Gender Across Languages

The linguistic representation of women and men

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Communicating gender in Czech

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1. Introduction

Czech (*český jazyk, čeština*) is the mother tongue of about 10 million inhabitants of the Czech Republic. Czech belongs to the Slavic group of the Indo-European languages, specifically to the subgroup of the West Slavic languages, along with

Slovak, Polish and Sorbian. The Slovak language, spoken in Slovakia, the second area of the former Czechoslovak Federation, is closely related to Czech and both languages are mutually intelligible (cf. Short 1987).

The Czech Literary Standard (*spisovný jazyk* 'literary language') originated in the early Middle Ages, reaching its peak in the period of the Hussite movement and Humanism (the epoch of Renaissance). The modern Literary Standard was elaborated at the beginning of the 19th century, in the process of the National Revival, on the basis of the earlier standard of the humanistic period. It contained a number of archaic features and became estranged from the colloquial speech. The entire history of the modern Standard until the present day has been marked by the tendency to overcome this gap. The present situation of Czech is characterised by the fact that whereas in the provinces of Moravia and Silesia the dialectal diversification in essence survives, in the province of Bohemia the local dialects have nearly disappeared and a regional interdialect (koiné), based on the speech of Prague and Central Bohemia, has emerged. This so-called Common Czech (*obecná čeština*) is marked, above all, by simplified inflectional paradigms. Being the speech of the cultural centre of Prague, Common Czech has also expanded to other regions.

Typologically, Czech is a highly inflected language. Its consistent inflectional nature is more evident than in other Slavic languages, e.g. Russian or Polish (see Doleschal & Schmid, vol. I; Koniuszaniec & Błaszkowska, this vol.). It has a rich system of declensional and conjugational paradigms as well as a rich and productive system of word-formation. The inflectional categories of the noun – including adjectives, pronouns and some numerals – comprise case (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, locative, instrumental), number (singular and plural, with vestiges of the dual), gender (masculine, feminine, neuter) and animacy (opposition of animate/inanimate within the masculine gender).

The verb is inflected for tense (past, present, future), person (first, second, third), number (singular, plural), mood (indicative, imperative, subjunctive), voice (active, passive), aspect (imperfective, perfective) and gender (in the past tense and in the subjunctive, both in the singular and plural, and also in the passive voice of all the three tenses and moods in the singular and plural, the verb has different forms for all three genders).[1]

2.   Gender in Czech

Czech belongs to the group of *noun class languages*, and more specifically, to the subgroup of *gender languages* (cf. Hellinger & Bußmann, this vol.). Although

grammatical gender may be conceived of as independent of a direct semantic correlation between the gender of a noun and the physical properties of the persons or objects denoted by that noun, there is a "natural" basis for the classification, evident in the group of nouns denoting persons. In most cases, nouns denoting male human beings are masculine, nouns denoting female human beings are feminine, while nouns denoting immature beings and young animals, such as *dítě* 'child', *mládě* 'young', or *kotě* 'kitten' are often neuter gender in Czech.

The category of animacy/inanimacy operates only within the masculine gender, classifying nouns into two types, one for animate masculines denoting human beings and animals (e.g. *pán* 'master'), the other for inanimate masculines (e.g. *hrad* 'castle'). The animate masculine is characterised by identical forms in the genitive (*pán-a*) and accusative case (*pán-a*), while the inanimate masculine has identical forms in the nominative (*hrad-Ø*) and accusative case (*hrad-Ø*). The distinction of animacy/inanimacy is also marked in orthography, determining the spelling of the nominal endings (*-i/-y*) in nominative plural forms: *pán-i* vs. *hrad-y*.[2]

Feminine and neuter nouns are not classified with respect to the feature of animacy, i.e. personal nouns such as *žena* (f) 'woman' or *děcko* (n) 'child' belong to the same declensional type as morphologically corresponding nouns denoting inanimate objects.

2.1 Grammatical gender

Grammatical gender is an inherent morphosyntactic property of the noun, which (together with the category of animacy) has both paradigmatic and syntagmatic features in Czech:

a. Nouns are classified into three gender classes corresponding to their declensional paradigms. Productive processes of word-formation, and in particular the derivation of feminine personal nouns give rise to numerous feminine counterparts to masculine terms.

b. Gender controls grammatical agreement between the noun (the controller) and the verb, as well as between the noun and its gender-variable satellite elements, such as adjectives, pronouns, and numerals in both attributive and predicative positions. The category of gender (together with that of animacy within the masculine gender) also controls the inflectional orthography of dependent verbs and nouns (e.g., the endings *-i/-y*):

(1) *Jeden   mladý   muž   potkal   svého*
     one.MASC young.MASC man.MASC met.MASC his.MASC
     přítele   a   vzal   ho   do kina.
     friend.MASC and took.MASC him.MASC to cinema.NEUT
     'A young man met his friend and took him to the cinema.'

(2) *Oba   mladí   muži   šli   spolu*
     two.MASC young.MASC men.MASC went.MASC together
     do kina.
     to cinema.NEUT
     'The two young men went together to the cinema.'

(3) *Jedna   mladá   žena   potkala svou   přítelkyni*
     one.FEM young.FEM woman.FEM met.FEM her.FEM friend.FEM
     a   vzala   ji   do kina.
     and took.FEM her.FEM to cinema.NEUT
     'A young woman met her friend and took her to the cinema.'

(4) *Obě   mladé   ženy   šly   spolu*
     two.FEM young.FEM women.FEM went.FEM together
     do kina.
     to cinema.NEUT
     'The two young women went together to the cinema.'

(5) *Jedno   malé   dítě   našlo   štěně*
     one.NEUT little.NEUT child.NEUT found.NEUT puppy.NEUT
     a   doneslo si   je   domů.
     and brought.NEUT it.NEUT home
     'A little child found a puppy and brought it home.'

Unlike in English, gender distinctions are communicated in Czech through various lexical, morphological, and syntactic means. Consequently, the category of gender and the relationship between grammatical gender and referential or "natural" gender has been analysed in detail by many Czech linguists: (a) in its diachronic perspective, tracing the history of the category of gender in Indo-European languages (cf. particularly Oberpfalcer 1933), and also (b) in its synchronic perspective (cf. Trávníček 1940, 1949; Šmilauer 1966, 1971; Jedlička 1955, Dokulil 1967; cf. also note 1). The analysis included word-formation, the adaptation of international lexemes to Czech morphology, and especially, the status of newly formed personal feminines. The Czech linguists have repeatedly debated systemic and functional features of the newly formed feminine terms, taking into account their opposition to, and competition with, masculine terms.

The linguistic interpretation of these opposite gender pairs was informed by the general background of the structuralist treatment of linguistic meanings and functions, and by markedness theory as formulated by Jakobson (1932); cf. also Daneš (1997).

