

УДК 070ПОЛИТИКА:811.163.41'42(497.1)"1987/1989"
343.352:[658.115:663/664(497.15)"1987/1989"

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31212/tokovi.2022.3.jov.199-226>

Оригинални научни рад/Original scientific paper

Примљен/Received: 17. 10. 2022.

Прихваћен/Accepted: 16. 11. 2022.

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A corpus-linguistic analysis of the Agrokomerc scandal based on newspaper articles from *Politika**

Abstract: The main purpose of this case study is to describe how corruption scandals, its actors and actions are linguistically conceptualized by the Serbian public word usage. The Agrokomerc scandal that was investigated from 1987 to 1989 in former Yugoslavia will serve as an example to show what kind of vocabulary as well as discourse-specific metaphors were used to describe the corruption scandal in the Serbian mass media. For this purpose, a text corpus was created that contains 137 articles from the Serbian newspaper *Politika*. The selected articles address the corruption scandal “Agrokomerc”. Data-driven, corpus linguistic methods will be used for this case study. This method enables the identification of concrete lexical units that can be further interpreted and used in a wider and interdisciplinary context.

Keywords: corruption, scandal, Agrokomerc, mass media, semantics, corpus linguistics

Introduction

According to *Transparency International*, corruption is defined as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” and can include behaviours such as:¹

* This article was created as part of the DFG-project HA 2659/11-1: „The historical semantics of INFORMALITY – empirical studies on the thematic word usage based on Serbian and Croatian press texts 1919-2018” within the joint project: „From Informality to Corruption (1817–2018): Serbia and Croatia in Comparison”.

1 Transparency.org, “What is Corruption?”, access date 3. 9. 2022. <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>

- public servants demanding or taking money or favours in exchange for services,
- politicians misusing public money or granting public jobs or contracts to their sponsors, friends and families,
- corporations bribing officials to get lucrative deals

It is further specified that corruption is not restricted to a specific sector or group of people (“corruption can happen anywhere [...] [and] involve anyone”²) and that it is constantly evolving (“corruption adapts”³) due to changes of laws for example.

Such a broad definition of corruption draws attention to the fact that corruption is a very open and dynamic concept, which cannot be easily defined. Furthermore, every society has different rules and values leading to the conclusion that a certain behaviour might be labelled as corrupt in one country but not in another. The *Global Informality Project*,⁴ for example, provides an online resource that includes practices from all over that world that are not necessarily considered to be corrupt in the respective countries. In others, however, they would be viewed as such.

The interdisciplinary research project “From Informality to Corruption (1817–2018): Serbia and Croatia in Comparison” aims to trace such shifts in Serbia and Croatia and to capture how corruption has been perceived within these societies. Therefore, the linguistic sub-project focuses on the public word usage based on Serbian and Croatian newspaper articles. It is assumed that concepts, such as corruption, can often only be experienced through media communication and dissemination and only then acquire the status of socially established knowledge when they are constituted under the specific conditions of mass media communication in the public space.⁵

The object of research are corruption scandals, since today, the concept of the scandal primarily refers to the media society and to the media as producers of scandals.⁶ Because of their public display, corruption scandals

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 In-formality.com, “About the Global Informality Project”, access date 30. 8. 2022. https://www.in-formality.com/wiki/index.php?title=About_the_Global_Informality_Project

5 Alexander Ziem, Ronny Scholz, David Römer, “Korpusgestützte Zugänge zum öffentlichen Sprachgebrauch: spezifisches Vokabular, semantische Konstruktionen, syntaktische Muster in Diskursen über ‘Krisen’”, *Faktizitätsherstellung in Diskursen. Die Macht des Deklarativen*, ed. Ekkehard Felder, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 330.

6 Klaus Buchenau, Björn Hansen, Thomas Steger, application text for the DFG-Project: „From Informality to Corruption (1817-2018): Serbia and Croatia in Comparison”, 2019, 7.

also offer the advantage that they have produced more material than other corruption cases. A scandal contains among others a scandalised actor (someone who is publicly accused of misconduct in the public interest) and a scandaliser (someone who publicly denounces wrongful behaviour).⁷ In the case of a corruption scandal, the misconduct corresponds to a corrupt action performed by the scandalized actor(s). Journalists and the media in general can be seen as the scandalisers. In the linguistic sub-project several corruption scandals from former Yugoslavia as well as from today's Serbia and Croatia from Serbian and Croatian newspapers will be linguistically analysed and compared. For this case study, however, only the Agrokomerc scandal in the Serbian newspaper *Politika* will be analysed. The goal is to find out how the corruption scandal, its actor(s) and action(s) were described in the public word usage. This study shall also demonstrate how a corpus-based linguistic analysis can contribute to a qualitative analysis in an interdisciplinary context of corruption studies.

The late 1980s in Yugoslavia and the Agrokomerc scandal

In the late 1980s, the situation in Yugoslavia was very chaotic. With the collapse of communism becoming more and more visible, the communist leaderships in Yugoslavia's republics switched from "brotherhood and unity" rhetoric to nationalist claims, which was also visible in the media that began to ignore the Yugoslav etiquette that each republic should only concern itself with its own problems.⁸ Starting with the Agrokomerc scandal in the late 1980s, a series of social scandals was exposed for political purposes, in which the media played a significant role.⁹

Admir Mulaosmanović sees the emergence of the Agrokomerc scandal in August 1987 as the beginning of the destruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina through the destruction of Hamdija Pozderac,¹⁰ who was constantly being exposed to attacks in the second half of the 1980s due to his position as president of the federal commission that worked on constitutional amendments.¹¹ In

7 Sighard Neckel, "Das Stelhölzchen der Macht. Zur Soziologie des politischen Skandals", *Anatomie des politischen Skandals*, eds. Rolf Ebbinghausen, Sighard Neckel, (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1989), 58ff.

8 Admir Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc” (utjecaji na razvoj tvornice u svjetlu odbrambenog koncepta u SFRJ)“, *Historijska traganja* 1/2008, 198.

9 Dino Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, *Historia Moderna* 2/2021, 47.

10 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc”, 200.

11 Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, 73.

1982, he also became head of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CK SK BiH).¹² His brother Hakija Pozderac was also a significant figure who had a decisive influence on events and trends in the economy and politics of the Bihać region. He especially had an influence on the circumstances of Agrokomerc, a food producer, processor, and trader in Velika Kladuša (Bosanska Krajina) that by then had become ‘too big to fail’.¹³

Receiving the political support from Hakija Pozderac and his brother Hamdija Pozderac, Fikret Abdić – the president of the business board of SOUR Agrokomerc at the time – was able to work outside of legal norms and enabled Velika Kladuša to emerge from the ranks of underdeveloped municipalities in 1979.¹⁴ Due to the political support and economic success of Agrokomerc, there were no consequences for him, even though his illegal actions were well known at the very top of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s political elite since 1980.¹⁵ This led to a feeling of untouchability of Agrokomerc as well as of Fikret Abdić.¹⁶

This untouchability was contested at the end of January 1987 when a fire in one of Agrokomerc’s warehouses broke out. The fire seemed to be used as a pretext for further investigations of illegal activities within Agrokomerc in March 1987.¹⁷

The Agrokomerc scandal then officially became public when the Belgrade-based *Borba*, the Yugoslav Communist Party newspaper, published an article in August 1987, in which Agrokomerc was accused of issuing promissory notes without coverage.¹⁸ After the publication of this article, the scandal was followed by an unprecedented media campaign. According to Dino Dupanović, journalists were competing to find evidence of corruption and crime in the management of Agrokomerc, which caused an enormous negative publicity for the company, which was similar to earlier campaigns against so called “narodnih neprijatelja” (en. ‘enemies of the people’).¹⁹

While the media labelled the activities in Agrokomerc as corruption and crime, an indictment for “counterrevolutionary activities” was filed against

12 Ibid., 43.

13 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc”, 194.

