are we going to do about the dative, which Slovenian National Radio’s journalists are constantly abusing?”

Almost 74% of posts are similar in form to usage guides in that they articulate usage problems. Separating usage problems into questions and supposedly erroneous usage was done on the basis of differing

average number of comments: laments and questions seem to garner the most attention from other users. This indicates that posting a question in this Facebook group is an efficient way to obtain usage guidance. The laments resemble those found in Pertot 1997 (see above).

In order to compare institutional and grassroots prescriptivism for Slovenian, a sample of comments was collected from the posts in TABLE 2 and categorized according to Anne Curzan's (2014, 26) types of prescriptivism in English usage guides. Her categorization includes four types: standardizing prescriptivism, stylistic prescriptivism, restorative prescriptivism, and politically responsive prescriptivism. Through working with the data, it was modified for the present purposes to include the following types of prescriptive activity: restorative prescriptivism (i.e. purism), politically responsive prescriptivism, referencing institutional resources, and referencing non-institutional resources. In addition, the users employed three other significant strategies when commenting on usage problems: they provided an example of use (without sourcing it), relied on their intuition ("I think that..."), or simply give no justification at all (see FIGURE 1).

To guarantee reliability, only comments under posts categorized in TABLE 1 as "Questions" and only verbal responses, as opposed to emoji and gifs, were considered. Additionally, as users frequently engaged in debates, points were often repeated, so only one comment per user account was considered for each usage problem.

4.1 RESULTS

Looking at FIGURE 1, we see that Restorative (6%) and politically responsive (1%) prescriptivism rarely featured as justifications. On the other hand, almost a third (32%) of commenters gave no explicit justification at all in their comments. While some implicit justification could certainly have been inferred or even elicited from their authors, such tampering with results seemed irresponsible. The rest of the categories are fairly well represented: institutional and non-institutional resources together amount to 28%, institutional resources (SSKJ, SP 2001, *Svetovalnica* and Toporišič et al. 2004) being quoted marginally more

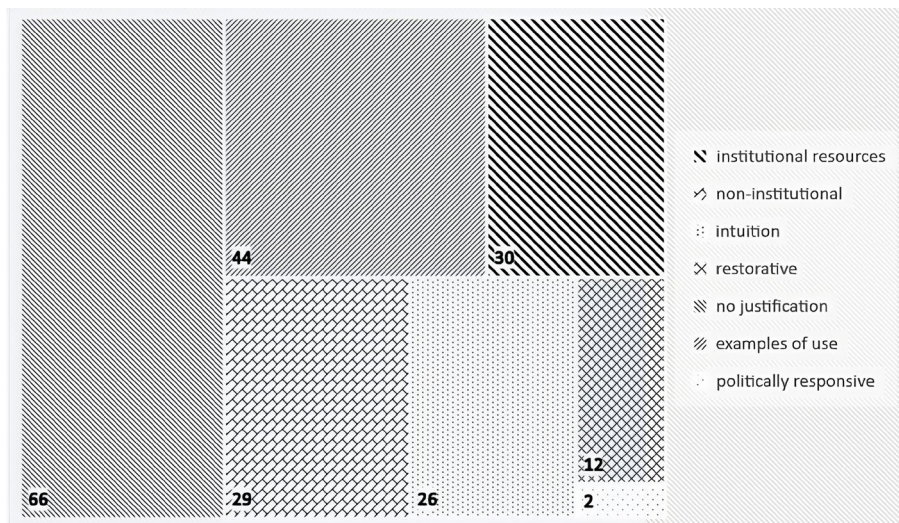


FIGURE 1: Justification in comments pertaining to ‘Question’ category in TABLE 1; relative amount (N = 209)

frequently than non-institutional ones. Intuition is invoked in 12% of cases and although this falls beyond the scope of this paper, it was not uncommon for commenters to express discomfort due to lack of any other resource at their disposal when giving intuitive usage advice. The final category was examples of use – in those comments, the users responded to the usage problem in question and justified their response by means of an analogous example. No reference to any institutional or non-institutional resource was made; when an example of use was used to complement such resourced guidance, it was classified together with the other comments pertaining to it. Bare examples of use comprised roughly 21% of cases. Although this is difficult to prove given that the examples were only rarely sourced (if they were, they were taken from daily newspapers), the users likely came up with the examples themselves, which may indicate that they relied on their intuition in those cases as well. However, for the purposes of clear-cut categorization, examples of use were given as the only justification, whereas with intuition, hedging such as “I think that...” always took place.

