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ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AMONG SLOVAK, CZECH, AND POLISH SPEAKERS[1]

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Abstract: In this paper, the various arguments that have been presented with respect to usage of generic masculine forms and pair/feminine forms are discussed and analysed. The source of the data is provided by a questionnaire carried out in October 2019, including a sample of answers and comments from Slovak, Czech and Polish respondents. In the study, two dominant views on generic masculine forms, arbitrary and semantic, are introduced and discussed against empirical findings from many experiments and studies. The material from the questionnaire is qualitatively analysed with respect to the axiological reactions of the respondents. The language attitudes are further classified into eight categories: representation, offensiveness, addressing, economy, textual qualities, language naturalness, tradition and ideological markedness. The attitudes of participants from both "camps" are quoted to illustrate the argumentation process yielding to the acceptance or rejection of forms substantiating gender-inclusive language.

Key words: gender-inclusive language, language attitudes, generic masculine forms, pair forms, alternative forms, feminine forms, questionnaire

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The usage of masculine generics has never been the focus of systematic linguistic research in the Slovak context. However, gender-inclusive language strategies proposed mainly by researchers in the field of gender linguistics represent a hotly

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debated topic and they often face criticism and resistance, both from the language community as well as from some language experts. The investigation of genericity of masculine and gender-inclusive language can be conducted in two ways, depending on the objective of such research. Firstly, different types of tests and experiments provided in this area aim at answering the question concerning the mental representation of generic masculine forms or, in other words, the conditionality of cognitive inclusion of women by the usage of particular language forms (using different types of tests, e.g. completing sentences, cf. Klein 1988, Scheele – Gauler 1993; measuring reading time necessary for anaphoric identification of nouns with different grammatical gender, cf. Irmen – Roßberg 2004; estimating the proportion of women and men in certain roles, e.g. participants at a congress of nutritionists versus geophysicists; Braun et al. 1998; association tests, cf. Stahlberg – Sczesny 2001; measuring response time necessary for category identification, cf. Irmen – Köhncke 1996; writing stories about fictitious people following an introductory sentence in the masculine or in gender-fair wording, cf. Heise 2000, making up nicknames for persons whose profession was labelled by the male noun form, cf. Valdrová 2008, etc.). On the other hand, there are numerous studies investigating the language attitudes of speakers towards the usage of language forms conforming the idea of gender-sensitive language (e.g., Blaubergs 1980, Parks – Roberton 1998, Dąbrowska 2008, Ostertágová 2014, Vergoossen et al. 2020, Scheller-Boltz 2020). In our study, we will focus on investigation of language attitudes towards gender-sensitive language among Slovak (SK), Czech (CZ) and Polish (PL) speakers but we will take into consideration the conclusions achieved in the former types of studies.

As to the terminology, the terms "gender-fair language" (Kollmayer et al. 2018), "gender-inclusive language" (Stout – Dasgupta 2011), "gender-sensitive language" (Savić 2011), or "non-sexist language" (Douglas – Sutton 2014) will be used synonymously, meaning manifestation of gender equality through language.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section serves as an introduction to the presented issues. The second section sketches two possible understandings of generic masculine forms within arbitrary and semantic approaches. The third section provides information on the online questionnaire and specifies the methodology used to classify all individual statements into individual types of arguments. In the fourth section, attention is focused on arguments from the determined categories and the given issue is commented on against the findings based on different types of tests and experiments which can reveal the conceptualization of language phenomena by language users.

2. GENERIC MASCULINE FORMS

Basically, two fundamental approaches towards the usage of generic masculine forms can be differentiated. According to the first, which can be labelled as arbitrary, there are no associations between grammatical gender and sex, grammatical gender

represents purely formal characteristics, and the gender form of a language unit has an arbitrary status; i.e., generic masculine as a grammatical form has nothing to do with "masculinity", it represents a semantically neutral means of generic reference. The second approach, traditionally labelled as semantic, by contrast, emphasizes that generic masculine as a grammatical form cannot be semantically neutral, there exist inevitable links between grammatical gender and sex. Those two approaches reflect two different kinds of language logics: reflexive-logic and pragmatic-logic views of language phenomena (cf. Dolník 2010).

