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## THE LEGAL STYLE OF CROATIAN-LANGUAGE VERSIONS OF EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATION – A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE LEGAL STYLE OF CROATIAN STANDARD LANGUAGE

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*The legal style of the Croatian-language versions of EU legislation draws on two sources: the legal style of standard Croatian, and a hybrid language based on combined linguistic concepts derived from the working languages of the European Union, as well as from the official languages of the member states that make up this international political and economic organisation. The purpose of this article is to present the features of the Croatian legal style by means of theoretical presentation thereof, to indicate (on the basis of the analysis) the features of Croatian Euro-jargon, i.e. the supranational style of the texts of EU legal acts, and to make an attempt to show if and how Euro-jargon influences the drafting of the texts of Croatian national laws.*

**Keywords:** *European Union; functional styles of the Croatian language; the legal style of the Croatian language; Croatian Euro-jargon; normative texts*

## 1. Introduction

The European Union is an international organisation comprising 27 nation states from the European continent, operating in its current form since 1993 with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty by the then member states of the European Economic Community. As in any international organisation, the problem of multilingualism in the European Union has arisen, as its language policy assumes currently 24 official languages within the organisation. This means that the official languages of the Member States are also official languages of the EU. With the expansion of the Union's structures to include subsequent countries, more languages were added to the existing group of official EU languages, Croatian being the latest language to join in 2013.

The European Union's internal language policy relies heavily on the work of interpreters/translators working in the various institutions of the European Union. The EU's linguistic services are very extensive as necessitated by the multiplicity of the languages handled, and the large number of documents translated, and meetings interpreted.

For the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Court of Justice of the EU, translation services are provided by hundreds of translators, often legal linguists working, among others, in the Directorate-General for Translation operating at the European Commission, and providing only (written) translations. Interpretation, on the other hand, is provided for the different institutions: the European Commission and the Court of Justice of the EU are serviced by the Directorate-General for Interpretation, the European Commission makes use of interpreters from the Directorate-General for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences. In a multilingual environment, the interpreters' work cannot be underestimated, as they are often the only individuals who can piece the message together. The EU's linguistic services are still plagued by an inadequate number of Croatian interpreters and translators. There is also a problem of the age of the interpreters working with the EU institutions, with few young people among them. In 2023, ten years after Croatia's accession to the EU, the issue of hiring new translators remained vital (MViEPRH- Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia – 2023: online). Theoretically, several hundred people with a command of Croatian and capable of translating from Croatian into other languages should cooperate with the Union on different terms. It is important to remember that

the demand goes beyond translators and interpreters, encompassing linguists, lawyers, proofreaders, and administrative staff.

As I have mentioned, Croatian has been the 24th official language of the European Union since 2013. In addition to prestige, this also involves editing the texts of EU legislation in Croatian and the work of several hundred people. The individuals rendering linguistic services in Croatian to the EU are not numerous; in regular demand are specialists who, in addition to their mother tongue, have a good command of one, or preferably two, of the organisation's working languages: English, French, German or Italian, but also other official EU languages, as drafting a text, including legal acts, can be a very complex process.

## 2. The purpose, sources of excerpted material, and methodology

The language of the texts of EU legislative acts bears some characteristic traces. The main purpose of this article is to discuss them. It should also be considered if the style of EU legal texts drafted in Croatian, in accordance with the guidelines adopted in this international organisation, is the same as the style of Croatian legal texts drafted in Croatia and concerning national law. What possible differences and similarities emerge between the two types of texts? How does the lexis typical of the European Union affect the reception of texts by non-specialist users of Croatian and specialists: lawyers, political scientists, linguists?

The source of the excerpted material are the texts of the Croatian language versions of EU legal acts deposited on the Eur-Lex website of the European Union, a promulgation journal. The website of *Narodne novine*, the promulgation gazette of the Republic of Croatia, is the source of texts for the analysis of the language of Croatian national legislation. The texts of EU acts and of Croatian national law have been selected according to the thematic criteria adopted by the author of the study, as it is impossible to examine all the texts published in these two promulgation journals. The texts selected for the analysis are related to environmental protection which are not parallel versions of each other, more specifically one EU text: *Uredba Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o upravljanju energetsom unijom i djelovanjem u području klime*<sup>1</sup>, published in Eur-Lex on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018,

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<sup>1</sup> The full title of the regulation reads: Uredba (EU) 2018/1999 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 11. prosinca 2018. o upravljanju energetsom unijom i djelovanjem u području

comprising 77 pages, and 1 text of Croatian national law *Odluka o donošenju programa financiranja ekološke mreže Natura 2000* published in *Narodne novine* on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 58 pages long. The material to be analysed was extracted manually from the texts.