Any interpretation of gender in Czech and, more specifically, the linguistic representation of women and men, must take into account the conspicuous nature of Czech gender distinctions. Languages differ not only in what they can express, but also in what they must express. Czech can (and in many cases must) communicate not only the gender of the person referred to, but also the gender of the speaker and that of the addressee. The Czech essayist Pavel Eisner (1946: 377–382) called Czech a thoroughly "sexist" language long before this topic was ever subjected to linguistic investigation. He established a scale of languages, based on the degree of linguistic sexism – where "sexism" relates to linguistic manifestations of gender and has nothing to do with the discrimination of women (or men):

> With regard to the structure of morphological endings and consequently word forms controlled by sex we can distinguish absolutely sexless languages like English, then languages with a small degree of sexism like German, languages with a larger degree – these are Romance languages – and in the end thoroughly sexist languages, and in Europe these are the Slavic languages, including Czech. (Eisner 1946: 378, my translation)

Although femaleness has many manifestations in Czech, some of the formal and functional manifestations of gender in the area of human reference can be interpreted as relics of the so-called "patriarchal language paradigm" (a term introduced by Eisner 1946: 366n), which may be universal. In Czech this also applies to orthography. The orthographic feature that is often mentioned in this connection is the choice of *-i* or *-y* in verb plural agreement, cf. the masculine vs. feminine verbal agreement in (2) vs. (4). In case of coordination of a masculine and a feminine noun it is the masculine expression which determines agreement: If at least one male person is present in the group referred to by the subject, only masculine agreement *-i* is permitted, as in (6):

(6) *Jeden   muž   a   tři   ženy   šli   do kina.*
     one.MASC man.MASC and three women.FEM went.MASC to cinema
     'One man and three women went to the cinema.'

2.2 Lexical gender

The correspondence between grammatical gender (masculine/feminine) and lexical gender (male/female) in Czech can best be illustrated by (general) personal nouns (Table 1a) and kinship terms (Table 1b). They are often paired by gender, but are not derived from each other. Typically, the nouns in this group display symmetry in that they stand in equipollent opposition, i.e. both terms are gender-specific and cannot substitute one another. However, this group of paired lexical gender nouns is now closed and unproductive in Czech.

Table 1c displays the marginal position of derived kinship terms such as the masculine/male term *tchán* 'father-in-law', which is historically derived from the feminine/female *tchyně* 'mother-in-law', and *švagr-ová* 'sister-in-law' which is derived from *švagr* 'brother-in-law'. Though these nouns form equipollent oppositions and are gender-specific, in metaphorical contexts female referents may be included in the group of referents denoted, e.g., by the masculine *vnuk* 'grandson', cf. (7).

Table 1a. General personal nouns

Masculine		Feminine	
muž	'man'	*žena*	'woman'
chlapec/hoch	'boy'	*dívka*	'girl'
kluk	'boy'	*holka*	'girl'
ženich	'bridegroom'	*nevěsta*	'bride'

Table 1b. Kinship terms

otec	'father'	*matka*	'mother'
otčím	'stepfather'	*macecha*	'stepmother'
bratr	'brother'	*sestra*	'sister'
syn	'son'	*dcera*	'daughter'
synovec	'nephew'	*neteř*	'niece'
bratranec	'cousin'	*sestřenice*	'cousin'
strýc	'uncle'	*teta*	'aunt'
zeť	'son-in-law'	*snacha*	'daughter-in-law'

Table 1c. Derived kinship terms

tchán	'father-in-law'	*tchyně*	'mother-in-law'
švagr	'brother-in-law'	*švagrová*	'sister-in-law'
vdovec	'widower'	*vdova*	'widow'
vnuk	'grandson'	*vnučka*	'granddaughter'

(7) *Mysleme na naše vnuky.*
     think   of our grandsons.MASC
     'Think of our grandsons (i.e. of the next generations).'

This type of female invisibility also occurs in expressions such as *generace našich otců* 'generation of our fathers' and *generace našich dědů* 'generation of our grandfathers'.

To avoid the gender-specific reference of kinship terms, Czech can use nouns with gender-indefinite or gender-neutral reference, such as *rodič*, pl. *rodiče* 'parents', which are grammatical masculines:

(8) *Rodič* (male or female person) *pomůže dítěti.*
     'A parent will help a child.'

(9) *Rodiče* (male and/or female) *pomohou dětem.*
     'The parents will help the children.'

Other nouns with gender-indefinite or gender-neutral reference for family members include the following masculines: *manžel*, pl. *manželé* 'couple', *partner*, pl. *partneři* 'partners', *prarodič*, pl. *prarodiče* 'grandparents', *sourozenec*, pl. *sourozenci* 'siblings' (children of both genders are denoted by grammatically neuter nouns: *dítě*, *děcko*, pl. *děti*, *děcka* 'children', *vnouče*, pl. *vnoučata* 'grandchildren').

The gender-indefinite or gender-neutral function can be expressed not only by generic masculines, such as *partner*, *rodinný příslušník*, or *člen rodiny* 'family member', but also by masculine, feminine and neuter epicenes (in Czech *jména vespolná*) (see Section 2.3), as well as by the so-called double gender nouns (in Czech *jména obourodá*), cf. Section 2.4.

2.3 Epicene nouns

Epicenes (*vespolná jména*) denote both female and male persons without a change of grammatical gender. These nouns belong to one of the grammatical genders and require the corresponding grammatical agreement.

2.3.1 *Masculine epicenes*
The central term in the category of masculine epicenes is undoubtedly *člověk* 'man, person' (plural *lidé* 'people') which can be described as gender-indefinite. The feminine counterpart *člověčice* 'female person' is very rare and stylistically marked, created occasionally to foreground the gender opposition as part of poetic licence (the corresponding feminine epicene *osoba* will be discussed in

Section 2.3.2). The term *člověk* applies to women as well, as in the following example from an interview between two young women:

(10) *Považujete se za cílevědomého člověka?*
consider you yourself ambitious.MASC person.MASC
'Do you consider yourself an ambitious person?'

Eisner (1946: 366) stated that Czech differentiates between the general personal noun *člověk* and the personal noun with male-specific reference *muž* 'man', and in this sense, he states, the Czech language is more friendly and welcoming to women than other languages in which the general noun denoting a person is derived from the noun "man" or associated with maleness. This semantic association can arise in Czech, too, particularly in contexts referring to an individual as in (11):

(11) *Byl tam jen jeden člověk.*
was.MASC there only one.MASC person.MASC
'There was only one person/one man there.'

The noun *člověk* is mostly used in colloquial contexts, its indefinite meaning being sometimes close to that of the pronoun *somebody*, *anybody*, *one* (analogous to German *man*):

(12) *Člověk stráví ve škole spoustu času.*
man.MASC spends at school much time.
'One spends a lot of time at school.'

Other nouns in this group are the above-mentioned masculines *rodič* 'parent', *kojenec* 'nursing infant', *sourozenec* 'sibling', and also *jedinec* 'individual', *jednotlivec* 'individual', *host* 'guest' and *sirotek* 'orphan':

(13) *Máš nějakého sourozence?*
have.you any.MASC sibling.MASC
'Do you have a brother or sister?'

Most of the nouns in this group can transmit both positive and negative evaluations. Whereas the nouns *idol* 'idol', *genius* 'genius', *drahoušek* 'darling', *miláček* 'sweetheart' and others express positive evaluations, the nouns *snob* 'cultural snob' or *anonym* 'anonymous person' are usually connected with negative associations. The group of masculine epicenes is quite numerous, as many nouns derived from adjectives lack feminine counterparts: *chytrák* 'clever', *hlupák* 'blockhead', *blbec* 'fool', *blázen* 'lunatic', *opilec* 'drunkard',

lenoch 'idler', *zuřivec* 'maniac', *zbabělec* 'coward', *pokrytec* 'hypocrite', *lakomec* 'miser', *povýšenec* 'arrogant person', *snaživec* 'eager person', *blouznivec* 'visionary', and *zločinec* 'criminal'.