14 Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, 42.

15 Ibid., 43.

16 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc“, 194.

17 Ibid., 195.

18 Z. Azdejković, „Udar od 22.000 starih milijardi”, *Borba*, 15-16. 8. 1987. Promissory notes (*menice*) were introduced in the former SFRY as a legal means of payment.

19 Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, 54.

Fikret Abdić as well as against his close associates in February 1988.²⁰ In December 1989, however, he was convicted to a prison sentence of three years and six months for the abuse of office and not for counterrevolutionary activities as it was initially filed.²¹ This turn of events, which is still unclear and subject of many speculations, marks the end of the Agrokomerc scandal.²²

Corpus and method

For this case study, a corpus consisting of 137 articles from the daily newspaper *Politika* was created. As a first step, all articles published from August 1987 to December 1989²³ that contain the keyword “Agrokomerc” were collected. As a second step, all articles were checked for their relevance in terms of content before being integrated into the corpus. The articles were uploaded using the Sketch Engine²⁴ software creating a corpus of 234’866 words. The Sketch Engine tools enable the further processing of the uploaded articles as well as the analysis of the lexical inventory of the Agrokomerc scandal.

Keywords of the Agrokomerc scandal

To identify the keywords, the Sketch Engine Worldlist tool²⁵ was used to generate a list of the most frequent nouns found in the created corpus:

#	Lemma	Absolute frequency ²⁶	Relative frequency ²⁷
1	<i>Agrokomerc</i>	910	3’224.86
2	<i>banka</i>	814	2’884.65

20 Admir Mulaosmanović, “Time of Changes. From ‘Agrokomerc Affair’ In 1987 to the SDA Pre-Election Rally in Velika Kladuša in 1990”, *Working Paper Series*, (Research Project: New and Ambiguous Nation-Building Processes in South-Eastern Europe, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and Austrian Science Fund, 2008), 25.

21 Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja“, 78.

22 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc“, 205.

23 The time frame was set from the first published article in *Borba* that led to the scandal to the conviction of Fikret Abdić.

24 Adam Kilgarriff et al., The Sketch Engine: ten years on, *Lexicography* 1/2014, 7.

25 Sketch Engine also offers a tool for keywords and term extraction. This tool, however, is not available for Serbian corpora. See: Sketch Engine, *Serbian text corpora*, access date 26. 10. 2022. <https://www.sketchengine.eu/corpora-and-languages/serbian-text-corpora/>

26 The number of hits in a corpus, in: Sketch Engine, “frequency”, Glossary, access date 10. 10. 2022. <https://www.sketchengine.eu/guide/glossary/?letter=R>

27 The number of occurrences (hits) of an item per million tokens, also called i.p.m. (instances per million). It is used to compare frequencies between corpora of different sizes. (Ibid.)

3	<i>Abdić</i>	750	2'657.85
4	<i>Fikret</i>	551	1'952.63
5	<i>godina</i>	551	1'952.63
6	<i>menica</i>	508	1'800.25
7	<i>BiH</i>	377	1'336.01
8	<i>SK</i>	360	1'275.77
9	<i>afera</i>	342	1'211.98
10	<i>dinar</i>	304	1'077.32

Tab. 1: The absolute and relative frequency of the 10 most frequent nouns in the Agrokomerc corpus

These nouns occur at least once in the majority of the 137 articles. Their distribution can also be visualised with Sketch Engine:

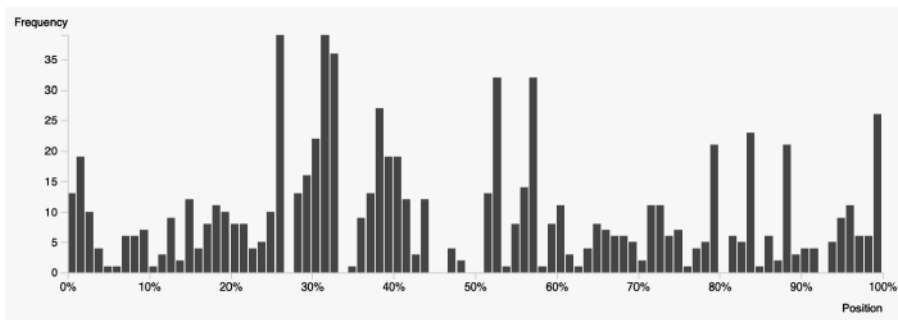


Fig. 1: The distribution of „banka” in the selected newspaper articles

The chart for the distribution of hits for “banka” (en. ‘bank’) in the corpus visualizes how the lemma is distributed over the corpus. The position indicates where in the article the word occurs. The frequency shows how often it appears in the respective article. Similar distributions with a different frequency, however, can be observed for the other nouns in Tab. 1. Hence, it can be shown that apart from Agrokomerc and Fikret Abdić the banks played a key role in the scandal.²⁸

²⁸ The importance of the banking sector is also discussed in: Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc“, 199.

This general overview of the ten most frequent nouns can be used to look deeper into the scandal and to describe its actual dynamics through the lexical inventory of the selected articles. This, in turn, provides empirical evidence for further interpretations in contrast to the intuitive conclusions that are drawn from reading the articles individually. Therefore, mainly the following tools will be used:

- *Word Sketch* that processes different type of collocates²⁹ of a given word and its surroundings, and
- *Concordancer* that displays a list of all examples of the search word or phrase found in the corpus.

Naming of the scandal

To see how the scandal is generally described, the collocates of “*afera*” (en. ‘affair’) will be analysed. The most occurrences can be found for the collocate *afera* “*Agrokomerc*”³⁰ that includes the name of the company that is involved in the scandal. This collocate is also used to refer to the scandal in general, outside of the media.

There are however several modifiers (in this case adjectives) of “*afera*” found in the corpus that refer to different elements of the scandal:

MEDIUM:	“ <i>menični</i> ” <i>menične afere, o meničnoj aferi</i> ³¹
TYPE:	“ <i>finansijski</i> ” <i>finansijskoj aferi</i> ³²
DEGREE:	“ <i>velik</i> ”, “ <i>neverovatan</i> ” <i>najvećoj finansijskoj aferi, velike finansijske afere, gotovo neverovatna afera</i> ³³
LOCATION:	“ <i>Velikokladuški</i> ” <i>velikokladuške meničke afere, velikokladuške finansijske afere</i> ³⁴

29 A collocation is a sequence or combination of words (e. g. noun + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb, etc.) that occur together more often than would be expected by chance, in: Sketch Engine, „collocation”, Glossary, access date 10. 10. 2022. <https://www.sketchengine.eu/guide/glossary/?letter=C>

30 Absolute frequency: 188; relative frequency: 666.23.

31 en. ‘the promissory notes affair, about the promissory notes affair’.