The small number of texts results from the multiplicity of the material, and the volume of the specific texts. The lexis and the syntax of the texts have been analysed, more specifically the lexis in the texts of national law, in the texts of EU law, and the similarities between them. How the indicated features influence the perception of the texts by the language users? Is it possible to indicate a *eurožargon* in the case of the Croatian language version of the EU legal acts, and what are its possible determinants? The contrastive method has made it possible to identify and discuss the similarities and possible differences.

### 3. The functional styles of standard Croatian – the legal style

The concept of functional styles, i.e. language varieties characteristic of specific forms of written or oral expression, has made its way to Croatia relatively recently. The first study of the issue, *Jezik i književno djelo* (for Serbo-Croatian at that) was written by Krunoslav Pranjić in 1968. A comprehensive study of the issue, *Funkcionalni stilovi hrvatskoga jezika*, written and published in 2006 by Josip Silić, is the only comprehensive presentation of stylistic phenomena in Croatian to date. The stylistic varieties of Croatian include the administrative style, the academic style, the journalistic style, the literary style, and the colloquial style (Kordić 1993: 129). The style or legal language as a legislative-legal style is a part of the administrative style, next to the socio-political, diplomatic, and business style. The administrative style, and by extension the legal style, retains elements of

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klimе, izmjeni uredaba (EZ) br. 663/2009 i (EZ) br. 715/2009 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća, direktiva 94/22/EZ, 98/70/EZ, 2009/31/EZ, 2009/73/EZ, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU i 2013/30/EU Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća, direktiva Vijeća 2009/119/EZ i (EU) 2015/652 te stavljanju izvan snage Uredbe (EU) br. 525/2013 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća – Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

general language so they are neutral, and not detached from it (Frančić, Petrović 2013: 244). Other classifications of functional styles in Croatian have been identified, in studies by Tošović (1988) and Katnić-Bakaršić (1999).

With regard to the question of how the language of legal acts can be viewed, be it style or legal language, reference should be made to the observations made by Josip Silić who argued that „*Funkcionalni stil (standardnoga jezika) sam po sebi nije jezik, a jezik književno umjetničkoga djela jest. Njegove norme nisu norme jezika kao standarda, nego norme jezika kao sustava*“, (Silić 2006: 184). In practice, the language of various administrative documents relating to the work of lawyers, the police and other services, state administration, etc., is referred to as the legal style. The language of law, on the other hand, is the language of normative texts, the so-called *normativni govor* (Mandić-Trkulja 2024: 7).

The characteristics of the Croatian administrative style include clarity of the message, adherence to facts, logicity, conciseness, precision, clarity, stylistic neutrality, and unambiguous concepts. The legal style emphasises conciseness, precision, and an impersonal nature of the message. In addition to the above characteristics of the message, if a text can be classified as written in the administrative style, depends on the grammatical (syntactic) and lexical determinants: nominalization, conciseness, occurrence of pleonasm, words and phrases typical of official language, repetitions, structural patterns, Latin structures, passive structures, terminology.

Clarity of the message in administrative texts is often necessary due to their legal nature. All the features of style contribute to these characteristics, as a message cannot be clear without being concise, precise, unambiguous in the terms used, or illogical. Unfortunately, often this is not the case when, due to grammatical and syntactical complexities, administrative texts are sometimes incomprehensible and therefore unclear to an ordinary citizen. A discussion on plain language, i.e. how to write a document that is understandable and clear, but without detriment to its meaning, importance and seriousness, is resounding more and more in the institutions of the European Union. Administratively, the first steps have been taken and, thanks to the action of the Council of Europe, the first ISO linguistic standard was introduced on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023, setting out the rules for drafting documents to be simple and clear. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) has established *ISO 24495-1:2023 Plain*

*language – Part 1: Governing principles and guidelines for the use of plain language in legal texts* (ISO: online). The standard provides guidelines and proposals for the application of rules simplifying communications, a process the European Union is preparing for; it is slowly introducing simplified communication texts on citizen information websites.

