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Grammatical-communicative status of particles in the Serbian language

1.0. Bearing in mind that particles have been the subject of many studies in which their various aspects have been considered¹, the present study deals with the grammatical-communicative status of particles and their role in **semantic cohesion**² in an utterance or text/discourse. It seems that particles have not been studied in relation to the semantic cohesion in the Serbian language studies. Therefore, this paper looks at some theoretical and terminological aspects of this phenomenon, and offers a new classification of particles into groups, subgroups and paradigms. A possible grouping into particular classes of discourse/text markers of cohesiveness is also provided. We take the term of discourse/text in its broadest sense³.

¹ We primarily refer to our research (Ристић, 1990: 93—139 и Ристић, Дугоњић, 1999: 140—146, in Ристић-Дугоњић, 1999; Ристић, 2005: 199—210; 2006: 205—216), as well as to the facts on particles previously presented in various grammars of the Serbian language: МАРЕТИЋ, 1931: 483—519; ВРАБЕЦ, НРАСТЕ, ЖИВКОВИЋ, 1958: 151—156; СТЕВАНОВИЋ, 1975: 383—385; *Приручна граматика...*, 1979: 214—215; СТАНОЈЧИЋ, ПОПОВИЋ, 2004: 128; МРАЗОВИЋ, ВУКАДИНОВИЋ, 1990: 405—444; as well as in various articles: ШОКИЦА, 1987: 189—210 and КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1996: 70—85; 1997: 7—25; 2005: 125—138. М. ИВИЋ (1978: 1—16) refers to most particles as to **sentence adverbials**. С. РИСТИЋ (1990: 120—122, 124—126, 128—131) in her monograph also considers some particles to be adverbs, emphasizing that they could also be classified differently due to their transitory nature. As for the literature in the domain of Slavonic studies, we have consulted a monograph on particles (M. GROCHOWSKI, 1986), as well as other sources listed in the references.

² We have taken the term **semantic cohesion** from text linguistics, because such a type of cohesion/dependency characterizes bigger chunks of text/discourse, whereas an utterance/a phrase/a sentence shows dependencies of a different kind, normally referred to as the **syntactic cohesion** (cf. POLOVINA, 1999: 147—175).

³ The term **discourse**, according to V. POLOVINA (1996: 55—67; 1999: 95—100), is in its broadest sense defined as a semantic whole realized in language/speech, disregarding its size.

1.1. Our studies of particles in contemporary Serbian have been centered around their lexical-semantic, functional and pragmatic-cognitive characteristics (РИСТИЋ, 1999: 93—146). Respecting all relevant semantic, pragmatic and communicative characteristics of particles, we have established some general characteristics of particles on the semantic and functional planes. On the functional plane, we speak about the function of **modification**⁴, which comprises pragmatic and modal components of the lexical meanings of particles, as realized on the communicative — discourse plane.

1.2. The meaning of particles comprises the sphere of a speaker and the sphere of the meaning of an utterance/discourse. The particles which are primarily concerned with the speaker expressing his relation/attitude with other elements of communication are said to realize the categorial meaning of **modality**. It is usually the relationship of the speaker towards the meaning of the utterance which is realized in the form of pragmatic and communicative components of meaning: comments, degrees of assurance, emphasis (intensification), assertion and negation (РИСТИЋ, 2005: 199—210; 2006: 205—216). Those particles relating to the speaker's attitude towards the addressee is performed with the components with the **illocutionary force**, i.e. intentional and emotional-expressive components in the following meanings: directive, conventional (contact signals, optative, and the like), and asking for information. The particles which are focussed on the content of the utterance/discourse and which show various **logical (sense) relations** between their segments, are realized through the components with the following meanings: logical, sensible sequencing, contrast, opposition, concession and generalization/expansion (cf. АРУТЮНОВА, 1988: 5—9, 245—251; ДЫМАРСКАЯ, 1988: 58—78; ЛЯПОН, 1988: 78—83; SESAR, 1989: 39—48; РИСТИЋ, 1990: 112—114, 122—132, 144—146; РИСТИЋ, 1999: 93—116).

1.3. Particles function in the modal part of the meaning of discourse, realizing the continuum of meanings in the mode of an utterance or discourse. The cognitive-pragmatic information of the modal frame of particles, or presupposition, may be represented as components of their lexical meaning, whose sense is only revealed in the deep semantic structure.