A woman may use the gender-indefinite masculine noun *blázen* when referring to another woman, when addressing a female addressee, or when referring to herself, cf. (14):

(14)   *To jsem blázen.*
         it   I.am fool.MASC
         'I must be crazy.'

Nevertheless, some of the masculine epicenes have rare and expressive feminine counterparts. This results from a strong tendency in Czech to create feminine counterparts to all grammatical masculines, e.g. *bláznivka* 'female lunatic', *lenoška* 'female idler', *chytračka* 'clever woman', *hlupačka* 'female blockhead', *zuřivka* 'female maniac', *lakomnice* 'female miser'. In dialects and occasionally also in literary language additional feminines may appear, such as *hostka* 'female guest', *génijka* 'female genius', *idolka* 'female idol', *milka* 'female darling', *drahuška* 'female darling', *anonymka* 'anonymous woman', *blbka* 'female fool', *opilka* 'female drunkard' or *povýšenkyně* 'arrogant woman'.

2.3.2   *Feminine epicenes*

There are also a number of feminine epicenes, the most neutral undoubtedly being *osoba* 'person'. This noun is frequently used in law (*osoby činné v trestním řízení* 'persons active in criminal proceedings'), psychology (*závislá osoba* 'dependent individual'), the workplace (*soukromá osoba* 'private person'), administration (*úřední osoba* 'official') and social life (*doprovázející osoba* 'accompanying person, escort').

Whereas in written texts the noun *osoba* 'person' is stylistically neutral and gender-indefinite, in colloquial speech, fairy tales and story-telling it may raise associations with a female person (the analogy with *člověk* 'man' being obvious).

There is another noun belonging to the category of feminine epicenes, i.e. *osobnost* 'person, personality', which – unlike the stylistically neutral noun *osoba* – transmits a positive evaluation 'a remarkable person' in various respects, particularly in the world of science, culture, social and political life, and in the sense of 'a type of personality'. It can also be applied in more neutral contexts, particularly to denote representatives of various occupations, backgrounds, settings or political opinions, as in (15):

(15)   *Osobnosti* (f) *z prostředí Brandýského fóra sdělily* (f) *svůj postoj v dopise,*
        který odeslaly (f) *v pátek předsedkyni* (f) *US-DEU a předsedovi* (m)
        KDU-ČSL Cyrilu Svobodovi.
        (*Literární noviny*, 13 February 2002: 2)
        'Personalities (f) from the Brandýs Forum expressed (f) their position in
        a letter they sent (f) on Friday to the chairwoman (f) of US-DEU and the
        chairman (m) of KDU-ČSL Cyril Svoboda.'

Another personal feminine is *bytost* 'being, creature', which is used predomi-
nantly in philosophical, psychological and literary contexts. It can be found in
neutral and positive evaluative contexts, mostly in predicative positions:

(16)   *Byla   to   křehká   bytost.*
        was.FEM it.NEUT tender.FEM being.FEM
        'He/she was a tender being.'

The feminine noun *existence* 'existence', when applied to a person, tends to appear
in deprecating contexts, where it refers to a person's peculiar characteristics
(e.g., *podivná existence* 'a fellow of dubious background'), and in this sense it is
close to the negative meaning of the more expressive noun *kreatura* 'creature'.

Several additional personal nouns are used without regard to referential
gender, e.g. *postava, figura* 'figure'. These nouns appear in evaluative contexts
(e.g., *velká postava české literatury* 'a major figure in Czech literature', *pochybná
postava českých dějin* 'a dubious figure in Czech history') and can be applied to
both males and females. The noun is often found in literary discourse (*literární
postava* 'literary character'), and appears mostly in descriptive, visual contexts,
where it may introduce a new character on the scene whose gender may be
unknown or unimportant.

The group of feminine epicenes also includes nouns with positive connota-
tions used to characterise persons or rather personalities, such as *autorita*
'authority', used mostly in politics, science and family life; *kapacita* 'authority',
used mostly in science; *celebrita* 'celebrity', widespread in social life; and the
metaphorical noun *hvězda* 'star', used in culture, particularly in the areas of
theatre, film, music and sports, as in *tenisová herecká, filmová hvězda, hvězda
pop-music* 'tennis-, theatre-, film-, pop-star'. As grammatical feminines these
nouns require feminine agreement, within a sentence or across sentence
boundaries. This group of nouns also includes metaphorical nominations of
human qualities both positive, as in *pilná včelka, včelička* 'diligent little bee', and
negative, as in *obluda* 'monster', *příšera* 'fright', *baba* 'coward', *bačkora* 'push-

over', *bábovka* 'sissy'; on the border between positive and negative evaluation are, e.g., *(velká) ryba* 'fish', *štika* 'pike, cunning person', and *liška* 'fox'.

Historical contexts testify to a wide use of such abstract nouns as *Excelence* 'Excellence', *Magnificence* 'Magnificence', *Výsost* 'Highness', *Milost* 'Majesty, Grace', or *Svatost* 'Holiness', which are grammatical feminines denoting both male and female beings. Referential gender is expressed by the possessive pronouns *jeho* 'his' or *její* 'her'; however, these nouns require feminine agreement:

(17) a. *Jeho Královská milost   přišla.*
          his   royal.FEM majesty.FEM came.FEM
          'His Majesty the King arrived.'
      b. *Její Královská milost   přišla.*
          her royal.FEM majesty.FEM came.FEM
          'Her Majesty the Queen arrived.'

2.3.3   *Neuter epicenes*

Besides nouns for immature persons, e.g., *dítě* 'child', *vnouče* 'grandchild', *batole* 'toddler', *nemluvně* 'infant', or *lidské mládě* 'child, greenhorn' there is the neutral noun *individuum* 'individual', which is partially synonymous with the stylistically neutral masculine *jedinec, jednotlivec* 'individual', but often transmits negative connotations, especially when preceded by the adjective 'strange', as in *podivné individuum* 'peculiar, strange, odd creature'. Some other evaluative nouns focus on insufficient size (*mrně, prtě, škvrně* 'tiny tot') or negative or insufficient outer or inner features, e.g., *strašidlo* 'fright', *trdlo* 'klutz, twit', *motovidlo* 'oaf', *třeštidlo* 'madcap', or *slonbidlo* 'spindleshanks'.

In historical contexts, honorary nominations and titles are widely used, such as *blahorodí* 'Honour' or *veličenstvo* 'Majesty', which are grammatically neuter denoting both male and female persons. Referential gender is communicated by the pronouns *jeho* 'his' or *její* 'her', but syntactically these nouns require neuter agreement:

(18) *Jeho Císařské   veličenstvo   přišlo.*
      his   imperial.NEUT majesty.NEUT came.NEUT
      'His Honour the Emperor came.'