The discussion, originated in Brussels, has transferred to the member states, facing a noticeable problem of citizens' perception of administrative texts. Unintelligibility and the use of strange grammatical or lexical structures often provoke distaste and resentment among users, if not outright ridicule. As a result, the texts of European Union legislation are consulted with reluctance, left to specialists. Work on plain language has also taken place in Croatia (Lenček, Josipović, Kraljević 2020: 90). A need has been recognised for law and language to serve the citizen, rather than forming an idea in itself and serving only a narrow group of specialists.

Sticking to facts is a semantic feature of importance to the administrative style, especially the legal style. Facts are expressed with the absence of linguistic misrepresentations, metaphors, ambiguities, illogic, and reticence. While they may appear in other functional styles of standard language, here they should not be tolerated. In the administrative style, often used to establish facts or to create them, the use of linguistic forms indicating a desire to manipulate renders the message unreliable.

As the above suggests, a text needs to be logical to make the message credible, but also to make it clear and unambiguous. Illogical sentences, e.g. in legislative texts, lead to misinterpretation of the law and, consequently, to loopholes, used to avoid punishment following crime. Logic in legislative texts tends to be linked to the linguistic speech act and is dependent on the linguistic forms used (Bekrycht 2011: 12).

Brevity is linked to the underlying logic of a text and is very much needed in legal and administrative texts; it involves structuring the message in such a way as to include the necessary content with as few words as possible. While there are no guidelines as to the number of words, or how to make a specific statement from the point of view of the content and semantics, for interpretative reasons one should strive for minimalism and avoid in legal texts linguistic deadwood. This prevents manipulation by removing individual phrases from the text, which can lead to a change in the meaning of passages, or whole sections of text (Ryśkiewicz 2021: online).

The precision of a text, especially an administrative-legal text, is sometimes expressed through its analytic nature (Loewe 2010: 184), i.e. the use of multi-word forms, as they reduce a message's ambiguity. Lack of ambiguity follows from precision, hence these two features of administrative-legal style texts are so strongly linked (Ryśkiewicz 2021: online). Also, the use of terminology serves to create precision in the text, and specialisation thereof. Often precision can be problematic due to lack of simplicity in a text, as many times precision and simplicity in language are to opposites. The mentioned multi-word structures and terms are incomprehensible to non-specialists, unfamiliar with the lexis in question, or its actual meaning.

In legal texts, polysemy often precludes precision, as one term can have multiple meanings depending on the branch of law or legal system. To avoid this problem, legal definitions, simple in form explanations defining specific terms, are an indicator of precision (Narodne novine 2015: part 2, art. 12). Let me mention two types of such definitions: projective (assigning a new meaning to existing lexemes), and constructive (establishing a semantic rule for an act and attributing a new meaning) (Bukowska-Pelc 2017: 40).

Clarity of administrative and legal texts is related to both the correct division and arrangement of the message's content and the text's semantics. The division and arrangement of the text's content results from the fact that these texts tend to be long, so some kind of navigation and the resulting arrangement of the text is needed. Therefore, a division into chapters, articles, points, paragraphs, etc. is conducive to formal clarity (Narodne novine 2015: part 2, chap. 2, art. 23). A semantic arrangement of the content involves logical continuity of the text and its division into specific titled sections.

Each language style operates within a larger whole, namely the standard language; it is immersed in it and does not function in isolation from it. Stylistic neutrality is one of the characteristics of the administrative style, which shows that the resulting texts should be as close as possible to the standard language, should not contain metaphors, although some studies indicate a highly metaphorical nature of certain legal documents, e.g. court decisions (Husinec 2011: 73), linguistic stylisation, regionalisms, profanities, etc. Their neutrality should derive from the message they convey. Neutrality also manifests itself in a text's gender-neutrality: abstaining from emphasising forms that explicitly indicate one gender (Narodne



novine 2015, part 2, art. 13). A case in point is the use of hyphenated masculine-feminine forms, e.g. *studenti/studentice* – *studenti/ce*, mentioning both masculine and feminine forms, e.g. *studenti* and *studentice*, or phrasing statements in such a way as not to indicate either gender, e.g.: *Ljudi bi trebali znati kako se ponašati u takvoj situaciji*.