32 en. ‘financial affair’.

33 en. ‘the biggest financial affair, the big financial affair, an almost unbelievable affair’.

34 en. ‘the Velika Kladuša promissory notes affair, the Velika Kladuša financial affair’.

TIME: “posleratni” *najveće posleratne afere*³⁵

PROMINENCE: “čuven”³⁶ *nadaleko čuvena menična afera iz Velike Kladaše, nečuvene finansijske afere*³⁷

The adjective “menični” refers to the MEDIUM of the scandalised action, namely the promissory notes (*menice*), which were also identified in the word list. The TYPE of the scandal is also indicated by the adjective “finansijski”, labelling the scandal as a financial one. These two adjectives often co-occur with several other adjectives that were identified in the corpus. The adjective “velik”, for example, can be found in its base form (*velike finansijske afere*) or as a superlative (*najvećoj finansijskoj aferi*) together with “finansijski”. This adjective expresses the DEGREE of the scandal, describing it as a big or even as the biggest financial scandal. The adjective “neverovatan” also refers to the DEGREE, describing the scandal as something so great or extreme and therefore, difficult to believe³⁸. The LOCATION of the scandal is expressed by the “Velikokladaški”, an adjective that refers to the town Velika Kladuša in Bosnia and Hercegovina, in which Agrokomerc is located. A reference of TIME is indicated by the adjective “posleratni” indicating that the scandal occurred after the Second World War. The adjective “čuven” appears once in its base form (*nadaleko čuvena menična afera iz Velike Kladaše*) and once with the prefix *ne*³⁹ (*nečuvene finansijske afere*). While the former refers to the degree of fame of the Agrokomerc scandal – which is also emphasised by *nadaleko* – the latter labels the scandal as something unusual and terrible.

Thus, the vocabulary attributed to the scandal reflects the media’s significant role as a scandaliser from the mid 1980s by using words that describe the Agrokomerc scandal as the biggest and worst financial incident since World War II. Moreover, specific shame on Bosnia-Herzegovina is implied by referring to the scandal’s LOCATION, namely Velika Kladuša.

The lemma “afera” was also found in combination with “scandal” (*skandala i afera*) which would assume a difference between the two words. Looking, however, at other contexts where the lemma “skandal” occurs, it can be

35 en. ‘the biggest post-war affair’.

36 “čuven”, *Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika*, 6, S–Š, (Novi Sad/Zagreb: Matica Srpska/Hrvatska, 1976), 899.

37 en. ‘the widely famous promissory notes affair from Velika Kladuša, an outrageous financial affair’.

38 „neverovatan”, *Ibid.*, K–O, 1969, 671.

39 „nečuven”, *Ibid.*, 785.

observed that it functions as a synonym of “afera”, e.g.: *Velikokladuški skandal, gigantski finansijski skandal, tako teških skandala kao što je „Agrokomercov“, skandalu sa „Agrokomercom“, najveći jugoslovenski posleratni bankarski skandal, skandal ogromnih razmera...*⁴⁰

As the lemma “afera”, “scandal” can also co-occur with markers of DEGREE (*gigantski, tako teški, najveći*⁴¹) as well as indications of LOCATION (*jugoslovenski*⁴²) and TIME (*posleratni*⁴³).

Another synonym of “afera”, that can be found in the corpus, is “slučaj” (en. ‘incident’; *slučaj „Agrokomerca“, slučaj „Agrokomerc“*) that does not seem to occur with other modifiers.

Thus, there seem to be slight differences between the three words. While “slučaj”⁴⁴ can be seen as the most neutral one referring to a specific incident, “skandal”⁴⁵ (en. ‘scandal’) also refers to the incident but evaluates it as something inappropriate that evokes general condemnation including the aspect of public shame. The lemma “afera”⁴⁶ corresponds to the same phenomenon as “skandal” but without the public shaming. The definition of “afera” first refers to an ‘illegal, dirty, dishonest work’ and then it continues with “skandal” as a synonym. This already implies that the action involved in the scandal is evaluated as an extreme breach of norms. Consequently, an intensification of the scandal can be observed: the use of “slučaj” portrays the scandal as an incident without any evaluative aspect, while the use of “skandal” – especially with markers of DEGREE – creates an enlargement of the scandal that also includes public shaming and negative evaluation. Such an intensification can also be observed in the corpus: the use of all three lemmas can only be observed in articles from August to October 1987, when the scandal started. Afterwards, the lemma “afera” established itself as the main label referring to the scandal, which implies a stagnation of the scandalisation process.

Interestingly, the modifier “Našička” could also be found in the corpus. It is used in one article that refers to a corruption scandal (*Našička afera*) from 1935 in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This scandal is labelled as one of the

40 en. ‘The scandal of Velika Kladuša, a gigantic financial scandal, such serious scandals as „Agrokomercov“, the scandal with „Agrokomerc“, the biggest Yugoslav post-war banking scandal, a scandal of enormous proportions...’

41 en. ‘gigantic, so heavy, the biggest’.

42 en. adjective ‘Yugoslav’.

43 en. adjective ‘post-war’.

44 “slučaj”, *Ibid.*, 6, S-Š, 1973, 871.

45 “skandal”, *Ibid.*, 796.

46 “afera”, *Ibid.*, 4, A-E, 1967, 113.

biggest Yugoslav scandals from the interwar period. The Agrokomerc scandal is compared to the Našička scandal as well as to other past scandals.⁴⁷ The scandalised action is labelled as “finansijska ujdurma” (en. ‘financial scheming, swindle’) and the article also mentions the CONSEQUENCES of the action (*zbog kojih su se drmale vlade, vojne vrhuške, pa i krunisane glave*⁴⁸). This is all the more interesting since the second, communist Yugoslavia understood itself as the antithesis of the first Yugoslavia. Comparing the affairs, and even more so by using Turkish words, seems to indicate a dramatic loss of self-esteem – not directed against Yugoslavia as such, but against Bosnia-Herzegovina as its constituent part.

Actors of the Agrokomerc scandal

Following from the word list, Agrokomerc, Fikret Abdić, various banks and SK BiH are potential actors involved in the Agrokomerc scandal.

For Agrokomerc, the following collocates could be found in the corpus that emphasise different aspects of the company:

- TYPE: “SOUR”⁴⁹ “firma”⁵⁰ “kombinat”⁵¹
*SOUR “Agrokomerc”, firma “Agrokomerc”,
 kombinat “Agrokomerc”*
- SECTOR: “prehramben”⁵² “poljoprivredni”⁵³ “prerađivački”⁵⁴
 prehrambeni kombinat, veliki poljoprivredni kombinat,
 velikokladušskog poljoprivrednog kombinata,
 prerađivački gigant⁵⁵

47 “Trampa narodnih para”, *Politika*, 2. 9. 1987.

48 en. ‘because of which governments, military leaders, and even crowned heads were shaken’.

49 Abbreviation for: “složena organizacija udruženog rada” (en. ‘united organisation of associated labour’).

50 en. ‘company’.

51 en. ‘combine’, a large business enterprise in which several enterprises of various production branches are united by a technological process in: “kombinat”, *Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika*, 3, Ž–K, (Novi Sad/Zagreb: Matica Srpska/Hrvatska, 1967), 798.