2.4 Double gender nouns

In Czech, there is a group of nouns that have one form in the nominative singular, but two grammatical genders, i.e. they belong to two grammatical

Table 2. Double gender nouns

Masculine		Feminine	
choť	'partner, husband'	*choť*	'partner, wife'
mluvčí	'spokesman'	*mluvčí*	'spokeswoman'
průvodčí	'male conductor'	*průvodčí*	'female conductor'
sirota	'male orphan'	*sirota*	'female orphan'
popleta	'male muddler'	*popleta*	'female muddler'

gender paradigms as manifested both paradigmatically (on the level of morpho-logical forms) and syntagmatically (on the level of agreement), cf. Table 2.

The obsolete noun *choť* denotes either a husband or a wife. A semantic analogy with English *spouse* is obvious. In Czech, however, the word belongs to two gender paradigms and accordingly takes two types of agreement:

(19) a. *Přišel   se   svou   chotí.*
          came.MASC with his.FEM partner.FEM
          'He came with his wife.'
     b. *Přišla   se   svým   chotěm.*
          came.FEM with her.MASC partner.MASC
          'She came with her husband.'

(20) a. *Můj   choť   přišel.*
          my.MASC partner.MASC came.MASC
          'My husband came.'
     b. *Moje   choť   přišla.*
          my.FEM partner.FEM came.FEM
          'My wife came.'

The group of double gender nouns includes some personal nouns derived from verbs, such as *mluvit* 'speak', *provádět* 'conduct', *vypravit* 'dispatch': *mluvčí* 'spokesman/spokeswoman', *průvodčí* (m/f) 'conductor', *výpravčí* (m/f) 'train dispatcher', also *rukojmí* (n, recently also m/f) 'hostage', cf. (21–24). It is not easy to decide whether we have one lexeme with two grammatical genders (cf. the term *double gender*) or two separate lexemes with partially homonymous forms.

(21) *Prezident* (m) *představil* (m) *svého* (m) *nového* (m) *mluvčího* (m) *Pavla Nováka.*
      'The President introduced his new spokesman Pavel Novák.'

(22) *Prezident* (m) *představil* (m) *svou* (f) *novou* (f) *mluvčí* (f) *Annu Novákovou.*
      'The President introduced his new spokeswoman Anna Nováková.'

(23) *Nový* (m) *mluvčí* (m) *Pavel Novák se omluvil* (m).
'The new spokesman Pavel Novák apologised.'

(24) *Nová* (f) *mluvčí* (f) *Anna Nováková se omluvila* (f).
'The new spokeswoman Anna Nováková apologised.'

In addition, there is a group of expressive double gender nouns belonging to the *a*-declension, usually associated with feminine gender. These expressive nouns are used mainly in the singular; nevertheless, their plural paradigms are also gender-sensitive. The obsolete noun *sirota* 'orphan' denotes either an orphaned boy or an orphaned girl, and takes either masculine or feminine agreement. The same applies to such colloquial expressive nouns as *popleta* 'muddler', *nešika* 'butter-finger', *naivka* 'naive person', and some other evaluative nouns belonging to the *a*-declension.

2.5 Nominalised adjectives

There is an even larger class of gender-symmetrical nouns (i.e. partially homonymous pairs of nouns), both masculines and feminines. These are conversions of adjectives (participles), cf. Table 3.

Table 3. Nominalised adjectives and participles

Masculine	Feminine	
dospívající	*dospívající*	'adolescent'
cestující	*cestující*	'traveller'
vedoucí	*vedoucí*	'head, leader'
dospělý	*dospělá*	'adult'
milý	*milá*	'beloved'

2.5.1 *Nominalised adjectives of the type* **dospívající** *(m/f) 'adolescent'*
In the nominative singular, e.g., *dospívající (muž)* 'adolescent (man)' – *dospívající (žena)* 'adolescent (woman)', and in all plural forms, e.g., *dospívající (muži)* – *dospívající (ženy)*, masculine and feminine forms merge, but are differentiated by gender in singular oblique cases, as in the genitive form: *dospívajícího (muže)* – *dospívající (ženy)*. These nouns denote persons on the basis of different features, relations, professions and functions: *neslyšící* (m/f) 'deaf person', *tonoucí* (m/f) 'drowning person', *předsedající* (m/f) 'acting chairperson', *soutěžící* (m/f) 'competitor', *vedoucí* (m/f) 'chief', *domácí* (m/f) 'landlord/landlady', *spolubydlící* (m/f) 'roommate', *kolemjdoucí* (m/f) 'passer-by', *pracující* (m/f) 'worker', *vyšetřující*

(m/f) 'investigator', *cestující* (m/f) 'passenger', *pěší* (m/f) 'pedestrian', *pokladní* (m/f) 'cashier', *radní* (m/f) 'counsillor', cf. (25):

(25) a. *Nový   vedoucí   odešel.*
          new.MASC chief.MASC left.MASC
          'The new chief left.'

      b. *Nová   vedoucí   odešla.*
          new.FEM chief.FEM left.FEM
          'The new chief left.'

2.5.2   *Nominalised adjectives of the type **dospělý/dospělá** (m/f) 'adult'*

Gender-symmetry also marks the group of masculine and feminine nouns converted from adjectives (participles) whose gender opposition is also manifested in the nominative singular: *dospělý (muž)* 'adult (man)' – *dospělá (žena)* 'adult (woman)', and, of course, in oblique cases, cf. the genitive forms *dospělého (muže)* – *dospělé (ženy)*. These nouns, too, denote persons on the basis of different features, relations, professions and functions: *známý/-á* (m/f) 'acquaintance', *milý/-á* (m/f) 'beloved', *vyvolený/-á* (m/f) 'sweetheart', *handicapovaný/-á, postižený/-á* (m/f) 'handicapped', *nemocný/-á* (m/f) 'ill', *raněný/-á* (m/f) 'wounded', *bytná/-ý* (m/f) 'landlord/landlady', *vrátný/-á* (m/f) 'porter', *odsouzený/-á* (m/f) 'convicted', *pohřešovaný/-á* (m/f) 'missing', *podezřelý/-á* (m/f) 'suspect', *hledaný/-á* (m/f) 'wanted', *trestně stíhaný/-á* (m/f) 'criminally prosecuted', *nezaměstnaný/-á* (m/f) 'unemployed', etc.

These nominalised adjectives and participles are converted directly from collocations with the word *muž* 'man' or *žena* 'woman'. They refer to women and men symmetrically, particularly in the case of a singular referent in a referential context:

(26) *Tento   nemocný byl   převezen   do nemocnice.*
      this.MASC ill.MASC was.MASC carried.MASC to hospital
      'This ill man was taken to hospital.'

(27) *Tato   nemocná byla   převezena   do nemocnice.*
      this.FEM ill.FEM   was.FEM carried.FEM to hospital
      'This ill woman was taken to hospital.'

The personal nouns introduced in 2.4 and in 2.5 are formed symmetrically, but do not form an equipollent opposition, as their textual usage shows: their opposition is privative, i.e. a masculine term, being an unmarked form, may include a female referent (cf. Section 4).

2.6 Word-formation

2.6.1 *The derivation of feminine personal nouns*

The tendency toward separate terms for males and females in Czech is reflected in widely applied processes of "motion", i.e. the derivation of feminine counterparts from masculine nouns. In comparison with other Slavic languages, this type of word-formation is more productive in Czech (particularly in the area of occupational terms), cf. Table 4.