Unambiguous terms are among the most important features of the administrative style, mainly of the legal style, as ambiguity of terms introduces into this type of text confusion and problems in determining the correct legal meaning of a term. Many of the concepts used in the administrative style are lexemes derived from general language, in which they often have a different meaning. The general and sometimes colloquial meaning of individual words, i.e. the user's understanding of them in a sense that is inappropriate for the style, sometimes causes misunderstanding of the text (Narodne novine 2015: chap. 3, sub-chapter A, art. 38). There may be various sources of ambiguity (polysemy); the most common include extension of meaning, attribution of metaphorical or metonymic meaning, folk etymology, and the influence of foreign languages (Raffaelli 2015: 192–193). In legal texts, the most common extension of meaning results from attributing specialised meaning to a specific lexeme by defining it with a legal definition.

Nominalization: following the use of more noun forms in a specific text, e.g. gerund, verbal adjectives, adjectives, participles, plural noun forms, etc., a text loses its dynamism and indicates specific phenomena, and explains them. The use of nominal forms also results in more compound sentences, as fewer verb forms are present, leading to a condensation of content in a message (Łapa 2018: 127; Kaczmarska 2008: 129), and diverse syntactic forms (Kaczmarczyk 2008: 131). In addition, nominalisation can serve to conceal unimportant or undesirable content, to develop a text if verb derivatives are used, the basic forms of which also occur in the text, and to intellectualise it (Kaczmarczyk 2008: 134). Nominalisation is characteristic of virtually all European languages with regard to the creation of official functional styles, which the administrative-legal style is considered to be. According to Ewa Jędrzejko, owing to nominalization, among other things, languages form a European phraseology league (Jędrzejko 1993: 80), so the indicated features also occur and are characteristic of the Croatian language. Condensation of the content of a message serves to economise the language and thus shorten the text, which is of importance to legal texts where often specific formulas and repetitions need to em-



ployed. Hiding unnecessary or unwanted content can result in message ambiguity and understatement. However, this procedure, used appropriately in administrative and legal texts, may also result in shortening the text through appropriate syntax devoid of a verb.

The use of analytic forms in texts: extended terminology or collocation, leads to higher precision of the message. Synthetic forms relative to analytic forms are considered less precise due to their expanded semantics, whereas analytic forms often consist of a synsemantic lexeme and the object. It allows for more precise meaning of the analytic form, contributing to the text's precision. However, there is a view in Croatian linguistics that the use of analytic structures should be avoided also in the administrative style, at least in the case of a periphrastic predicate (*dekomponiranog predikata*), i.e. most often a noun-verb collocation, and replaced by a meaningful verb that also includes a noun that can be a part of such a predicate (Hudeček 2020: 61).

Repetition occurs in administrative and legal texts; it is often a must since other wording in the form of synonyms cannot be used, as they may have a different meaning to that of the legal definition. In administrative and legal texts, synonymous forms are avoided for this very reason, as they are never full synonyms, which may mean that the use of such a synonym negatively affects the legal interpretation of the text (Narodne novine 2015: chap. 3, sub-chapter A, art. 40(1)). Repetition is associated with structural patterns in legal and administrative texts. Oftentimes, the texts representing this functional style consist of schemata, as they are forms containing specific wording. The schematic nature affects the text's clarity, precision and lack of ambiguity, as the arrangement of the content is important in its reception and functionality. (Narodne novine 2015: chap. 2, sub-chapter A, art. 23(1))

Latin structures in legal texts are a regular phenomenon while in administrative texts, they tend to be less common. The use of Latin sentences often stems from their terminological nature. The following sentences may appear in the texts: Latin: *alibi* – Croatian: *na drugom mjestu* – in another place, Latin: *eadem res* – Croatian: *ista stvar* – the same thing, case, Latin: *hora legalis* – Croatian: *Vrijeme određeno za održavanje sudskog ročišta* – time fixed for the commencement of legal proceedings, Latin: *sui generis* – Croatian: *svoje vrste, osobit* – peculiar, special, Latin: *votum separatum* – Croatian: *odvojeni glas* – separate voice. (GPPNet online)

Passive structures occur in administrative texts largely to render the message impersonal. From a formal point of view, it can be noted that they are sometimes introduced with the expression *od strane...* + performer of the action (Genitive). Whoever performs the act can be referred to in general terms, without indicating a specific person, e.g. *ministarstvo, policija, poslodavac, grad, općina*, etc. (Hudeček 2020: 58–59).