52 en. ‘food, nutritional’.

53 en. ‘agricultural’.

54 en. ‘processing’.

55 en. ‘food combine, large agricultural combine, Velika Kladuška agricultural combine, processing giant’.

LOCATION:	“Velika Kladuša” Velikokladuški “Agrokomerc”, kombinat iz (Velike) Kladuše, kladuški kombinat, Velikokladuski kombinat
PROMINENCE:	“famozan”, ⁵⁶ “čuven” <i>famozni “Agrokomerc”</i> , <i>ovog već čuvenog kombinata</i> ⁵⁷
SIZE:	“velik”, “gigant” ⁵⁸ <i>veliki kombinat, prerađivački gigant,</i> <i>Velikokladuški gigant, nekadašnjeg giganta</i> <i>iz Velike Kladuše</i>
IMPACT	“moćan” ⁵⁹ <i>moćni “Agrokomerc”</i>

While collocates indicating the TYPE and SECTOR do not provide any new information about the portrayal of the company in the media, the LOCATION seems to function as a representative of Agrokomerc which increases the discursive burden thrown on Bosnia and Hercegovina as a republic. Furthermore, collocates referring to the PROMINENCE, SIZE and IMPACT of the company seem to imply the awareness of the scandalisers that Agrokomerc has become a difficult-to-control giant in Yugoslavia that was pushing the political control to its limits.⁶⁰

Several CONSEQUENCES having an impact on the company itself can also be identified. The use of “stari” (en. ‘old’) and “novi” (en. ‘new’) imply an unavoidable change of “Agrokomerc” (*posle svega, biće to sasvim novi Agrokomerc, stari Agrokomerc više ne može da se vrati*⁶¹). With the use of “bivši”, allusions are being made that the company will also cease to exist (*koji je već nazvan bivšim prehrambenim kombinatom*⁶²). Furthermore, the company is even accused of being the main culprit for the inflation (*krivac za inflaciju*).

56 „famozan“, Ibid., S–Š, 1976, 655.

57 en. ‘the infamous „Agrokomerc“, this already famous combine’.

58 en. ‘giant’.

59 en. ‘powerful’.

60 Klaus Buchenau, „The Third Path into the Twilight? Corruption in Socialist Yugoslavia”, *Tokovi istorije* 3/2021, 111,

61 en. ‘after all, it will be a completely new Agrokomerc, the old Agrokomerc can no longer return’.

62 en. ‘which has already been named as a former food company’.

The two nouns “Fikret” and “Abdić”, that mainly occur together, refer to another main actor involved in the scandal, namely Fikret Abdić – the (former) president/director of the business board of SOUR “Agrokomerc” (*doskorašljeg direktora “Agrokomerca”, bivši predsednik Poslovnog odbora ovog velikog kombinata, „Agrokomerca”, bivši predsednik Poslovnog odbora “Agrokomerca” iz Velike Kladuše*⁶³).

There is, however, a significant number of occurrences referring to him only by his first name (152, 538.66). Using a mononym to refer to him also indicates his level of fame.

He is also described as the (former) first man of “Agrokomerc” (*bivši prvi čovek „Agrokomerca”, nekadašnjeg prvog čoveka “Agrokomerca”, prvi čovek “Agrokomerca”*⁶⁴), the leader of “Agrokomerc” (SOUR „Agrokomerc”, *kombinat kome je Abdić bio na čelu, čelnik “Agrokomerca”, bivšem čelniku “Agrokomerca”*⁶⁵) as well as a powerful man (*moćnik*). His power and untouchability are further emphasised by comparing him to God (*od čoveka koji je do juče bio mali bog, po nalogu boga alaha Fikreta*⁶⁶).

The use of “bivši”, “nekadašnji” (en. ‘former’) and the past tense show the CONSEQUENCES of his actions: the loss of his position, power, and untouchability as well as the loss of his membership in CK SK BiH (*bivši član CK SK BiH*).

Fikret Abdić is also the first accused in the investigations around the Agrokomerc scandal (*prvooptuženi Fikret Abdić*). He does, however, not only occupy the role of the accused, but also the roles of a witness (*svedok Abdić*) and prisoner (*stanar bihačkog zatvora*). The noun *kontrarevolucionar* (en. ‘counterrevolutionary’) is also attributed to him since he is accused of counterrevolutionary activities. Labelling someone as counterrevolutionary is specifically attributed to communist regimes in which corruption was always linked to communist ideals and therefore, other terms were used for the corrupt actions that always implied a political component. Hence, economic criminals also became political enemies in Socialist Yugoslavia.⁶⁷ Interestingly, this label is ex-

63 en. ‘the former director of „Agrokomerc”, former president of the Management Board of this large combine, „Agrokomerc” and its president Fikret Abdić, former president of the Management Board of „Agrokomerc” from Velika Kladuša’.

64 en. ‘former first man of „Agrokomerc”, former first man of „Agrokomerc”, first man of „Agrokomerc”’.

65 en. ‘SOUR „Agrokomerc”, the combine with Abdić as its head, the head of „Agrokomerc”, to the former head of „Agrokomerc”’.

66 en. ‘from a man, who until yesterday, was considered a little god, by the order of God, Allah Fikret’.

67 Buchenau, “The Third Path into the Twilight? Corruption in Socialist Yugoslavia”, 94–95.

clusively attributed to Fikret Abdić by the prosecutors in the trial and not by the media itself, which leads to the question if the media abandoned the communist understanding of corruption and instead used another one.

It comes as no surprise that the name Hakija Pozderac (*Fikret i Hakija, Fikret Abdić i Hakija Pozderac*) often co-occurs with Fikret Abdić. He is also described as one of the powerful men (*moćnik*) together with Fikret Abdić as well as the second accused (*drugooptuženi*). Many other names (first and last names) occurring together with Fikret Abdić and Hakija Pozderac or Agrokomerc can be found in the corpus. This also includes the third accused (*trećeoptuženi*) Aljija Alešević as well as Hamdija Pozderac. The position of the corresponding actors (usually in a bank or company or in relation to “Agrokomerc”) is often indicated in the corpus as well. The accused actors can so far be classified into the sectors “agriculture/food”, “politics” and “finance” according to their positions in the specific organisations:

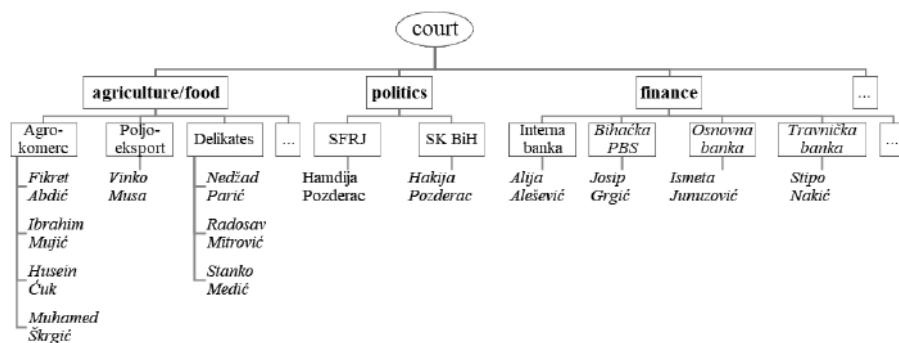


Fig. 2: The accused actors in the Agrokomerc scandal classified by sectors

The media mainly refers to the accused actors of the scandal by using their first and last name (only Fikret Abdić and Hakija Pozderac can occur without their last names), their position in an organisation or in relation to Agrokomerc as well as their role in the investigation process. This use of first and last names is also mentioned in the corpus, which shows the media’s role as the Fourth Estate and judge in the Agrokomerc scandal by saying that all the wrongdoers must be named and held accountable by name (*krivci moraju imati svoje ime i prezime, iznesemo poimenično na odgovornost*).