The reflexive-logic approach can be illustrated by a statement found in the paper by Košková – Satoła-Staśkowiak (2017, p. 6): "Na jazykové vedomie nositeľov jazyka sa pod vplyvom rôznych sociologických a psychologických výskumov začína vyvíjať tlak a nastoľujú sa požiadavky na zmenu tej podoby jazyka, ktorá sa nielenže tradične bežne používa, ale je aj ukotvená gramatickými pravidlami." [The language consciousness of language speakers is exposed to pressure based on different sociological and psychological experiments which call for changing such forms of language that are not only traditionally commonly used, but which are also anchored by grammatical rules.]. This quote illustrates two important aspects of the reflexive-logic approach. Language and grammar are viewed as phenomena independent of external cognitive capabilities and social circumstances so that external interventions into its form are regarded as inadequate. Grammatical rules determine the usage: grammar is hence to be understood as a pre-requisite for usage (*a priori* grammar). The grammatical rule concerning genericity of masculine forms is understood as a well-defined norm (which is proved by its common usage in the course of time). However, in the post-structuralist approach, grammar is not a category that is strictly separable from language usage but rather a highly conventional form of language usage (cf. Hornscheidt 2006, p. 37), it has emergent status (emergent grammar that is provisional and emerges in usage).

Within the pragmatic-logic approach, questions concerning the cognitive aspects of generic masculine usage (when compared with gender-neutral or gender-balanced strategies) are often raised. Investigating the cognitive and social aspects of grammatical structures (e.g. by sociological and psychological experiments) is justified by the fact that (i) language/grammar is grounded in cognition so that the cognitive structures shape language usage and the grammatical meaning is dependent on conceptualization, (ii) specific grammatical patterns and structures are held up through social practice, i.e. language use is a form of a social practice (Hornscheidt 2006, p. 75).

Namely, two major questions resonate in regard to the given issue:

1. How are generic masculine forms conceptualized by speakers (the aim of such studies is to reveal unconscious cognitive interpretations of generic masculine forms)?

2. How are generic masculine forms interpreted by speakers (do all speakers view generic masculine forms as a neutral strategy of referring to both genders equally)?

The study seeks to find answers to the second question, with the focus on language attitudes of Slovak, Czech, and Polish speakers. In the following part, the results of a questionnaire investigation carried out in October 2019 will be presented and discussed against the findings achieved by various psycholinguistic experiments and tests.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The present study was designed as an experimental online study. Participants were invited to complete the online questionnaire via social media in October 2019.

The questionnaire was distributed in public and private groups on the social network Facebook (e.g., *Inštitút slovakistiky a mediálnych štúdií FF PU*, *Polszczyzna mnie bije*, *Simultánní blekotání*, *Copywriteři a další psavci*, *Lektoři češtiny pro cizince*, etc.).

In the first part of the online questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer several questions concerning demographics (gender, age, educational level and native language),[2] cf. distribution of individual characteristics in the table below.

[2] A few remarks need to be added in this section: (1) The Slovak version was filled out by more people from the younger generation – 101 out of 171 (59%) respondents were aged between 20 and 30, while in the Polish version, respondents aged between 20 and 30 were represented by 69 persons out of 160 (43%), and in the Czech version even less – 64 respondents out of 188 (34%) were between 18 and 30 years old. This unequal age representation might be a result of the questionnaire distribution via different channels – the Facebook account of the *Institute of Slovak language and media studies FF PU* is followed mainly by students and graduates of the department; while members of the *Polszczyzna mnie bije* Facebook group, who responded to the Polish questionnaire to a large extent, come from various age groups; The same holds for Facebook groups where the Czech questionnaire was distributed.; (2) The Slovak and Czech versions of the questionnaire show a somewhat higher proportion of respondents with a higher education (including respondents studying at a university or respondents with a university degree). To a certain extent, therefore, it can be assumed that the respondents of the Slovak and Czech versions had a higher chance of encountering the issue of gender aspects of the language, behind the media sphere, i.e. in the academic sphere, in linguistic publications, etc., and the acceptance rate of gender-sensitive language could, thus, be higher.; (3) 8.2% of respondents in the Slovak/Czech version and 8% of respondents in the Czech version of the questionnaire stated their mother tongue as other than Slovak/Czech (e.g., Polish, Ukrainian, Serbian, Russian, Ruthenian, Hungarian, etc.). The level of knowledge of Slovak in the questionnaire was not examined, so the language competences of respondents with a mother tongue other than Slovak/Czech cannot be evaluated. It can be people who have learned or are learning Slovak/Czech, ultimately, even, members of national minorities. Their answers were included in the overall results but when evaluating specific answers, information about mother tongue was taken into account.; (4) All three versions of the questionnaire show a higher proportion of female respondents (79.5% for Slovak, 71.9% for Czech and 80.3% for Polish.). In this paper, we aim at the qualitative investigation of the attitudes. To conduct in-depth quantitative research, more representative and balanced sample would be needed. One possible explanation for uneven gender distribution is the fact that the questionnaire was filled in mostly by the students of humanities which are typical of mostly female enrolments. The comparable results in gender distribution can be evidenced in similarly conducted research, e.g. Remigio – Talosa (2021). Considering this gap in the body of sample, the interpretive qualitative research design was chosen instead of descriptive quantitative investigation and no statistically significant or generalizing conclusions about the respondents' attitudes are drawn to avoid self-selection bias.