Pleonasm has made its way into administrative texts out of the need for precision of expression. Text editors, wishing to make the texts more precise, use semantically incorrect lexemes to get the message across. Pleonasm can be divided into two groups: intentional and unintentional. The use of unintentional pleonasm is considered a fault of style (Silić 2006, 68–69). In turn, a deliberate use of certain terms, especially in legal texts, police reports, etc., is sometimes considered appropriate, and perceived as an indicator of precision (Mandić-Trkulja 2024: 13). Examples of pleonasm include *cirka oko, kako i na koji način, no, međutim, objaviti javno, odgovorno tvrditi, popeo se gore, sitni detalji, u potpunosti je provedeno, u vremenskom periodu* etc.

Officialese, i.e. fixed lexemes, expressions and syntactic forms characteristic of the administrative style, results in (Hudeček 2020: 57) a text being sometimes illegible. Officials include lexemes or phrases, e.g. *biti dužan, biti obvezan, nismo u mogućnosti, unaprijed zahvaljujem/o*, and syntactically passive constructions and other impersonal forms, conditionals with the conjunction *ako*, etc. (Hudeček 2020: 70–74).

#### 4. *Euro-jargon*

A closer look at the process of producing documents in the European Union reveals that a large burden of responsibility for the final shape of a given document lies with the translator, often a lawyer. This is because the main emphasis in the texts of European Union legislation is on the legal regulation of the lives of EU citizens, so the texts are peppered with many legal and generally social science terms. It is also the role of a legal linguist to adapt the language version of the edited text to the legal terminology used in the member state in question. However, sometimes the legal concepts are specific to the European Union legal system, in which case these adaptations do not apply. Thus, due to the subject matter of the texts, their original language has acquired certain specific characteristics, and is considered a new variety – the functional style of the official languages of the

European Union. This style is called Euro-jargon and is often defined as a variety of the language of communication taking place through translators. In the nomenclature of other European languages, Euro-jargon is referred to as: euro-speak, euro-rhetoric, euro-language, euro-legalese, EUese, euro-fog, the European Union's multilingual functional style, or Eurolect. The term Eurolect first appeared in 1990 in a study by Roger Goffin (Goffin 1990: 18); it is based on the association with a sociolect, i.e. the language of a specific social group, distinguished by a specific lexis, which makes it rather hermetic, understandable in fact only to the members of that community, but devoid of negative overtones, as is sometimes the case with terms associated with jargon.

Euro-jargon is a peculiar interlingual mode of communication due to its coherent EU terminology; many times, it is understood by specialists regardless of the underlying language. The same reason, i.e. the comprehensibility of the texts for specialists, gives rise to problems of reading them by ordinary language users. This is the case irrespective of the language in which the texts of EU legislation are drafted, so it is also the case of native speakers of Croatian.

When preparing a text in a specific language version, semantic equivalents in multiple languages are sought so that in terms of terminology, they are consistent and do not generate too many possibilities for questions about the semantic interpretation of a text in the Court of Justice of the European Union.

## 5. The legal style of the Croatian language and Croatian *eurožargon*

*Eurožargon* is part of the Croatian legal style. The Croatian legal style is an overarching concept to the Croatian *eurožargon* due to the nature of EU texts within national law. *Eurožargon* grows out of the legal style of the Croatian language because it is grounded in the language of legal texts concerning Croatian domestic law. Legally, EU regulations take precedence over national law, but when viewed from a linguistic perspective, they are dependent on the language in which they are drafted. This dependence stems from the use of specific linguistic forms, e.g. equivalent grammatical structures – impersonal forms or analytical structures – which do not exist in isolation from the donor language, in this case Croatian. Euro-jargon draws on Croatian legal texts because there is no other linguistic template

for it, despite the existence of its second source, the hybrid language in which EU legal texts are written. Euro-jargon is, in a way, immersed in Croatian standard language, so that it is embedded in the foundations of the Croatian legal style. The boundary between the legal style of national law texts, and that of EU legal acts, is very thin. Since Croatia's accession to the European Union, more and more lexemes of foreign origin have permeated the Croatian legal language, which also repeatedly appear in the texts of EU acts.