While the proper names build the majority of nouns used to describe the accused actors, some other words that convey an extremely negative picture of the actors could also be found in the corpus. They are described as cul-

prits (*krivci*) and as the ones who signed the fake/fictitious promissory notes (*potpisnici lažnih/fiktivnih menica*). Their relation to Fikret Abdić is expressed by describing them as *Fikretovi torbari* (en. ‘Fikret’s pedlars’) and *njegovih pomagača* (en. ‘his helpers’), While the latter refers to the actors as accomplices of Fikret Abdić, the former refers to a pejorative term of someone who carries various goods and sells them at fairs and to people at their workplaces or homes. This was transferred to the people who helped Fikret Abdić by visiting various banks and companies and pressured them to accept the promissory notes from “Agrokomerc”. Other evaluative vocabulary is also used, referring to the actors as thieves and robbers (*lopovi, pljačkaši*).

Collocates of “banka” provided a list of modifiers referring to several bank institutions: *Narodna banka* (111, 393.36),⁶⁸ *Osnovna banka* (110, 389.82), *Ljubljanska banka* (87, 308.31), *Bihačka banka* (73, 258.7), *Privredna banka* (67, 237.43), *Interna banka* (51, 180.73), *Beobanka* (17, 60.24), *Jugobanka* (17, 60.24), *Beogradska banka* (16, 56.7), *Travnička banka* (14, 49.61), *Riječka banka* (5, 17.72), *Zagrebačka banka* (4, 14.18), *Međumurska banka* (3, 10.63), *Vojvođanska banka* (3, 10.63)

Nouns of genitive occurring together with “banka” mainly include locations. The list of locations connected to “banka” was further expanded by other locations identified in the corpus: *Jugoslavija* (138, 489.04); *Bosna i Hercegovina* (268, 949.74): *Velika Kladuša* (398, 1’410.43), *Sarajevo* (113, 400.45), *Bihać* (106, 375.64), *Cazin* (30, 106, 31), *Banja Luka* (21, 74.42), *Travnik* (17, 60.24), *Srbljani* (3, 10.63); *Srbija* (86, 304.77): *Beograd* (93, 329.57), *Niš* (25, 88.59); *Vojvodina* (12, 42.53): *Novi Sad* (24, 85.05); *Kosovo* (50, 177.19): *Priština* (35, 124.04), *Peć* (8, 28.35); *Slovenija* (33, 116.95): *Ljubljana* (34, 120.49), *Nova Gorica* (1, 3.54), *Kranj* (1, 3.54); *Hrvatska* (21, 74.42): *Zagreb* (25, 88.59), *Čakovec* (4, 14.18), *Rijeka* (17, 60.24), *Ogulin* (1, 3.54), *Karlovac* (1, 3.54), *Split* (8, 28.35); *Makedonija* (6, 21.26): *Skopje* (27, 95.68); *Crna Gora* (9, 31.89).

Locations in Bosnia and Hercegovina were by far the most mentioned ones, followed by locations in Serbia. The representation of the two republics in the media reflects their prominence in the scandal as well, since SR BiH and SR Srbija were the main republics involved in the scandal. Having a closer look at the concordances, the following network could be created from the identified bank institutions and locations:

68 Absolute and relative frequency in brackets ().

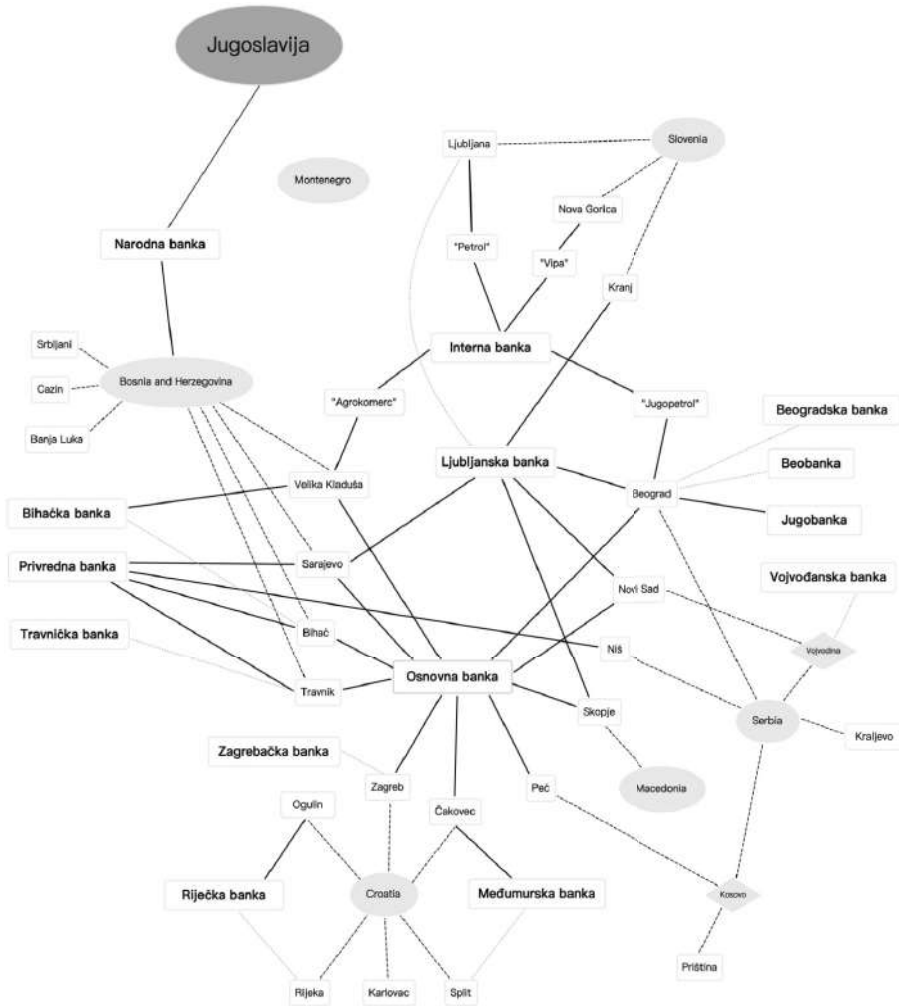


Fig. 3: Network of bank institutions and locations found in the corpus

It is striking that no banks on the territory of Montenegro were involved. Apart from that, all the republics of Yugoslavia seem to be involved in the scandal. Moreover, the network in Fig. 3 confirms Admir Mulaosmanović' claim that Agrokomerc worked with banks throughout Yugoslavia and that the banking sector played an extremely important role in the Agrokomerc scandal.⁶⁹ The banks were, however, described as the losers (*gubitnici*) and as those

69 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc”, 199.

that were damaged (*oštećeni bankari, sa nesagledivim štetnim posledicama*⁷⁰) by the actions of Agrokomerc.