Table 4. The derivation of personal feminines

Masculine	Feminine	
učitel	*učitelka*	'teacher'
divák	*divačka*	'viewer'
ministr	*ministryně*	'minister'
poslanec	*poslankyně*	'deputy'

A feminine counterpart may be formed practically from any masculine form – if the meaning of the masculine permits female reference. E.g., the term *horník* 'miner' has a potential feminine parallel *hornice*, but this is not used because there are no women working as miners (cf. Section 3). Because they are formally marked by suffixes, the feminine terms may be perceived as secondary. However, they are widely used, and most of them are stylistically neutral, although some are rare in comparison with their masculine counterparts, depending on the type of lexeme, the suffix and the frequency of the given noun. For instance, as *psychiatr* 'psychiatrist' allows both the feminine terms *psychiatrička* and *psychiatryně*, and *chirurg* 'surgeon' both *chiruržka* and *chirurgyně*, they are used more reluctantly than stable derivations. Czech speakers have completely accepted such feminine nouns as *doktorka* 'female doctor', *starostka* 'female mayor', *ministryně* 'female minister', *poslankyně* 'female deputy', *psycholožka* 'female psychologist', and *filoložka* 'female philologist', all of which were hardly used a few decades ago.

Linguistic debates about derived feminines and their relation to masculines formerly addressed systemic processes of formation, social legitimacy and norms of usage (cf. Trávníček 1949: 426). For example, two competing variants of a feminine for *doktor* were discussed by Trávníček at that time:

(28) a. *Paní doktor   mi poradila.*
          Mrs doctor.MASC me advised.FEM
      b. *Paní doktorka   mi poradila.*
          Mrs doctor.FEM me advised.FEM

In present-day Czech, *doktorka* has become generally accepted, whereas *doktor* for a female doctor is used rarely and exclusively by elderly people. Both forms have been frequently discussed by Czech linguists. E.g., Trávníček (1940:148) maintained that it was not the form of the title (*doktor/doktorka*) that would guarantee equal positions for men and women, but the law, public opinions, social attitudes, and life itself.

The same opinion was voiced by bohemicists in the 1950s and 1960s. It has repeatedly been noticed that equal rights have brought women to new professions and that "the language has to reflect these facts systematically and organically. The tendency to denote women in various occupations, functions and positions by separate terms derived from masculines is salient in Czech" (Jedlička 1955:79). The effort not to exclude women from traditionally male positions has given rise to feminine counterparts of masculines even in the sphere of military service, cf. *vojákyně* 'female soldier', *vojínka* 'female private', *poručice* 'female lieutenant', *plukovnice* 'female colonel', *generálka* 'female general'.

The derived feminine terms belong to the so-called nomina agentis (*učitelka* 'female teacher', *ředitelka* 'female director', *hlasatelka* 'female announcer'), nomina actoris (*novinářka* 'female journalist', *oštěpařka* 'female javelin thrower'), nomina attributiva (*cizinka* 'female foreigner', *demokratka* 'female democrat', *chudinka* 'poor woman'), and to the nouns denoting persons according to their place of origin (*Češka* 'Czech woman', *Angličanka* 'Englishwoman', *Moravanka* 'Moravian woman', *Pražačka* 'woman from Prague'). Most of the derived feminines belong to the first two categories, the most productive derivational suffix being *-ka*. A monograph on word-formation in Czech (Dokulil 1967:125) lists more than 1000 feminines derived by this suffix. Since that time, however, their number has increased even more. The dictionary of Czech neologisms (*Slovník neologismů* 1998) includes such words as *moderátorka* 'female moderator', *vizážistka* 'female visagiste', *workoholička* 'female workaholic' and many others.

Another productive derivational suffix in Czech is *-ice*, as in *pracovnice* 'female worker', *kadeřnice* 'female hairdresser', *současnice* 'female contemporary', *krasavice* 'female beauty', *výtvarnice* 'female artist', or *uprchlice* 'female refugee'. Dokulil (1967) mentions about 230 feminines derived by this suffix.

The next suffix on the frequency scale is *-(k)yně*, as in *poslankyně* 'female deputy', *ministryně* 'female minister', *umělkyně* 'female artist', *běžkyně* 'female runner', etc. The suffix *-ová* is restricted to the derivation of female surnames from both Czech and foreign male names, e.g., *Nováková*, *Krejčová*, *Lagerlöfová*. Other suffixes are specialised: *-na* is restricted to historical terms, cf. *kněžna* 'Duchess' or *královna* 'Queen', and *-anda* is a derivational element used to derive expressive and often derogatory feminines, e.g. *vojanda* 'woman soldier'.

Feminine counterparts to masculine nouns can be found in dictionaries, though inconsistently. The *Dictionary of the literary Czech language* (SSJČ) introduces them in brackets following the masculine term, whereas the more recent *Dictionary of contemporary Czech* (SSČ) introduces both forms (m is followed by f, often in a shortened form; for a profound analysis of SSČ from the point of view of gender linguistics see Dickins 2001). The *Dictionary of neologisms* (*Slovník neologismů* 1998) treats both parallels separately in two lexical entries.

2.6.2   *Compounding*

Compounding is not used as a means of gender specification in Czech. Compounding of the word *muž* 'man' or *žena* 'woman' with another noun (typical of English and German) does not occur in Czech; juxtaposition of the word *žena* with a masculine noun (typical of Russian, e.g. *ženščina-vrač* 'woman doctor') is not used either. Such masculine nouns as *gentleman* (more often *džentlmen*), *businessman* (*byznysmen*), *sportsman*, *superman*, *batman*, etc. are more or less lexicalised loans from English. Instead of compounding, Czech uses double gender nouns (29a) or derivation (29b) to create feminine counterparts:

(29) a.   'spokesperson'   *mluvčí* (m/f)
           'chairperson'   *předsedající* (m/f)
      b.   'businessman/woman'   *obchodník* (m), *obchodnice* (f)
           'salesman/woman'   *prodavač* (m), *prodavačka* (f)
           'sportsman/woman'   *sportovec* (m), *sportovkyně* (f)

3.   Asymmetries and lexical gaps

Due to extralinguistic restrictions some male-specific masculines lack feminine counterparts and vice versa. Such asymmetries may have different origins, and may derive from:

a. biologically and socially determined roles in family life; for this reason *rodička* 'mother-parent', *kojná* 'wet-nurse' or *chůva* 'nanny' are feminines and have no semantically parallel masculines;

b. the distribution of roles in social, professional and occupational settings; for this reason, *bytná* 'landlady' and *servírka* 'waitress' are feminine, whereas *pikolík* 'page boy, bus boy' is a masculine term and *příručí* 'shop assistant' tends to have male reference;

c. the distribution of roles in religious life; while e.g. the masculine *kněz* 'priest' includes both non-Christian and Christian connotations, the feminine *kněžka* 'priestess' is associated rather with non-Christian contexts; the feminine *vědma* 'prophetess' has no masculine counterpart in Czech, but can be roughly paralleled to masculine *jasnovidec* 'clairvoyant'.

d. various aspects of evaluation of male and female characteristics and appearance; this is responsible for the male interpretation of such masculines as *vousáč* 'bearded', *holobrádek* 'beardless', *plešatec* 'bald' and the female associations conveyed by feminines such as *kráska* 'beauty', *plavovláska* 'blonde', or *modroočka* 'blue-eyed'. Such asymmetries may have linguistic as well as cultural motivations: cf., e.g., the different denotative and connotative features of such lexemes as *duch* 'spirit' and *duše* 'soul':

(30) a. *Byl   to velký   duch.*
was.MASC it great.MASC spirit.MASC
'He/she was a great spirit.'
b. *Byla   to křehká   duše.*
was.FEM it tender.FEM soul.FEM
'He/she was a tender soul.'