The fact of these lexemes entering Croatian legal and judicial practice is a rather unstoppable process, although not all lawyers agree with this state of affairs. Therefore, round tables are organised under the motto *Language and Law* to make judges and lawyers aware that care for the Croatian language in Croatian legal texts (not only normative ones) is an important element of legal practice, and its absence has a negative impact on the image of the Croatian judiciary. Taking care of the Croatian nature of legal texts is a priority, as these are texts in the official style of the Croatian language, and should be written correctly (Miletić 2015: 80).

Before Croatia's accession to the European Union, the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics ran a project called *Croatian Language on Route to the EU* and the book *Hrvatski jezik na putu u EU* (Bratanić 2011) written on its basis. Now it is involved in a project called *Croatian Language in the European Union*, in which the position of the Croatian language in the multilingual EU environment is identified. The project will develop terminology and produce bilingual manuals to serve individuals working in the European Union structures. The term Euro-jargon used by the project owners in this study is the European *koine* of the administrative style and legal speech in the languages of the European Union (IHJJ 2023: online).

## 6. Features of the legal style in the Croatian-language version of EU legal acts – an analysis

The legal style is considered to be the most precise style of Croatian language; it is a part of the administrative style, and should be concise, precise, impersonal, and contain legal terminology. So, it shares its characteristics with the administrative style.

In 2020, an updated manual was issued in Croatia, the *Common Manual for the Formulation and Creation of Acts that are passed under the ordinary legislative procedure* (*Zajednički priručnik za oblikovanje i izradu akata koji se*

*donose u okviru redovnog zakonodavnog postupka*) first published in Croatia in 2014. It indicates the wording that should be used when drafting legal texts produced by the various EU institutions. However, the authors of the manual stimulate that it is for illustrative purposes only, and is not a legally binding standard. Rather, it is intended to assist and facilitate the work of legislators by indicating certain schemes and required formulas to ensure that texts are consolidated, and produce coherent versions in multiple languages. They refer to the Handbook as a ‘toolbox’ for a better, faster, and easier work of the individuals drafting European Union legal texts (European Parliament, Council of the European Union, European Commission 2020: II).

The Handbook mentions certain word structures that should be used when drafting the texts of EU legislation, e.g.: *u skladu s redovnim zakonodavnim postupkom*, *uzimajući u obzir*, *upućivanje na instrument*, *upućivanje na mehanizam*, *budući da*, which construction is indicated as indispensable in any legislative text (PE, RUE, KE 2020: 5). The use of certain structures or lexemes results in a text that is in line with European Union guidelines, but not necessarily natural to the national language, in this case Croatian.

In the analysed texts of EU legislation, characteristics can be identified, and divided into two groups: lexical and syntactic. The following lexical features can be distinguished:

- European Union terminology, often general vocabulary acquiring the status of terms. Multiword structures are widespread in Euro-jargon to clarify a message. The terms are often of foreign, mostly Latin, origin, but are borrowed through and influenced by English, and spread in the language of EU legal texts, regardless of the official EU language of the text (Bajčić 2020: 258). Examples of such terms from the analysed text include *delegirani akt*, *direktiva*, *država članica*, *dugoročna perspektiva*, *dugoročne strategije Unije*, *europski energetska sustav*, *europski semestar*, *koordinirano djelovanje*, *integrirani plan*, *mehanizam mjera*, *nezakonodavni akt*, *područje inovacija*, *politika za...*, *zakonodavni akt*, *politike i mjere*, *projekcija s mjerama/bez mjera*, *nacionalni sustav inventara*, *regionalna suradnja*, *program potpore*, *obnova kapaciteta*, *više razinski dijalog*, etc.

- The names of the EU institutions are a group of lexemes made up of multiword structures, often times incomprehensible to a user unfamiliar with the EU politics, and are incomprehensible in the prevailing relationships within this organisation. Multiple names are often confused, even

though they are spelt correctly in the texts, but their accumulation in a text turns it into an endless list of institutional names. The constant listing of the names of the institutions is due to the general characteristics of all legal texts, in which care must be taken to ensure precision, accuracy and lack of ambiguity. The following names can therefore be identified in the text under examination: *Europska agencija za okoliš*, *Europska komisija*, *Europsko Vijeće*, *Europski gospodarski isocijalni odbor*, *Europski gospodarski prostor*, *Europski parlament*, *Eurostat*, *Odbor regija*, *Petostrani energetska forum*, *Službeni list Europske unije* etc.