An utterance with a predicate-argument structure of the following type: *Чак А Р* — *Even А Р* (*Чак је А радио* — *Even А worked*) may be interpreted in the following way: 'The others worked; A worked; The speaker did not expect A to work', and the utterance *Само Х* (*Он је само капетан; Он је донео само 10 књига*) — *Only Х* (*He is only a captain; He brought only 10 books*) may be interpreted as: 'X, as well as the speaker, think that this is not enough'. An indispensable element of the meaning of particles *чак* (*even*) and *само* (*only*)

⁴ The modification function of particles is based upon the categorial meaning — **sense relations**. (see ЛЯПОН, 1988: 7883; ЩУР, 1988: 83—87; КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1997: 19—30).

as well as in the case of other similar particles, is the attitude of the speaker ('the speaker did not expect...'; 'the speaker thinks that'..., and the like). The attitude of the speaker forms the modal framework of the meaning of particles (cf. АПРЕСЯН, 1995: 68).

2.0. It can be seen from the aforesaid that the **function of modification** in particles is primarily realized through units of the communicative discourse plane, showing various **relations** among elements of discourse. The final analysis shows that the parameters relevant for the classification of particles into groups, both on the level of lexical system and that of a discourse, are based on the meanings of relations. According to these parameters, we have divided Serbian particles into two groups:

I. Particles showing relations in connection with the content of an utterance/discourse, and

II. Particles showing the relation of the speaker towards his addressee.

2.1. The particles forming the first group could be classified into two subgroups and several paradigms, with the following meanings:

1) the meaning of logical (semantic) relations among segments of an utterance/discourse: a) analogy, sensible sequencing: *тако, наимае, дакле, такође, баш, управо, затим, онда, најзад*; b) contrast, opposition: *упркос, напротив, међутим, пак, итавише*; c) concession: *ипак, додуше, макар, год, било*; d) exemption, restriction: *само, баш, скоро, готово, умало, искључиво, закључно, лично, јам, поготову, напочито*; generalization/expansion: *чак, још, итавише; иначе, ионако, уопште, углавном, све, сасвим*;

2) the meaning of the relation of the speaker towards discourse content: a) factivity: *наводно, дословно, буквално, стварно, привидно, тобоже*; b) assurance: *сигурно, свакако, зацело, вероватно, можда, ваљда, никако, нипошто*; c) assertion: *да, дабогме, дакако, свакако*, and d) negation: *не, ни, нити, никако, нипошто*.

The particles of this group are primarily realized in their role of **semantic-type cohesion**, connecting pragmatic and cognitive discourse contents, and are therefore labelled in the following ways: **connecting particles**, **cohesive particles** and **discourse particles**. Together with other cohesive units these could be grouped into a class of **discourse connectors**, which are meta-textual units of the cohesive type (cf. VELČIĆ, 1987).

2.2. The particles forming the second group with the meaning of relation of the speaker towards his addressee, have also been classified according to the semantic, pragmatic and communicative criteria into the following subgroups:

- 1) expressives: *на, а, и, него, ама, ма, бре, море, вала*;
- 2) directives: *ево, ето, ено; де, дела; немој (немојмо, немојте), доста*;
- 3) phatic particles: *срећно, живео, наздравље, довиђења, здраво, хвала, молим, пардон, забога, наопако, добро, немогуће, да, тако*, and
- 4) interrogative particles: *ли, зар, еда*.

The primary function of these particles is their being exponents of a specific **speech act**, but they also function secondarily as cohesive units connecting emotional-expressive and pragmatic content of the discourse pertaining to an intention, judgement, attitude, and the like. They share many characteristics with **expressives** and **performatives** according to which they may be classified thus (Ристић, 1999: 118—127). This does not eliminate them either from the group of particles as a part of speech, or the class of discourse markers of emotional-expressive and performative type, which differentiates them from the formerly described group of discourse particles with the connecting function.

2.3. Having all the aforesaid in mind, as well as the results of studies conducted so far which focussed on particles in the discourse, it may be concluded that, according to the connecting function in an utterance and discourse content, all particles may be listed as units of discourse. On the basis of this, particles may be classified into different classes of discourse/meta-textual units.