Each lexeme has a significant amount of cultural history inscribed in its semantics and transports rich intertextual and inter-discursive overtones. Over time, some types of gender-aligned messages have remained constant, while others have changed. Some nominations have disappeared or become archaic; and many new terms have appeared which demonstrate the process of neutralising gender oppositions and contribute to the mixing of gender roles. Thus, in present-day Czech we can observe not only feminine counterparts to originally masculine nouns as in *golfista–golfistka* or *surfař–surfařka*, but also the opposite, i.e. masculine counterparts to originally feminine nouns: *striptérka–striptér*, *prostitutka–prostitut*, *modelka–model*, *hosteska–hostes*, *feministka–feminista*, etc. Whereas in such examples the process of reverse derivation

causes no problems (the feminine ending is simply removed), in other cases it may be more difficult to find a corresponding expression (*sestřička* lit. 'diminutive sister' means 'nurse' in Czech).

The pairs of gender nouns and their meanings are subject to diachronic change. This concerns not only their occurrence in language and their frequency in texts, but also the interpretation of their semantic and stylistic features, as given in dictionaries. The paired lexemes may or may not be listed in dictionaries as independent entries and the meaning of the feminine form can be described as dependent on or independent of the respective masculine term. In any case, dictionaries deal with the fact that some of the interrelated gender pairs are only partially synonymous, i.e. they share only a part of their semantic core. For example, a feminine term may lack some of the meanings of its male counterpart: whereas *mistr* may denote 'master, specialist, artist, head of a workshop', and may generally be used as the title of an outstanding artist or athlete, *mistryně* can be used only as the title of an outstanding female athlete, while *mistrová* denotes a female head of a workshop. Masculines may have developed different semantic features than their feminine counterparts due to transposition processes in metaphorical contexts, cf. the nouns *otcové* 'fathers', *dědové* 'grandfathers', *vnuci* 'grandsons' denoting 'generations'. Fathers can also be associated with founders (*otcové zakladatelé* 'founding fathers'), whereas mothers are associated with wisdom (*matka moudrosti* 'mother of wisdom').

Long lists of both male-specific and female-specific nouns, not only from the literary language but also from various dialects, can be found in Eisner (1946: 368–377). He also analyses numerous examples of cross-gender reference, i.e. denoting a male person with a feminine noun (such as *klepna* 'gossip', *fňukna* 'whimperer', *bábovka* 'softie', *bačkora* 'sneak') and vice versa. Linguists have made two salient observations about the phenomenon of crossing gender lines (see Yokoyama 1999: 422 f, who analysed the situation in Russian): The use of masculine nouns to refer to women (a) can be accounted for by Jakobson's thesis about the more inclusive, unmarked nature of the masculine gender in Russian, (b) carries affectionate connotations and generally produces positive effects, while crossing the gender line in the direction of feminine nouns, with reference to men, produces negative connotations (cf. Tobin, vol. I). According to Yokoyama, this is evidence of the fact that maleness is more positively evaluated than femaleness (for the situation in Russian see also Doleschal & Schmid, vol. I). In Czech, the effects of cross-gender reference do not seem to be as conspicuous as in Russian, and both neutral and connotatively charged (ameliorative and pejorative) transgressions can be found in either direction.

4.   Masculine generics

Although the productivity of feminine derivation from originally masculine forms is almost unlimited in Czech (with the exceptions mentioned above) and constantly supply the repertoire of feminine nouns with new items (e.g. professional titles), the frequency of derived feminines in texts is lower than we would expect, due to the fact that in gender-indefinite contexts masculine forms are considered to be the norm.[3]

According to structuralist theory it is the unmarkedness of masculine terms that is responsible for the fact that the referential range of masculine terms is wider than that of corresponding feminine terms (Jakobson 1932, 1971). While in the area of terms for human referents feminines are always female-specific, masculine terms have both male-specific and gender-neutral reference.

The concept of privative, i.e. asymmetrical, gender opposition has been questioned repeatedly (cf. Dokulil 1958). Examples show that the relationship between the two members of a gender pair is sometimes equipollent, i.e. symmetrical:

(31)   *Porady   se.zúčastnilo   pět učitelek*
       in.meeting participated.NEUT five teachers.FEM
       a   tři   učitelé.
       and three teachers.MASC
       'Five teachers (f) and three teachers (m) participated (n) in the meeting.'

Jakobson (1932:74) acknowledged this fact when he stated that the unmarked category can under certain conditions express the non-existence, or absence of the feature – in our case femaleness – and may express the opposite feature, i.e. maleness. Jakobson adds that this is even the most frequent function of the unmarked term. However, he points out that such a contextually bound meaning does not contradict the general and basic meaning of an unmarked category.

The contextually bound gender-specific meaning of the unmarked category appears in situations of foregrounding, i.e. in situations where maleness stands in contrast to femaleness, as in example (31). When gender is not foregrounded, the opposition remains hidden and the female reference is only implicit. This holds for singular as well as plural expressions in Czech:

(32)   *Tato televize se snaží oslovit diváka* (m), *dát mu* (m) *možnost, aby*
       vyjádřil (m) *svůj* (m) *názor.*
       'This TV tries to address the viewer (m), giving him (m) a chance to express (m) his (m) opinion.'

(33) *Ráda* (f) *čtu rozhovory s herci* (m), *ale nedivím se některým svým*
      kolegům (m), *že nechtějí s novináři* (m) *mluvit.*
      'I like (f) to read interviews with actors (m), however, I do not find it
      strange that some of my colleagues (m) do not wish to talk to
      journalists (m).'

One must admit that in some contexts the usage of masculine forms may create
the impression that it is predominantly or only men who are being referred to.
It is not easy to say which contexts suggest a more gender-specific or more
gender-indefinite reading of a noun. First of all, it would be necessary to
distinguish between several types of referential situations, from those in which
the referent is an individual who may, however, be unknown (*hledaný vrah* 'the
wanted murderer'), to those of generic reference, with a large number of
possible referential situations between the two poles.

      Whether we interpret masculine terms as in (34) in their generic or gender-
specific meaning, depends on many factors, including the meaning of a lexeme,
the situation referred to, the author's as well as the reader's perspective, etc.

(34) *Procesy se zločinci* (m) *minulého režimu, ať už máme na mysli*
      zločince (m) *ve smyslu mravním, nebo i zákonném, vnucují ještě jednu*
      úžaslou otázku. Jak to, že ani jeden (m) *z nich není schopen* (m) *podívat se*
      na vlastní minulost…?
      (*Literární noviny*, 13 February 2002:4; (m) added)
      'The legal proceedings with the criminals (m) of the past regime, be it
      criminals (m) in a moral or a legal sense, prompt one further astounding
      question: How is it possible that not a single one (m) of them was able to
      look into his (m) own past…?'