- The names of international documents appear in the texts of EU legislation for the same reason as the names of the institutions: to prevent ambiguity and ensure precision and factual accuracy when the document on which the text is based, is cited. However, the problem with the names of these international documents, and often the names of documents adopted within the structures of the European Union, is their elaborate, multi-part names, and the use of their colloquial names in the documents. These names are explained in the texts when they are first used, but to a non-specialist, they mean nothing, and are difficult to remember, for example: *Euromediterransko partnerstvo*, *Europski opservatorij za energetska siromaštvo*, *Okvir za klimatsku i energetska politiku Unije*, *Smjernice Komisije za države članice o integriranim nacionalnim energetska i klimatska planovima*, *Ususret europskoj energetska uniji*, *Zajednički istraživački centar*. EU legislators want to make the names of the more popular documents at least a little more familiar, and often name them after the place where they were signed, e.g. *Aarhuška konvencija*, *Kyotski protokol*, *Okvirna konvencija Ujedinjenih naroda o promjeni klime (Pariški sporazum)*, however, this does not always help if the text does not provide the explanation.

- Latin borrowings occur in the texts of EU legislation largely through English and French, which are the working languages of the European Union. It is often easier for translators to use an international lexeme than a native one. This also stems from the semantic nuances that exist between a foreign word, used many times in a legal text, and a native word that has not necessarily occurred before as a legal term, or in the sense needed in the context and meaning of a specific message, e.g.: *diversifikacija*, *fleksibilnost*, *implikacije*, *infrastruktura*, *inovacija*, *integriran*, *kohezija*, *kogeneracija*, *komplementaran*, *konkurentnost*, *kumulativan*, *ratificirati*, etc. The occurrence of these lexemes in the Croatian version of the texts of EU legislation does not mean that they are not used in general Croatia, but probably are used

to a lesser extent. Notably, Croatia has launched a linguistic policy to use native lexemes in official communications.

- EU and international acronyms are used in the texts of EU legislation because of the very extensive nomenclature used by its institutions, and activities which are given their own names. Theoretically, acronyms are used to make navigating through the maze of names easier, and to make the message more concise. However, the problem with these acronyms is that they are created from English-language names, and are sometimes unclear to the average speaker of Croatian. The following were extracted from the text analysed: *Plan međupovezanosti baltičkog energetskeg tržišta* (BEMIP), *Plinska povezanost središnje i jugoistočne Europe* (CESEC), *Srednjo-zapadno regionalno energetskeg tržište* (CWREM), *Inicijativa mreže na moru zemalja Sjevernog mora* (NSCOGI), *Ugovor o funkcioniranju Europske unije* (UFEU), *Strateški plan za energetskeg tehnologiju* (SET-Plan) etc.

In turn, the syntactic features include:

- An accumulation of present adjectival participles; however, they are derived only from certain verbs, to shorten the message through the use of elaborate conjunctive constructions, e.g.: *odstupajući – odstupajući od članka 3. stavka 1. te uredbe prva dugoročna strategija obnove iz stavka 1. ovog članka; olakšavajući – olakšavajući troškovno učinkovitu pretvorbu postojećih zgrada u zgrade gotovo nulte energije; stavljajući – u prvom razdoblju, istovremeno stavljajući naglasak na područja obuhvaćena ciljevima Okvira za klimatsku i energetskeg politiku do 2030.; uključujući – uključujući metodologiju na kojoj se temelji; uzimajući u obzir – uzimajući u obzir poslovno osjetljive podatke i usklađenost s pravilima o zaštiti podataka* etc.

- Impersonal forms with *se*, e.g.: *Ovom se Uredbom uspostavlja mehanizam upravljanja za; Primjenjuju se sljedeće definicije, mjere donesene kako bi se ostvario cilja za energetskeg učinkovitost donesenog u skladu s Direktivom 2012/27/EU;*

- Repetition resulting from the need to define terms, and to specify a meaning, where a synonymous lexeme cannot be used, e.g. *„postojeće politike i mjere“ znači provedene politike i mjere i donesene politike i mjere.*

The language sample that has been analysed in the form of a multi-page text of EU and national law indicates European lexis penetrating national law texts. In terms of syntax, however, a larger number of texts would need to be examined in more detail, and further conclusions drawn on this basis. It should be checked if this is the standard or if there are oth-



er syntactic solutions in other texts. It is impossible to tell from a single text. The noticeable features mentioned above are only the most obvious ones.

