Argumentative contexts of use of inferential markers in Lithuanian

The studies into the category of epistemicity in Germanic and Romance languages have shown that markers of evidentiality and epistemic modality may signal not only *justificatory support* for the proposition (Boye 2012) but also foreground the author□s position or solidarity with the reader in discourse and thus reflect dialogical or argumentative view of language (Martin, White 2005; Simon-Vandenbergen, Aijmer 2007; Aijmer 2008; Cornillie 2010). In Lithuanian, the dialogical dimension of epistemic markers has been addressed in Šinkūnienė (2011), Usonienė (2012, 2014) and Ruskan (2013) with the focus on the adverbial marking of epistemic stance in fiction and academic discourse. However, more research is needed to disclose the parameters of argumentative use of evidential markers and their contribution to discourse management. The present study focuses on the inferential Complement-Taking-Predicates (CTPs) *akivaizdu* 'evident□, *aišku* 'clear□ subordinating *that* clauses or used parenthetically and the adverbs *akivaizdžiai* 'evidently□ and *aiškiai* 'clearly□ used as sentence adverbials in Lithuanian fiction and academic discourse:

(1) *<…> palyginus šias sąvokas **akivaizdu, kad** jos nėra tapačios.*
    '<…> having compared these concepts it is **evident that** they are not identical.'

(2) ***Aišku**, riebių padažų reikėtų vengti.*

   '**Of course/clearly**, fatty dressings should be avoided.'

(3) *<...> vakarėlis jam **akivaizdžiai** neįtiko.*
    '<...> he **evidently** did not enjoy the party.'

The aim of the study is to identify the types of inferences realized by the CTPs and adverbials under consideration and explore the range of argumentative contexts in which they are used. The study also aims to investigate the correlation between the form of the marker (CTP subordinating *that* clause or adverbial) and its functional realization in argumentative context. The research is conducted applying a corpus-driven methodology and the data are obtained from the Corpus of the Contemporary Lithuanian Language (http://donelaitis.vdu.lt), namely from the sub-corpus of fiction, and the Corpus of Academic Lithuanian (http://www.coralit.lt/).

The results suggest that the markers under study express perceptual and conceptual inferences that shape the author's argumentation in discourse. In both fiction and academic discourse, they typically modify propositions that contain negative polarity items, comparison, rhetorical questions and thus function as strategies of authorial *pronouncement* or *concurrence* (Martin, White 2005). In fiction, the inferential CTPs and adverbials modify propositions that contain negative evaluation of characters, objects and places. In academic discourse, these markers show the author's engagement in argumentation with scientific community (Fløttum *et al.* 2006). In both types of discourse, inferentials appeal to common knowledge and modify propositions of irrefutable truth (Aijmer 2008). The use of inferential markers in a range of argumentative contexts implies the author's polemics with alternative points of view and foregrounds the reliability of authorial arguments (Hoye 1997). Although lexical inferential markers are optional discourse elements, their removal from discourse would largely affect the validity of the proposition.

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