The lemmas “BiH” and “SK” often co-occur in the same context and in the following order: “SK BiH”. This abbreviation refers to the political party of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Hercegovina (“Savez komunista Bosne i Hercegovine”) that also seems to occupy a central role in the Agrokomerc scandal. It also implies a location, namely Bosnia and Hercegovina. Many occurrences can also be found with “CK” before “SK BiH” which refers to the central committee of the political party “SK” in “BiH”. The lemma “CK” only occurs with “SK BiH” and “SKJ”. “SK” on its own co-occurs with several other locations from Yugoslavia: *SK Srbije, SK Kosova, SK SSRNJ, SK Bihaća, SK Cazina, SK Velike Kladuše, SK Prištine, SK Slovenije, SK Hrvatske, SK Arandjelovac, SK Šumadije, SK Vojvodine, SK Beograda, SK Banjaluka ...* It can again be observed that the Republic of Montenegro was not included. This time, however, no locations from Macedonia were mentioned either. As it was already observed for the bank institutions, locations in Bosnia and Hercegovina and Serbia occur more frequently than locations from other republics.

They, however, do not seem to occupy the role of a scandalised actor, except for the brothers Hamdija and Hakija Pozderac (see also Fig. 2). Some allusions to the involvement of other politicians can be found in the corpus, they, however, do not directly refer to the Communist Party: *gigantski finansijski skandal dovodi u pitanje i političke ličnosti, koliko su celu operaciju štitali političari? već su to političari činili od početka.*⁷¹

The role of the Communist Party was mainly to discuss and evaluate the situation with Agrokomerc (*raspravljalo o slučaju nepokrivenih menica „Agrokomerca”*) or to exclude members that were involved in the scandal. The SK BiH, for example, demanded to exclude Hakija Pozderac from the League of Communists (*zahtev da se Hakija Pozderac isključi iz Saveza*). No evaluative vocabulary could be identified for this actor. This is quite surprising, however, giving the fact that the scandal is supposed to be politically motivated.

70 en. ‘damaged bankers, with immense harmful consequences’.

71 en. ‘the gigantic financial scandal also calls political figures into question, to what extent was the entire operation protected by politicians? politicians have already been doing this from the beginning’.

Scandalised action

The lemma “menica” often co-occurs with “bez pokrća”⁷² in the corpus. It refers to the main MEDIUM involved in the scandalised action, namely the promissory notes (*menice*) and it specifies that they were without coverage (*bez pokrća*). The lemma *menica* also occurs with various modifiers that can be classified into three groups:

1. No reference to the lack of coverage: *avaliranih, eskontovanih, izdatih*
2. Reference to the lack of coverage: *nepokrivenih, ne plaćenih, neotkupljenih, fiktivnih, protestovanih, lažnih, šupljih*
3. Reference to a specific location, company, and person: *bosansko-hercegovačkih, Agrokomercovih, Fikretovih*

The first two groups include many verbs in form of their passive participle, which indicate the action in which the medium was involved: promissory notes were validated (*avalirati*) or issued (*izdati*). Past participles of verbs occurring with the negative particle *ne* express that the promissory notes were also not covered (*ne pokriti*), not paid (*ne platiti*) or unredeemed (*ne otkupiti*). The last group assigns the promissory notes to Fikret Abdić (*Fikretovih*), the company “Agrokomerc” (*Agrokomercovih*) and to Bosnia and Hercegovina (*bosansko-hercegovačkih*), which again emphasises the specific shame on Bosnia and Hercegovina as well as on Fikret Abdić and the company itself.

Besides the issuing of promissory notes without coverage, the following actions could be identified in the corpus:

- *kucati/izdavati falsifikovane telekse/teleks-naloge/teleks poruke*⁷³
- *kupovati/uvoziti soju (po većoj ceni od važeće od firme Jugotrejd)*⁷⁴

Nevertheless, the focus is mainly on the actions revolving around the promissory notes.⁷⁵ There are not many indications for the abuse of the money that was gained by those actions. They mostly refer to how the company “Agrokomerc” profited from it (*kupujući stotine traktora, kombajna..., za potrebe “Agrokomerca”, za nabavku druge robe, tako se jedan kredit otplaćivao*

72 Absolute frequency: 40, relative frequency: 141.75.

73 en. ‘typing/issuing forged telexes/telex-orders/telex messages’.

74 en. ‘buy/import soybeans (from Jugotrejd, but for a higher price than the current one)’.

75 Occurrences of “menica” (508, 1’800.25) are almost four times higher than occurrences of “teleks” (59, 209.08) and “soja” (78, 276.42) combined.

*nenaplativim menicama, a uzimao se drugi*⁷⁶). Individual people also profited from the fictional validation of the promissory notes (*fiktivnim eskontiranjem „Agrokomercovih“ menica omogućio Ibrahimu Ičanoviću i Dušanki Rosić protivpravnu korist od preko pet miliona i 200 hiljada dinara*⁷⁷).

The words that were used to describe the corrupt action can be grouped in three categories: there is 1. neutral vocabulary used to describe the actions, 2. vocabulary evaluating the action negatively, and 3. vocabulary highlighting the legal aspect of the action:

1. neutral:

(menično) poslovanje, saradnja, raditi sa, ovaj posao, poslove ...
en. ‘business with promissory notes, cooperation, work with, this work, jobs...’

2. evaluative:

prljava работа, “crno” poslovanje, korupcija, pljačka, ujdurma, prevara, mahinacija, nepotizam, (finansijska) malverzacija, menične mučke, kontrarevolucionarno delovanje, kontrarevolucionarno ugrožavanje društvenog sistema ...

en. ‘dirty work, “black” business, corruption, robbery, scheming/swindle, fraud, machination, nepotism, (financial) embezzlement, scams with promissory notes, counter-revolutionary action, counter-revolutionary endangerment of the social system...’

3. legal:

brojne nezakonitosti, krivično delo, u propisima, teška krivična dela, nisu smeli, zloupotreba, prekršaj, nezakonitim radnjama, nezakonitosti u bankarskom poslovanju, protivpravnu korist, nezakonitim radnjama i mitu, obični criminal, ovu nezakonitu rabotu, nepoštovanja zakona i Ustava...

en. ‘numerous illegalities, criminal offence, in the regulations, serious criminal offences, they were not allowed, abuse, misdemeanor, illegal work, illegalities in the banking business, illegal benefits, illegal actions and bribery, ordinary crime, this illegal work, disobeying the law and the Constitution...’

76 en. ‘buying hundreds of tractors, harvesters..., for the needs of „Agrokomerc“, for the purchase of other goods, thus one loan was repaid with non-payable promissory notes, and another was taken’.

77 en. ‘the fictitious discounting of promissory notes from „Agrokomerc“, allowed Ibrahim Ičanović and Dušanka Rosić an unlawful benefit of over five million and 200 thousand dinars’.

The legal and evaluative vocabulary overweighs the neutral descriptions of the scandal, and they also overlap since most of the nouns attributed to the evaluative vocabulary can also be classified as illegal. Thus, the corrupt action involved in the scandal is clearly labelled as a crime, something illegal that does not comply with the law nor the Constitution. This comes as no surprise since the actors had to answer to a court for their actions.