3.0. In the next section we will deal with the problem of the use of particles in the role of semantic cohesion of an utterance and text/discourse.

3.1. Unlike nominational units (auto-semantic words), particles are secondarily classified as **grammar (function) words** in the linguistic system (lexical and grammatical). This may be the reason why particles have only been present in lexicography and morphology, and even here they have only been peripheral units. Their specific functions have not been noticed in syntactic studies, as particles appeared as non-inflectional and non-congruent parts of the syntactic structure. However, theoretical research of anthropological orientation has drawn attention to the communicative role of language and to the importance of the role of the speaker in it. The newly acquired knowledge on the exponents of such phenomena in language included particles, whose status needed to be redefined on the lexical and morphological levels, and newly established and defined on the syntactic/communicative plane.

3.2. The problem of determining the function of particles on the syntactic/communicative plane has not been solved up to this day, as their unspecified collocability in the domain of semantic and syntactic criteria could not help classifying particles into the well-established grammatical and semantic relations of coordination and subordination. Significant results have been brought by the linguistic research of pragmatic and cognitive orientation in semantics, syntax, text linguistics/discourse analysis and in the theory of speech acts. Classifying a sentence/utterance and text/discourse as **semantic/situational units** or **speech acts**, whose structural parts mark the situation, its participants and relations between them — their **cohesion**, is of highest importance for this topic.

4.0. In order to determine the status and function of particles on the syntactic/communicative planes and demarcate them from similar lexical-grammatical parts of speech (conjunctions, adverbs, prepositions and interjections), it

is important to spot differences between **modal** and **propositional meanings**, as well as **various types of cohesion of units** in a sentence/utterance and text/discourse (see POLOVINA, 1999: 148—149).

4.1. The syntactic linking of units into sentences/utterances is characterized by grammatically dependent cohesion of „short scope”, also termed as **grammatical (syntactic) cohesion**. Its main features are the contact position and fixed order of elements. The function of grammatical cohesion of propositional type: coordination, subordination, conjunction and disjunction, is realized through conjunctions and their functional equivalents.

4.2. On the level of a text/discourse, as a complex communicative unit, the cohesion of „wider scope” is present, which is termed **semantic cohesion** with the following types: modification, compression, substitution, elimination, *etc.* One of its main characteristics is both contact and distance positions, as well as a looser ordering of elements. The function of semantic cohesion of the **modification** type is realized through particles and their functional equivalents.

4.3. All this being said, we can conclude that particles differ from conjunctions. Judging by the absence of other types of grammatical dependency in particles, they may be categorized as different from adverbs and prepositions. The modifying function of particles both on the formal and semantic levels differs from the same function characteristic to adverbs. The modifying function of particles is realized in the following way: they are not conjoined to only one element of sentence structure, but are directed to the substance of the proposition. Thus, the proposition in its entirety fills the slot of semantic valency of particles, which on the formal plane is shown by their free collocability.

4.4. The aforementioned words which are formally similar to particles, differ from them in their functioning as the means of grammatical and syntactic dependencies, whereas particles are characterized by the dependencies of discourse-type. Separation of particles into an independent group of the lexical system has shown that the central part of this system is made up of a restricted number of units which primarily realize functions and meanings of particles. In the peripheral parts of the system, the number of units is not restricted as it is constantly filled up by the results of morphological processes of transposition (conversion), the change of function of other parts of speech (adverbs, conjunctions, interjections, prepositions, nouns, verbs, *etc.*), which can be primarily or secondarily classified into the lexical system of particles. Therefore, these paradigms (See 2.1. and 2.2.) include a large number of adverbs (*укратко, уопште, просто, једноставно, тако, тек, најзад, лепо, добро, тешико, лако, etc.*), conjunctions (*и, па, те, ни, нити, тек, него, ако, да, а*), interjections (*благо, де, е, та, ма, ама, море, бре, etc.*), prepositions (*око, осим, сем, изузев, etc.*), verb forms (*живео, молим, извини, изволи, рецимо, знаш, замисли, etc.*), and

nouns (*врага, ђавола, боже, etc.*). These units, as well as other similar units, represent both parts of speech, and in lexicography they should be classified as separate lexemes, i.e. as homonyms. Some debatable cases whose function and meaning pertaining to particles is only realized secondarily, should be treated as belonging to the primary part of speech (cf. HUDEČEK, 1994: 155—159).