There are several principles that seem to underlie the usage of masculine/
feminine forms:

Reference to third person
In referential contexts femaleness is often contrasted to maleness – when a
singular female referent or more referents whose gender is known are meant:

(35) *Naše   učitelka   je nemocná.*
      our.ᴀ́ᴇᴍ teacher.ꜰᴇᴍ is ill.ꜰᴇᴍ
      'Our teacher is ill.'

In predicative positions feminines may be used to characterise a female referent
(36a), but this is not necessarily common practice (36b):

(36)   a.   *Ona je vědecká.pracovnice.*
                she   is scholar.FEM
                'She is a scholar.'
         b.   *Ona je vědecký.pracovník.*
                she   is scholar.MASC
                'She is a scholar.'

Speaker reference

Not only when women are referred to by other speakers, but also when women talk about themselves, they often use masculine nouns to express their profession:

(37)   *Já jako lingvista* (m), *filosof* (m), *právník* (m) *si myslím …*
         'I as a linguist (m), philosopher (m), lawyer (m) think …'

What is stressed in these utterances is professional status and membership in a professional group. Group membership is often more important than gender differentiation. However, feminine counterparts can be used in such contexts and it may be only a question of time until they prevail over masculine expressions.

Reference to addressee

As a rule, the gender of the addressee is explicitly identified, at least as far as nominal address forms are concerned. In situations of social contact, women and men are both addressed, with the women being addressed before the men as a form of "politeness":

(38)   *Vážené dámy a pánové*
         'Dear ladies and gentlemen'

In written texts, the norms differ in accordance with the type of discourse. Magazines and other texts designed explicitly for girls and women address their readership with feminine nouns *Milé čtenářky*, *Vážené čtenářky* (f.pl) 'Dear readers ', or recently also *Milá čtenářko* (f.sg) 'Dear reader', or *Milá dívko* (f.sg) 'Dear girl' (cf. Čmejrková 1996, 1997, 1998). However, in texts addressed to a mixed readership masculine forms prevail *Milý čtenáři* (m.sg) 'Dear reader', *Milí čtenáři* (m.pl) 'Dear readers', though we also encounter more gender-specific address forms such as *Milá čtenářko* (f.sg), *milý čtenáři* (m.sg) 'Dear reader', especially in those types of texts which are based on the so-called "synthetic personalisation" (Fairclough 1989). Such a form of addressing a potential reader is typical of media discourse, particularly of advertising and generally of those situations when authors do not know their audience and

therefore use synthetic personalisation (or splitting) as "a compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people 'handled' en masse as an individual" (Fairclough 1989: 62). The application of this principle in advertising is self-evident (cf. Čmejrková 1998, 2001).

5.   Achieving female visibility in Czech

A symmetrical form of reference with both masculine and feminine terms (splitting) seems to be in progress. If the text is designed to reach both a male and a female audience and tries to treat both genders symmetrically, the consequences of its dual orientation vary depending on the nature of the text. Short official texts, circulars, and questionnaires sometimes employ splitting of items such as: *žadatel* (m), *žadatelka* (f) 'applicant', *narozen* (m), *narozena* (f) 'born', etc., usually in the form *žadatel(ka)*, *narozen(a)*. This usage also appears in job advertisements, albeit unsystematically. The format of job advertisements has been undergoing a change in Czech professional settings, and splitting in job offers seems to be getting the norm.

Splitting may also be introduced into those types of texts which have the character of a short list of items addressed to a mass audience, or into newspaper headlines (cf. Valdrová 2001).

Apart from usage in such simple text types, the strategy of splitting or any other kind of gender-fair usage is problematic in Czech, as the category of gender has distinctive manifestations on several linguistic levels (cf. Section 2.1). For personal reference, Czech has a set of morphological endings not only in adjectives, pronouns, and some numerals, but also in verb forms. Although differentiation in the active voice affects only preterit forms of the indicative and subjunctive, in the passive voice grammatical gender is marked in all three tenses and moods. This is also the reason why Czech linguists are very cautious to recommend any language policy in this respect.

Thus, a consistent gender-oriented translation of the English sentence (39) into Czech would result in a problematic case of gender splitting:

(39)   The reader is invited to reveal for himself/herself the consequences of revising language paradigms for the text.
Čtenář/ka (m/f) *je vyzýván/a* (m/f), *aby sám/sama* (m/f) *odhalil/a* (m/f) *důsledky revidování jazykového paradigmatu pro text.*

Attempts at avoiding a male bias in a cohesive text would result in the stylistically objectionable proliferation of masculine and feminine word pairs. We are reminded of Pavel Eisner's statement about the erotic spell in the Czech language as rendered by the system of feminine endings. This characteristic feature of Czech (and to a certain extent of all Slavic languages) would overload many Czech gender-oriented texts with cumbersome formulations.

In other languages one of the solutions to avoid problems of splitting is the use of personal nouns in the plural. However, in Czech, plural forms are no option because they would result in equally clumsy utterances:

(40) *Čtenář/i/ky* (m/f) *jsou vyzýván/i/y* (m/f), *aby sam/i/y* (m/f) *odhalil/i/y* (m/f) *důsledky revidování jazykového paradigmatu pro text.*
'Readers are invited to …'

In most cases, the plural endings of verbs, adjectives, pronouns and some numerals entering into grammatical agreement also differ orthographically, the minimal distinction being *-i* in verb agreement with masculines, and *-y* with feminines (e.g. *muži přišli* 'men came' and *ženy přišly* 'women came'). This is why female visibility can only be achieved in very simple cases:

(41) *Olympijské hry jsou opravdovým svátkem pro sportovce* (m) *a sportovkyně* (f).
'Olympic games are a real festival for male and female athletes.'

In written language, the strategy of splitting appears only rarely. It tends to occur more often in linguistic texts rather than anywhere else. The following, very rare example is taken from a short notice addressed to students of Czech:

(42) *Kolegové* (m) *a kolegyně* (f),
Kteří/které (m/f) *jste nepsali/nepsaly* (m/f) *testy z historické mluvnice a absolvovali* (m) *kurz už dříve, pozor! Změnila se struktura testů. Informujte se u spolužáků* (m) *nebo učitelů* (m).
'Colleagues (m) and colleagues (f),
those of you who (m/f) have not written (m/f) tests on historical grammar and had finished (m) the course earlier, mind that the structure of tests has changed. Ask your schoolmates (m) or teachers (m) for information.'

In spite of such restrictions there can be no doubt that the expression of gender has been undergoing a change in Czech.

6. Variability, language critique and language politics

It remains to be seen how Czech and other Slavic languages will react to the efforts observable in other languages to develop a more gender-fair language. Language politics has to take into account the fact that, although masculine terms are widely used in a non-masculine referential meaning, they share that function with other terms that have gender-indefinite or gender-neutral functions. The textual distribution of generic masculines in Czech should be considered in relation to other strategies of referring in the given text. I have shown above that, among the expressions used in Czech to denote human beings, there are:

Symmetric kinship terms and asymmetric pairs of basic masculines and derived feminines; double gender nouns; masculine epicenes (of the type *člověk* 'man, person'), and feminine epicenes (of the type *osoba* 'person'). In a cohesive text, various designations (masculine and feminine) may co-occur, controlling agreement with either masculine or with feminine forms. While the use of masculine nouns seems to be the norm for various types of texts that express generic reference, there are some genres, e.g. law documents, that use the feminine noun *osoba* 'person' as a generic.