5 DISCUSSION

In the Facebook group in question, which has over 3000 members, the users typically (see TABLE 2) answer each other's questions (9), discuss and/or ridicule perceived errors in other people's usage (10), or give reasons why the state of Slovenian is deteriorating (11).

- (9) “Zanima me, ali se beseda ‘navidez’ piše skupaj ali narazen.”
 “I want to know if ‘navidez’ is written as one or two words.”
- (10) [in reference to a screenshot of a tweet] “Pismenost Pojbičevih pristašev :D”
 “The literacy of Pojbič's acolytes :D”
- (11a) “Ja, hm, če se pa lepše sliši v angleščini!!! Prodane duše!”
 “Oh, but it sounds better in English!!! Sellouts!”
- (11b) “[...] Potem je prišla nova doba nekritične in slepe imitacije vsega mogočega (zlasti) zahodnega. [...]”
 “[...] Then came the new era of uncritically and blindly imitating everything (especially) Western. [...]”

In terms of the categories discussed above, it is the strategy of referencing either institutional or non-institutional resources that prevails, while the amount of restorative prescriptivism is, perhaps surprisingly, rather small (only 1% of comments exhibited overt purism). Frequently, no justification was given at all. Because most discussions end with the original poster thanking the community for their input, it appears that this practice is respected and trusted. From a linguistic point of view, the input is not always sound, especially when compared to the answers given in the *Svetovalnica*, but it is nevertheless easy to see why people experiencing a usage problem should seek such guidance: the answers come quickly and are easy to understand, users (both laypeople and professionals) more often than not provide justification for what they claim, and after receiving several comments in quick succession, the askers can thank the community, close the discussion and move on with their lives.

As was hypothesized, the major differences between institutional and grassroots prescriptivism in Slovenian therefore lie in reliability and

speed of delivery. Whereas institutional resources, especially *Svetovalnica*, provide answers that are richly corroborated with various types of evidence, at least 44% of comments answering questions in the sample from *Za vsaj približno pravilno rabo slovenščine* are justified poorly or not at all. Conversely, some of the appeal of turning to other people for usage advice must lie in the fact that questions receive answers within minutes of being posted. It is important to mention at this point that whereas several posts from other categories in TABLE 1 received no comments from the group's users (especially advertisements), "Questions" were the only category in which *no* post received no comment. In other words, all questions had been answered. With this in mind, it is easy to see why language users would choose one or the other option: *Svetovalnica* for accuracy, and grassroots prescriptivism when rapid response is necessary or desired.

The sample also suggests that institutional and non-institutional guidance is referred to in equal amounts. It was previously shown that normative authority is ceded to institutional guidance in book-form usage guides; the authors selected the problems and retold SP 2001's solutions in plainer language, all while rarely challenging them.⁴ Given that a significant portion (28%) of even grassroots prescriptivism's justifications were based on it as well, institutional guidance is in a peculiar position in the Slovene speech community compared with speakers of English and Dutch: even while novel forms of prescriptivism are emerging due to its notorious complexity, it appears that the professional linguist being the best disposed to have the final say on matters of usage still seems heavily present in Slovene speakers' minds. To a degree, this finding contradicts the colloquialization and anti-official patterns found throughout the English-speaking (Mair 2006) and Slavic-speaking (Bogoczová 2021) countries: while it may well be that non-standard speech is considered a usage problem less and less frequently, results here suggest that when a usage problem does occur, its resolution is more likely than not to still be based on institutional resources.

