

**Iva Petrak**

**Institute for Slavic Studies**

**Heidelberg University**

### **Linguistic purism and the (re)negotiation of the Croatian national identity**

The thesis sets out to present a systematic approach to the phenomenon of linguistic purism as the most salient manifestation of language criticism in the Croatian language. Based on the premise that the practice of evaluative language reflection reveals individual and collective ideologies as well as a set of culture-specific behaviors, the tendency to practice linguistic purism can be understood as a clear manifestation of national attitudes and ongoing (re)negotiation of national identity. The thesis aims to provide a model for a formal description of the dynamics of purist practices in the Croatian language that would extend the German tradition of language criticism (*Sprachkritik*) to the context of contemporary Croatian. Although there is a long tradition of evaluative language reflection and purist tendencies in the Croatian language, little has been done at the level of description of and systematization of language-critical forms of the language employed by the society. Given the lack of formal research in the description and assessment of language-reflective comments of the speakers of Croatian, the thesis would make up for the research deficit and fill a scientific desideratum. The thesis uses a three-dimensional framework consisting of text, discourse context and social context to analyze the largely under-investigated landscape of Croatian online discourse. The discourse analysis aims to describe and systemize the obtained data in order to make sense of the relation between national language and identity and to uncover how certain speakers or groups of speakers negotiate their identity, position themselves with regard to certain ideologies and thus constitute a particular view of reality.

Key words: language criticism, linguistic purism, discourse analysis, national identity, ideology