Most of the evaluative labels include the aspect of private gain due to theft or a scheme which also corresponds to Transparency International's definition of corruption.⁷⁸ This also answers the question if the media abandoned the communist understanding of corruption. The media refers to the corrupt practices according to Transparency International's definition. The only label going beyond that is the one of "counterrevolution" that is exclusively attributed by the prosecutors and the trial and that was discussed before. This vocabulary was also identified in the corpus and belongs to the language used in court since many articles from *Politika* include detailed reports of the legal proceedings.

Because of the actions performed by the actors in the Agrokomerc scandal, the state and banks have suffered from a huge loss (*gubitak*) and social damage (*društvena šteta, oštetili jugoslaviju menicama bez pokrića*⁷⁹). The actors, however, did not describe it as a loss but rather as a credit (*kredit*) that will be paid back to the banks. This indeed happened with several banks that converted the debt of Agrokomerc into a loan (*kredit*).⁸⁰

These notions co-occur with several sums of money that are expressed using the keyword "dinar" in combination with "u vrednosti/iznosu od".⁸¹ *10 hiljada milijardi starih dinara, 20 hiljada milijardi starih dinara, 9.749 miliona dinara, 2.3 novih milijardi dinara, 10 milijardi i 310 miliona dinara, 80.000 dinara, 9.8 miliona dinara, 237.530.000.000 dinara ...*

Only one amount is expressed without the use of numbers, comparing the damage/loss/credit to the value of the total accumulation of the Yugoslav economy (*u vrednosti trećine akumulacije jugoslovenske privrede*). This leads to the question of the economic impact of Agrokomerc' actions that could be further elaborated.

78 Buchenau, "The Third Path into the Twilight? Corruption in Socialist Yugoslavia", 91–92.

79 en. 'social damage, they damaged Yugoslavia with promissory notes without coverage'.

80 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc”, 200.

81 en. 'in the value/amount of'.

*Conceptual Methaphors*⁸²

Some conceptual metaphors could also be identified in the corpus. Metaphors make abstract concepts – such as that of corruption – linguistically accessible by using another concept that is familiar to us⁸³, e.g., the conceptualization of corruption as an ILLNESS/DISEASE. This metaphor can also be found in the corpus:

1. *Za ozdravljenje “Agrokomerca” – smatra republička vlada – biće potrebna sredstva iz fondova za nerazvijene Federacije i republike, novac društveno-političkih zajednica i bosansko-hercegovačkih banaka, inostrani krediti, pa i promene u kreditno-monetarnoj politici Jugoslavije.*
2. *Pošast “Agrokomercovih” menica se širi. Svaki dan pokazuje da je veći nego što se juče znalo.*

In (1), the company “Agrokomerc” suffered from corruption and must recover again. The metaphor is expressed though the noun *ozdravljenje* (en. ‘recovery’). In the specific contexts, especially the reputation of “Agrokomerc” was damaged. The consolidation and rehabilitation of “Agrokomerc” can only be cured by the following remedies: funds for underdeveloped Federations and republics, money from socio-political communities and Bosnian-Herzegovinian banks, foreign loans, and changes in Yugoslavia’s credit-monetary policy. In (2), the issued promissory notes from “Agrokomerc” are conceptualised as a plague (*pošast*) that is spreading and becoming bigger every day.

Another conceptual metaphor used to describe corruption is DIRT. This is expressed by using the verb *očistiti* (en. ‘to clean’):

3. *Na našem društvu je ozbiljan zadatak, a u tome je i uloga Socijalističkog saveza ogromna: da očisti svoju kuću od korupcije, nepotizma, i nepoštovanja zakona i Ustava, da se onemogući otimačima rezultata tuđeg rada.*

82 Zoltan Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 4–6.

83 For example: Alexander Ziem, “Kollokationen, Konkordanz und Metaphern: Krisenszenarien im SPIEGEL”, *Aptum. Zeitschrift für Sprachkritik und Sprachkultur* 7/2011, 272–288.

In this example, not only corruption, but also nepotism and disobeying the law are conceptualised as DIRT. Nepotism is also conceptualised as MA-FIA (CRIMINAL ORGANISATION) by using “kumstvo” and “kumovi”:

4. *On je, kažu „svojim prisustvom i „autoritetom“ direktno uticao na izbor kadrova u opštini i naročito u međuopštinskim strukturama“. Reklo bi se, tipično kumstvo u mafijaškim stilu (8.9.1987) ovo potvrđuje i rečenica iz platforme, da se realno ništa nije moglo sprovesti bez stavova Hakije i Fikreta.*
5. *Šta da radimo sa raznim „kumovima“, koji su podgrevali ambicije i apetite moćnika iz Velike Kladuše.*

Klavs Sedlenieks defines “kumstvo” in Alena Ledeneva’s *Global Encyclopaedia of Informality* as “an informal network based on fictive kinship”, especially in Montenegro.⁸⁴ In (4), Hakija Pozderac and Fikret Abdić are portrayed as godfathers in the sense of powerful men who are at the head of a criminal organisation. In (5), other ‘godfathers’ are involved that helped those powerful men from Velika Kladuša.

Accordingly, the metaphorical conceptualisation of corruption as illness/disease and dirt and nepotism as mafia can only be interpreted as something extremely negative and that radical intervention is absolutely necessary.

Conclusion and Outlook

This corpus linguistic analysis offered well-founded empirical data and concrete values that were to some degree interpreted in a wider context. Using corpus linguistic tools that were provided by Sketch Engine, the lexical inventory of the Agrokomerc scandal could be identified. Specific vocabulary could be attributed to the scandal, the actors involved in the scandal and the scandalised action.

By describing the corruption scandal, the role of the media as a scandaliser becomes clear since they emphasise certain aspects of the scandal such as the DEGREE, TIME, and PROMINENCE comparing the current scandal to previous events and scandals in Yugoslavia.

The main organisations involved are the company “Agrokomerc”, various banks and the Communist Party. The common lexical inventory of Fikret Abdić as the director of “Agrokomerc” as well as of the company itself focus-

84 From *kum* a godfather, *kuma* – a godmother, in: Alena Ledeneva, *The Global Encyclopaedia of Informality*, (London: UCL Press, 2018), 237.

es on power, especially on the loss of it. The company and Fikret Abdić as its director were able to do things that could not be checked by the court or political parties.⁸⁵ Due to the huge scandalisation of their actions in the media, they have lost their power and status which is often emphasised in the corpus.

The banks are seen as the most damaged actors and losers involved in the scandal. The actors who work in the banks, however, were accused in working together with Fikret Abdić and “Agrokomerc”. To show the dimensions of Agrokomerc’ actions, bank institutions and the Communist Party from all the republics of former Yugoslavia were involved in the scandal, whereby the Communist Party did not seem to occupy a central role in the scandal according to *Politika*. This, in turn, is contradictory to what Dino Dupanović described concerning the role of the media from the mid 1980s in Yugoslavia.⁸⁶ *Politika* does not focus on the political aspect of the affair which is shown by the little occurrences of political actors in the corpus which seems to be much higher in other newspapers.⁸⁷ Moreover, it is also assumed that one of the goals of the Agrokomerc scandal was the destruction of Bosnia and Hercegovina by destroying Hamdija Pozderac.⁸⁸ In the articles of *Politika*, occurrences of Hamdija Pozderac are by far less frequent than of his brother Hakija Pozderac, which does not place Hamdija Pozderac but Hakija Pozderac as one of the main targets of the scandal. Bosnia and Hercegovina or Velika Kladuša, however, are often mentioned in the corpus emphasising the specific shame on Bosnia and Hercegovina as a republic.