In summary, findings indicate that internet users as well as usage guide writers (and writers of usage-guide-resembling texts) often reference

⁴ There is one such challenge in Pertot 1997.

institutional texts to justify their normative stance. Given the ubiquitous knowledge about them, as well as their function as reference points for almost all secondary resources (including *Pravipis* as the first prototypical usage guide available to the speech community), SSKJ and SP 2001 stand as the best respected guides to usage. The main reasons why people seem to be willing to consult other resources are comprehension issues and the speed with which the answer is delivered. On the other hand, the fact that institutional guidance has recently begun to spread to the internet (a student's grammar version of *Fran* has recently been added to the portal, for example), there is no reason to suggest that grassroots prescriptivism will supersede institutional guidance if the latter can increase its speed of resolution and user-friendliness.

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SUMMARY

NON-INSTITUTIONAL AND GRASSROOTS PRESCRIPTIVISM FOR SLOVENIAN

The current SP 2001 with supplementary infrastructure (*Fran* portal, *Jezikovna Svetovalnica*) has the highest normative authority for the Slovenian speech community. Still, non-institutional usage guides have been appearing in Slovenia, addressing the issues of complicated rules and protracted searches. Since they do help speakers of Slovene resolve some usage problems, two forms of prescriptivism for Slovenian were surveyed: non-institutional prescriptivism and grassroots prescriptivism. Non-institutional prescriptivism is an anglophone invention appearing mostly in book form and is typically based on an author's sense of style. Grassroots prescriptivism is a relatively novel phenomenon which consists of internet users interacting to solve one another's usage problems without necessarily being language professionals. For Slovene, it was discovered that several books were published that resemble usage guides. Three have been researched and it was discovered that *Pravipis* by Aleksandra Kocmut most closely resembles a prototypical usage guide. Interestingly, the authors all cede normative

authority to SP 2001, an institutional guide. Most of grassroots prescriptivism is carried out in specific Facebook groups in which their members rapidly respond to posted usage problems. Among other things, it was discovered that grassroots prescriptivism responds to usage problems more quickly while institutional guidance does so in a more reliable and informed manner.

NEINSTITUCIONALNI IN SAMONIKLI PRESKRIPTIVIZEM ZA SLOVENŠČINO

Za slovensko govorno skupnost ima pravopis skupaj s pomožnimi orodji, kot sta portal *Fran* in *Jezikovna Svetovalnica*, najvišje normative pristojnosti. Kljub temu tudi v Sloveniji opazamo pojave neinstitucionalnih priročnikov, ki odgovarjajo na težave uporabnikov, izhajajoče iz zapletene ubeseditve pravopisnih pravil na eni ter visokih časovnih zahtev na drugi strani. Zaradi dejstva, da govorkam in govorcem vendarle pomagata pri razreševanju normativnih zadreg, smo preučili dve obliki preskriptivizma: neinstitucionalnega in samoniklega. Neinstitucionalni preskriptivizem se je pojavil v angleško govorečem svetu predvsem v obliki priročnikov za rabo, tiskanem žanru, ki ima nabor definicijskih lastnosti in navadno sloni na avtorjevem osebnem izostrenem jezikovnem občutku. Samonikli preskriptivizem je razmeroma nov pojav, ki ga omogoča razvoj informacijsko-komunikacijskih tehnologij, gre pa za interaktivno razreševanje jezikovnih problemov med različnimi uporabniki, ki niso nujno jezikovni profesionalci. Za slovenščino je bilo ugotovljeno, da je v zadnjih tridesetih letih izšlo več besedil, ki so podobna priročnikom za rabo (preučili smo tri), med katerimi je prototipskemu še najbolj podoben *Pravipis* Aleksandre Kocmut. Zanimivo je, da vrhovno normativno avtoriteto za razliko od avtorjev priročnikov za rabo drugod slovenske avtorice priročnikov vendarle prepuščajo institucionalnemu SP 2001. Samonikli preskriptivizem trenutno živi v namenskih Facebook skupinah, kjer uporabniki eden drugemu pogosto in hitro odgovarjajo na normative zadrege. Med drugim je bilo ugotovljeno, da je prednost samoniklega pristopa k reševanju normativnih zadreg njegova ažurnost, prednost institucionalnega pristopa pa njegovi informiranost in točnost.