As I have mentioned, the Croatian legal language used for the drafting of the national law texts is not free of Euro-jargon features mainly in the lexical layer as proven in the analysis in question. For example, the names of the EU institutions appear: *Europski parlament*, *Europska komisija*, various expressions representing European terminology like *financijska perspektiva*, *strateške mjere*, *strateški prioriteti*, or abbreviations of the names of the EU institutions, activities, or programmes: EK (*Europska komisija*), INTERREG (*Europska teritorijalna suradnja*), LIFE (*Program za okoliš i klimatske aktivnosti*), Natura 2000, PAO (*Prioritetni akcijski okvir*), and names of institutions: *Europski fond za pomorstvo, ribarstvo i akvakulturu*, *Europski revizorski sud*, *Europski socijalni fond* or programmes *Aksijski plan za prirodu, ljude i gospodarstvo Vijeća Europske unije*. Texts also contain abbreviations in Croatian, e.g. VFO – *višegodišni financijski okvir*, although they are explained in the text. All of this, however, means that the texts of national law, which regulate situations in an area in which the European Union also presents its legislation, become Europeanised. As the European Union regulates practically all areas of the lives of its citizens, and national legal systems must adapt to these regulations, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find texts free of EU terminology or nomenclature. One problem is, for example, the abbreviations used in legal texts, which are not always explained, and are of English origin: MAES – in the analysed text *Odluka o donošenju programa financiranja ekološke mreže Natura 2000* – it is not explained to Croatian users what this English abbreviation stands for (*Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services*) – in Croatian *Mapiranje i ocjena ekosustava i njihovih usluga*. Abbreviations are commonly used in EU legal texts and, unfortunately, are not always translated, as shown in the example above.

## 7. Conclusion

The legal style of the Croatian language versions of the texts of European Union legal acts influences Croatian national law texts, especially their vocabulary, however, this is not a significant impact. Mainly, attention should be paid to the terminology, names of EU institutions, and names of legal acts in national law texts that contain adaptations of national law to EU law although this is not sufficient to conclude that the

language of national legislation is heavily influenced by Euro-jargon. Croatian lawyers indicate the need for greater attention to the language of legal acts, but the process of their Europeanization is very strong due to the fact that the European Union regulates many areas of life. (Kordić 2023: 103). As a result, this process is hard to curb. The similarity of EU texts, including EU texts in Croatian, is also evident in the syntax, but this should be attributed to the general nature of these messages and their affinity with legal texts, regardless of which legal system we are referring to, as in many languages, the features of the legal style are similar, which stems from the universal principles of legal drafting applied since antiquity, which is intended to give security through the law that is created, and the universality itself is achieved through the use of appropriate linguistic structures and the structured aesthetic nature of the legal statement (Lizisova 2018: 430).

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## SAŽETAK

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PRAVNI STIL HRVATSKIH INAČICA ZAKONODAVSTVA  
EUROPSKE UNIJE – PRILOG PROUČAVANJU PRAVNOGA STILA  
HRVATSKOGA STANDARDNOG JEZIKA

Pravni stil hrvatskih verzija zakonodavstva EU-a oslanja se na dva izvora: pravni stil standardnoga hrvatskog jezika i hibridni jezik koji se temelji na kombiniranim jezičnim konceptima izvedenim iz radnih jezika Europske unije, kao i iz službenih jezika država članica koje čine ovu međunarodnu političku i gospodarsku organizaciju. Svrha je ovoga članka teorijskim prikazom prikazati značajke hrvatskoga pravnog stila, ukazati (na temelju analize) na značajke hrvatskoga eurožargona, odnosno nadnacionalnoga stila tekstova pravnih europskih zakona, te pokušati pokazati utječe li i kako eurožargon na izradu tekstova hrvatskih nacionalnih zakona.

**Ključne riječi:** *Europska unija; funkcionalni stilovi hrvatskoga jezika; pravni stil hrvatskoga jezika; hrvatski eurožargon; normativni tekstovi*