The scandalised actions mostly revolve around the MEDIUM of promissory notes without coverage. These actions are clearly labelled as illegal that is expressed by a rich lexical inventory describing the actions. While most of the labels given to the corrupt action correspond to what Transparency International considers as corruption, one clearly stands out, namely labelling the action as counterrevolutionary which is specific to communist regimes. This label is nevertheless given by the prosecutors and not the media itself which, in turn, seems to have abandoned the communist understanding of corruption. This also confirms that *Politika* did not focus on the political aspects of the scandal.

85 Buchenau, “The Third Path into the Twilight? Corruption in Socialist Yugoslavia”, 111.

86 Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, 47.

87 See Ibid.

88 Mulaosmanović, „O političkom kontekstu „afere Agrokomerc”, 200.

Conceptual metaphors could also be found in the corpus, conveying an extremely negative image of corruption and nepotism that inevitably calls for a radical intervention.

While the linguistic analysis can only offer limited interpretations of the lexical inventory, the data gathered from this corpus analysis can be used in further qualitative analyses in other disciplines. For example, from a legal perspective, it could be analysed how the actions labelled as illegal break the law and which laws are affected by it. Some references to legal aspects can also be found in the corpus and can be additionally examined.

Furthermore, several numbers were identified in the corpus leading to the questions: what was the financial impact of the Agrokomerc scandal, and which economic sectors were involved? Apart from the banks and the agricultural company “Agrokomerc” other companies could also be identified in the corpus that could be used for further analyses (e.g. *Jugotrejd, Eksimport, Jugopetrol, Finagrejn, Kostolac, Trdoagencija, Kraft44, Flavoreks, Lovel, Simba, Stal, Ambre, Fudži etc.*)

Moreover, the data collected from this linguistic analysis only reflects the scandal from the perspective of the media – and specifically of *Politika* – that does not necessarily reflect all the information and facts around the Agrokomerc scandal.

For this reason, not only other disciplines, but also linguistics would profit from a comparative approach. Other newspapers, especially from other republics or political parties could be analysed to compare the vocabulary that was used to portray the Agrokomerc scandal or any other scandal and to examine if, for instance, other aspects of the scandal were emphasised in other newspapers.

Dino Dupanović, for example, analyses *Borba, Oslobođenje* and *Krajina* focusing on the place and role of the media in the Agrokomerc scandal.⁸⁹ Dupanović’ approach, however, seems rather intuitive, since he only focuses on the analysis of individually selected titles from various newspaper articles. Nevertheless, he offers some insight into the coverage of the Agrokomerc scandal in the respective newspapers. For *Borba*, Dupanović concludes that the newspaper only focused on the growth of Agrokomerc from an ordinary combine to a giant and on its high fall as well as on the consequences.⁹⁰ *Oslobođenje* was according to Dupanović the most objective media, which reported on the

89 See Dupanović, „Mjesto i uloga medija u aferi Agrokomerc – od nacionalizma do oslobođenja”, 39–86.

90 Ibid., 61.

events as they really occurred.⁹¹ The newspaper *Krajina* on the other hand also included the aspect of Islamic fundamentalism.⁹² While no evidence of Islamic fundamentalism could be identified in this corpus analysis, similar results could be found for *Politika* as they were for *Borba*. Both are Belgrade-based newspapers which raises the question what and if specific goals in portraying the Agrokomerc scandal existed and if they can be assigned to certain regions.

Summary

This study focuses on the public word usage describing the Agrokomerc scandal in the Serbian newspaper *Politika*. Corpus linguistic methods were used to identify the vocabulary used to describe the Agrokomerc scandal as well as the scandalized actors and actions that were labelled as corrupt. This linguistic analysis provides a base for further qualitative analyses in other disciplines dealing with corruption. The media especially focused on the key actors involved in the scandal, namely Fikret Abdić the director of the company “Agrokomerc” and on various banks and its employees working with the company. The scandalised action primarily revolves around promissory notes without coverage that were issued by “Agrokomerc”. Various descriptions of the promissory notes could be identified in the corpus. Especially negatively evaluated vocabulary could be attributed to the actors working with Abdić as well as to the actions that were performed using the promissory notes, including labels, such as *prljava rabota*, *ujdurma* and *korupcija*.

While the collected data can only be interpreted to some extent within the discipline of linguistics, other disciplines can offer further insights. The linguistic analysis provided data about the Communist Party, the legislation, various companies, and locations mentioned in the newspaper articles from *Politika* that can for instance be used for historical contextualization as well as for legal or economic studies.

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Резиме

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КОРПУСНО-ЛИНГВИСТИЧКА АНАЛИЗА АФЕРЕ АГРОКОМЕРЦ НА ОСНОВУ НОВИНСКИХ ЧЛАНАКА ИЗ ПОЛИТИКЕ

Апстракт: Основна сврха ове студије је да опише како је корупционашки скандал лингвистички концептуализован у јавној употреби речи. Скандал *Агрокомерц*, који се истраживао од 1987. до 1989. године у бившој Југославији, послужиће као пример којим се речником, као и метафорама, описује скандал у српским медијима. У ту сврху креиран је корпус текста који садржи 137 чланака из дневног листа *Политика*. Одабрани чланци баве се корупционашким скандалом *Агрокомерц*. За ову студију биће коришћене корпусне лингвистичке методе. Овај метод омогућава идентификацију конкретних лексичких јединица које се могу даље тумачити и користити у ширем и интердисциплинарном контексту.

Кључне речи: корупција, Агрокомерц, масовни медији, семантика, корпусна лингвистика

Студија се фокусира на јавну употребу речи којима се описује скандал *Агрокомерц* у дневном листу *Политика*. Методом корпусне лингвистике идентификован је вокабулар којим се описује афера *Агрокомерц*, као и скандализоване актери и радње које су означене као корумпиране. Ова лингвистичка анализа даје основу за даље квалитативне анализе у другим дисциплинама које се баве корупцијом. Медији су се посебно фокусирали на кључне актере скандала, а то су Фикрет Абдић, директор СОУР *Агрокомерца*, те разне банке и њихови запослени који су сарађивали са *Агрокомерцом*. Скандализована акција се пре свега тиче меница без покрића које је издао *Агрокомерц*. У корпусу су се могли идентификовати различити описи меница. Посебно негативно вреднован вокабулар може се приписати актерима који су радили са Абдићем, као и радњама које су се изводиле око меница, укључујући речи као што су: *прљава работа, ујдурма и корупција*. Док се прикупљени подаци могу само донекле интерпретирати у оквиру лингвистике, друге дисциплине могу понуди-

ти даљи увид. Лингвистичка анализа дала је податке о Савезу комуниста, законодавству, разним компанијама и локацијама које се помињу у новинским чланцима у *Политици* и који се могу, на пример, користити за историјску контекстуализацију, као и за правне или економске студије.