Table 1. Data on respondents to the questionnaire in three language versions

Categories	Slovak	Polish	Czech
Age	20–69	20–69	18–62
Gender (F/M)	79.5%/19.3%	71.9%/27.5%	80.3%/19.1%
Native language	SK 91.8%	PL 99.4%	CZ 92%
Education (university/high school)	81.7%/14.2%	74.4%/25.6%	85.1%/12.2%

The second part of the questionnaire was focused on investigation of the preferences and attitudes towards different possibilities of gender expression. The main part of the questionnaire was designed with respect to the following questions:

(1) Do users of Slovak, Czech and Polish perceive one of the two alternatives (usage of the generic masculine or a concretization of the female gender) as marked/inconvenient?

(2) What associations do feminine versus masculine nouns applied to denote females (non-directness, dishonesty, prestige, expertise, etc.) evoke?

(3) Does affiliation to style/genre/communication sphere affect a preference of a gender form?

(4) Does a function (address) or do grammatical categories (sg., pl., third person) affect a preference of a gender form?

(5) What are the similarities or differences in attitudes in all three language communities?

Through the questionnaire, we monitored the language preferences of users of the three West Slavic languages in four communication areas:

(1) marketing communication (MC; addressing customers in text messages and in a public announcement – in sg. and pl. form),

(2) institutional communication and communication with the public (IC; referring to professions in official mail and in documents of political entities, specifically in the election manifesto),

(3) rhetorical style (RS; referring to socially high-ranking professions with a sign of positive evaluation in an official commemorative speech, either with or without subordinate sentences with a verbal form),

(4) political communication (PC; referring to professions in the electoral list of candidates, expression of personal conviction in the field of politics).

Each communication area consisted of two sets of sentences or shorts texts, offering two or three different possibilities of gender expression. Respondents were asked to choose the most suitable form in the given types of text:

(a) generic masculine form;

(b) pair forms, i.e. full male and female noun form respectively or feminine form;

(c) full male noun form and female suffix after a slash (sk, cz: *lektor/-ka*) or in brackets [pl: *lektor(ka)*].[3]

The sentences which the respondents were supposed to choose from come from existing texts that we collected privately (received e-mails, text messages), are available on the Internet in the form of announcements by public and non-public institutions and political parties or come from the database of the Slovak National Corpus. The selected sentences were modified and supplemented with gender-balanced variants. The original Slovak version of the questionnaire was subsequently translated into Czech and Polish by native speakers with regard to the conditions in the given language communities (names of politicians, parties, banks, etc., were translated so that they were understandable to the public in the given countries).[4]

Each choice of options was followed by an instruction for the respondents to provide us with an explanation of their opinion, where respondents could but did not necessarily have to clarify their choice. This part was supposed to be the main source of qualitative data on attitudes towards gender forms and motivation for preferences of language users.

Participants (n1 = 171 Slovak speaking; Mage = 31.8, n2 = 160 Polish speaking, Mage = 35.6, n3 = 188 Czech speaking, Mage = 32.4) provided 1882 arguments (519 by Slovak, 893 by Czech and 470 by Polish respondents) related to the usage of generic masculine, pair and alternative forms. The analyses focus on those arguments concerning generic masculine and pair/feminine forms.

Based on Chatfield's (2018) approach, different types of argument can be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In this study, we focus on qualitative analysis as it enables us to focus on the interpretive dimension and to reflect not only

[3] See the instruction and one of the sentences sets (from the marketing communication area, Slovak version) below: "Ktorú z nasledujúcich foriem preferujete? Ak sa Vám zdajú rovnako dobré viaceré možnosti, vyberte viaceré." [Which of the following forms do you prefer? If more than one option seems just as good, choose more.]

(a) Vážení klienti, dovoľujeme si Vás informovať o plánovanej údržbe kartového systému Tatra banky, ktorá sa uskutoční zajtra v čase od 00:00 hod. do 00:30 hod. [Dear clients (generic masculine form), we would like to inform you about the planned maintenance of the Tatra Banka card system, which will take place tomorrow from 00:00 until 00:30.]

