

When Openness Isn't Enough:

Case Study on Autism Framing in Croatian Scientific Discourse

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Open Science means more than **Open Access**; it is also about making **knowledge production more inclusive**. Recognising communities as epistemic agents means taking their knowledge, perspectives, and preferred ways of being represented seriously. **Language plays an important role in this process.**

How is autism talked about in Croatian scientific articles?

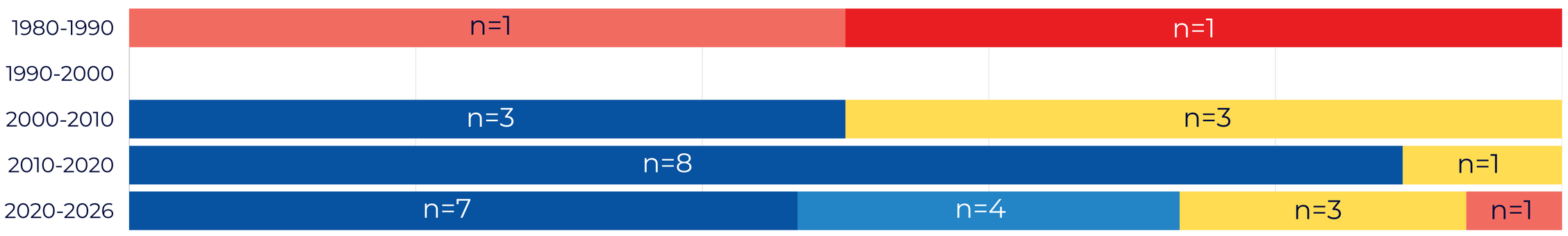
- **HRČAK** database searched with the term **"autizam"**
- **inclusion criteria:** Croatian language; professional articles (16), original articles (7), and review articles (10)
- final number of articles included: **32**

philosophy · psychology · medicine · interdisciplinary · etnology · education & rehabilitation sciences · education

How is language being used in these articles?

Diversity of terminology:

autistične osobe, osobe s PAS-om, autizam kod osoba, osobe s PSA-om, osobe s MAS-om, osobe sa smetnjama autističkog spektra, osobe s dijagnozom poremećaja autističnoga spektra, osobe s autizmom, osobe u autističnom spektru, osobe s poremećajima iz autističnog spektra



While there is no consensus within the scientific community, English-speaking autistic communities often advocate for **identity-first language**.

Examples of pathologising language:

- *"As presented in the DSM-5, autism spectrum **disorder** is a subcategory of neurodevelopmental **disorders**, a group of **conditions** characterized by developmental **deficits** that produce various **impairments** in everyday functioning."* *(Lekić Barunčić, 2019)*
- *"Approximately only 12% of individuals with ASD will achieve a **satisfactory level of independence** in adulthood [...], while the majority will still **suffer** from significant degrees of **pathological symptoms** and dependence."* *(Vragović, Frey Škrinjar i Masnjak, 2013)*
- *"The use of **appropriate treatment** methods is necessary to **reduce the extent of autism symptoms."*** *(Ljubičić, Šare i Markulin, 2014)*

How are autistic people included?

None of the articles incorporated the perspectives of autistic people: autistic people were neither consulted nor engaged with

Participants in a study · Case study · Passive objects in an article



- *There are **no articles that examine the preferred language use of Croatian autistic people** in the literature*
- *The literature is **not incorporating autistic perspectives***

Time to change?

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