4.5. Despite the fact that particles are often found in the position of connecting elements in a sentence or text, their function is realized in the form of **semantic cohesion**, unlike conjunctions and other connectors whose function is realized in the form of **grammatical cohesion**. On the formal plane, this difference is observed in the grammatical independence of particles and the words they collocate with, as well as in their loose restrictions in terms of position in an utterance or discourse. In line with this, the cohesive function of modification realized by particles on the level of utterance or text/discourse, as well as the phenomenon of **semantic cohesion** may be classed as belonging not only to the syntactic and discourse planes but also to the lexical system.

5.0. As we have already pointed out, the primary function of particles is realized in a text/discourse, which are situational-semantic units. This approach calls for the encompassing of various factors relevant to communication: the participants in communication, the communicative situation and variable characteristics of objects and phenomena in it (cf. АРУТЮНОВА, 1988: 5—9). The factors of the communicative plane emphasize the role of the speaker — the linguistic subject and his/her interrelations with other elements in the communication, which results in the inclusion of cognitive components (in an utterance, these are presuppositions and implications), together with the pragmatic components into the meanings of particles. The correct interpretation of such contents is realized by the speaker or by the listener, and this is done on the basis the common concept organized into cognitive models⁵. Furthermore, the semantics of text/discourse is also based on the coherent organization of the concept and relations between them⁶. The particles also keep pace with the dynamics of the situation, and due to their mobility, they are able to cover many positions in a discourse where „stitches” may occur: wrong interpretations, anomalies, redundancies and interruptions, thus taking care of the text unity and coherence. The text coherence is realized through the wholeness of the logical-semantic, grammatical (syntactic, first of all) and stylistic connectivity which all make up

⁵ More on the cognitive approach to language phenomena, see ПЕТРОВ, ГЕРАСИМОВ, 1988: 5—11; ЛАКОФФ, 1988: 12—51; ФИЛЛМОР, 1988: 52—92; ван ДЕЈК, 1989.

⁶ In a text, the primary concepts are connected to the topic, around which other concepts are grouped. The configuration of concepts has its own reflections in the grammatical, linguistic configuration, but these two structures do not necessarily overlap. The complexity of the grammatical, surface form does hinder the comprehension of the text, as in order to understand the semantic interpretation is important, which is realized through the text cohesion and text coherence (cf. POLOVINA, 1999: 163—171).

a text (cf. POLOVINA, 1999: 147—175). Particles also realize the text coherence with the help of various types of components which are a part of their meaning: **propositional, pragmatic and cognitive.**

6.0. To conclude with, our research of particles in the Serbian language has shown that their semantic space is systematically ordered, that this space has its borders and that semantic variation of these units is present within the system. On the basis of their own semantic space within whose limits the modification function is realized, the particles can be said to form their own system, with its own rules on the lexical and discourse planes. This system very often coincides or overlaps with the semantic spaces of units belonging to other systems, on the basis of which these units are classified into groups. The first group of meta-textual particles can be classified together with the deictic elements, anaphoras, cataphoras, and other cohesive units, for which the term **discourse connectors** or **connectives** seems to be most appropriate. Other terms which have been used so far in similar studies such as „discourse particles”, „discourse markers” or „pragmatic markers” are less appropriate, as all particles, not only the meta-textual ones, as exponents of the discourse content, represent the units of discourse or, discourse particles, in other words.

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STANA RISTIĆ

Gramatyczno-komunikatywny status partykul w języku serbskim

Streszczenie

Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań widać, że partykuły w języku serbskim tworzą jedyny w swym rodzaju system na planie leksykalno-semantycznym i gramatycznym, a także komunikatywnym. Partykuły bowiem organizują spójność tekstu typu modyfikacyjnego, zarówno w zdaniu/wypowiedzeniu, jak i w tekście/dyskursie.

СТАНА РИСТИЋ

Грамматическо-коммуникативный статус частиц в сербском языке

Резюме

На основании наших прежних исследований, опираясь на теоретический подход, в статье показывается что в сербском языке частицы составляют единственную систему не только в лексическо-семантическом и грамматическом, но и в коммуникативном плане. Именно, частицы являются в функции семантической кохезии типа модификации, несмотря на это реализуют ли они эту функцию в предложении/высказывании или в тексте/дискурсе.