In the following example the masculine *účastník občanskoprávních vztahů* 'participant in civil rights relations' has the same generic reference as the masculine pronoun *každý* 'everybody' or the feminine epicene *osoba* 'person'; cf. the Czech National Corpus (Český národni Korpus 2000):

> (43) *Tato ustanovení mají povahu jednoho ze základních principů občanského práva. Jako takové se vztahuje na všechny (i možné) účastníky* (m) *občan-skoprávních vztahů, což je vyjádřeno použitým termínem "každý"* (m), *a osoba* (f) *fyzická* (f) *nebo právnická* (f).
> 'These statutes have a character of one of the fundamental principles of civil rights. As such, they refer to all (including potential)
> participants (m) in civil rights relations, as expressed by the use of the term "everybody" (m), and a physical (f) or a legal (f) person (f).'

The following example shows that the same persons can be denoted either by the feminine noun *osobnosti* 'personalities' or by the masculine noun *signatáři dopisu* 'signatories of the letter' and that both control plural agreement, either masculine or feminine. The gender of the persons who are called 'personalities' and who 'signed the letter' is obvious as their names (both female and male) follow at the end of the text, and, of course, the form of a Czech surname signals the bearer's gender.

(44) *Osobnosti* (f) *z prostředí Brandýského fóra sdělily* (f) *svůj postoj v dopise,*
      který odeslaly (f) *v pátek předsedkyni* (f) *US-DEU a předsedovi* (m)
      KDU-ČSL Cyrilu Svobodovi. Signatáři (m) *dopisu záměr přivítali* (m),
      vyjádřili (m) *však přesvědčení, že nezávislé osobnosti* (f) *nemají na kandi-*
      dátky vstupovat jen pro ozdobu, ale jako respektovaný partner (m)*, který*
      (m) *bude mít vliv na obsah společných programových zásad i na postavení*
      na kandidátkách…. Dopis podepsali (m) *například: … šéfredaktor* (m)*,*
      nezávislý senátor (m)*, ředitel* (m)*, spisovatelka* (f)*, katolický duchovní* (m)*,*
      spisovatel (m)*, hlavní dramaturgyně* (f)*, nezávislá senátorka* (f)*, vysokoš-*
      kolský pedagog (m)*, politolog* (m)*, předsedkyně* (f) *… V dovětku dopisu*
      "všichni (m) *signatáři* (m) *podporují toto řešení, jakkoli některé z níže*
      podepsaných osobností (f) *nehodlají do Poslanecké sněmovny kandidovat za*
      žádných okolností".
      (*Literární noviny*, 13 February 2002:2; (f) and (m) added)
      'Personalities (f) from the Brandýs Forum communicated (f) their stance
      in a letter sent on Friday to the president (f) of US-DEU and the presi-
      dent (m) of KDU ČSL Cyril Svoboda. The signatories (m) of the letter
      welcomed (m) the intention, nevertheless, they expressed (m) their
      conviction that independent personalities (f) should not appear on the
      list of candidates for decoration only, but as respected partners (m) who
      would influence the content of the principles of the political platform, as
      well as the position on the list… The letter was signed (m), for instance,
      by … an editor-in-chief (m), independent senator (m), director (m),
      writer (f), catholic priest (m), writer (m), chief theatre manager (f),
      independent senator (f), university teacher (m), political scientist (m),
      chairwoman (f)… In the postscript to the letter, "all the signatories (m)
      of the letter support this solution, even though some of the under-signed
      do not intend (f) under any circumstances to stand as candidates".'

This feature of Czech texts, i.e. the constant shifts in the grammatical gender of
personal nouns has never attracted the attention of either readers or linguists.
Gender, however, has often been discussed in translation studies commenting
on cross-linguistic differences in the grammatical gender of nouns referring to
the same non-linguistic entity (life, death, sun, moon, etc.). Whereas it was
widely recognised that in poetic contexts gender may sometimes play a decisive
role when foregrounded (Daneš 2001), in everyday speech grammatical gender
was taken rather as a conventional attribute of a noun.

The semantics of gender is not generally recognised as a serious problem in
Czech linguistics; nevertheless, in recent years, the topic has often been raised,

particularly in linguistic literature reporting on the situation in Western languages.[4] Thus, the semantics of gender is recognised rather as a problem of "other", i.e. Western languages. As to Czech, no serious guidelines for the equal linguistic treatment of women and men have been created, and no measures to reform the Czech language have been accepted. Initial attempts at a feminist critique of language and literature can be found in the proceedings of the conference "Woman – language – literature" (Moldanová 1996). And occasionally, the topic has been raised in public discourse and in the general press.[5]

7.   Conclusion

The linguistic representation of women and men is one of the basic and universal issues of language structure and language use. Languages differ not only in what they can express, but also in what they must express. In this respect, Czech data deserve a systematic study: Czech must express not only the gender of the referent – and does so more systematically than other languages – but also the gender of speaker and addressee. This is why Czech gender linguistics must always be directly related to genre analysis.

Czech communicates "natural" gender both by the first name (if it is a Czech name) and last name (in most cases, even if it is a foreign name), and common personal nouns are regularly gendered, forming either equipollent or privative counterparts of masculine and feminine forms. In this way, these nouns manifest the strong tendency of the Czech language to create separate symmetrical terms for women and men. The conclusions of linguistic gender research will undoubtedly force Czech linguists into reconsidering the interpretation of unmarkedness of masculine terms and the proportion of "marked" (male-specific) and unmarked (generic) readings of masculines in various types of texts. I have tried to give a tentative outline of the scope of sensitive contexts (referential vs. predicative positions, contrasting male vs. female reference, etc.). However, much analytical work still remains to be done. New discourse practices may have shifted the interpretation of some masculines from gender-indefinite to gender-specific, i.e., in some contexts, masculine terms appear to be more male-specific than their presumed unmarked, "inclusive" meaning would predict (cf. also Lehečková 2002). In this respect, the potential changes in the linguistic awareness of speakers of Czech are worth linguistic attention.

Notes

1. Standard grammatical descriptions of Czech are Trávníček (1949), Šmilauer (1966), Havránek & Jedlička (1988), Kavka (1988), *Mluvnice češtiny* (1986-1987), *Příruční mluvnice češtiny* (1995).

2. Some inanimate masculines inflectionally behave like animate masculines. Not only the category of animacy, but the whole category of gender has different manifestations in the Literary Standard Language and in Common Czech.

3. For example, in the Czech National Corpus (SYN 2000) the noun *poslanec* (m) 'deputy' has 4500 occurrences, *poslankyně* (both sg and pl.f) 'deputy' 686 occurrences and *poslanci* (m) 'deputies' 6535 occurrences. Statistical data require a profound analysis from the point of view of linguistic as well as extralinguistic features.

4. Cf., e.g., Čmejrková (1995, 1996, 1997, 1998), Daneš (1997, 2001), Flegl (1999), Hoffmannová (1995, 1997), Ježková (1998–1999), Maroušková (1996), Nebeská (1996, 1997), Podhajská (1995–1996), Schwarzová (1999a,b), Valdrová (1996, 1997, 1999b, 2001), Věšínová (1998), Zimová (1996–1997).

5. Cf. Lipold (2000), Loucká (1995), Machovec (2000), Stránský (1995), Vaculín (2000), Valdrová (1999a).

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