(b) Vážení klienti, vážené klientky, dovoľujeme si Vás informovať o… [Dear clients (male noun, female noun), we would like to inform you about…]

(c) Vážení/-é klienti/-ky, dovoľujeme si Vás informovať o... [Dear clients (male noun/suffix for female noun), we would like to inform you about…]

[4] The questionnaire was translated into Czech by Mgr. Karolína Dohnalová, into Polish by Mgr. Aleksandra Wojnarowska. The translators participated as well in the distribution of the questionnaire and data collection, cf. Kyseľová – Wojnarowska – Dohnalová (2021).

statistical findings but also latent content present in the answers and comments of the respondents. To provide qualitative analysis, statements of participants were divided into several categories representing set of codes derived on the basis of data, not established before (e.g., Blaubergs 1980).

4. TYPOLOGY OF ATTITUDES

Language attitudes can be defined as a specific example of metalinguistic reaction reflecting the human tendency to evaluate phenomena in positive or negative way (cf. Sloboda 2017). Three parts of a language attitude can be identified: (i) cognitive component which includes information and knowledge about the evaluated object, (ii) affective component which reflects feelings towards the evaluated object and (iii) behavioural component which mirrors the readiness to act as a reaction to the attitude (Sloboda, ibid.).

In the following part, individual types of argument concerning the qualities and understanding of generic masculine forms and pair/feminine forms (feminine-masculine word pairs) will be presented and commented on.

In the characterization of attitudes, the term "argument" is used in the general sense, as it is understood in Toulmin's model of argumentation. In his work *The uses of arguments* (2003) he argues that good, realistic arguments typically consist of six parts and he uses following terms to describe the items: (i) *data*: the facts or evidence used to prove the argument, 'the facts we appeal to as a foundation for the claim' (p. 90), (ii) *claim*: the statement being argued (a thesis), "conclusion whose merits we are seeking to establish" (p. 90), (iii) *warrants*: the general, hypothetical (and often implicit) logical statements that serve as bridges between the claim and the data, "general, hypothetical statements, which can act as bridges, and authorise the sort of step to which our particular argument commits us" (p. 91), (iv) *qualifiers*: statements that limit the strength of the argument or statements that propose the conditions under which the argument is true, "some explicit reference to the degree of force which our data confer on our claim in virtue of our warrant" (p. 93), (v) *rebuttals*: counter-arguments or statements indicating circumstances when the general argument does not hold true, "circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside" (p. 94), (vi) *backing*: statements that serve to support the warrants, "assurances, without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency" (p. 96).

In the questionnaire, the respondents usually use only some of the items from the Toulmin's model, e. g.

Data: *... ženský rod může někomu evokovat, že je daná žena vnímána jako schopná kandidátka v zúženém okruhu žen-kolegyň,* [… usage of the feminine form can evoke that a given woman is viewed as a capable candidate only in a narrow circle of women – colleagues,] (PC)

Rebuttal: *generické maskulinum naopak podtrhuje její význačnost mezi všemi konkurenty bez ohledu na gender.* […generic masculine form emphasizes her excellence among all competitors irrespectively of gender.] (PC)

or

Claim: *Tady by mi přišlo naprosto nevyhovující a do očí bijící použít výraz politik,* [Here, I would find it completely inconvenient and striking to use the expression *politician* (male noun),] (PC)

Backing: *to je skoro jako prohlašovat, že je muž.* [… it is almost like claiming she is a man.] (PC)

In the strict sense, the criteria of representation, offensiveness, addressing, etc. should be defined as *topoi* or *loci* which are labelled as *warrants* in the Toulmin's model. They can be described as parts of argumentation belonging to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. They are the content-related justifications or "conclusion rules" which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion, the claim (cf. Wodak 2006, p. 74). Richardson (2004, p. 230) talks of topoi "as reservoirs of generalised key ideas from which specific statements or arguments can be generated." For example, the statement *Pierwszy jest krótki I dlatego lepszy.* implicitly relies on the premise that shorter texts are better (the topos of *economy*). In the process of argumentation, the topoi are usually not explicitly stated, but they stay in the background when the attitudes are presented or when the specific agenda is negotiated; the topos of *representation* can be paraphrased by means of following formula: language forms used in communication should be equally representative for both genders, the topos of *offensiveness* can be paraphrased in the following way: language forms used in communication should not be offensive for any gender, etc.

In the questionnaire, many statements provided by our respondents were accompanied by signs indicating a strong affective attitude (e.g., exclamation marks, emoticons):

PL1: *SĘDZINA to ŻONA sędziego!!!!!!* [Sędzina (she-judge) is a sędzia's (he-judge's) wife.]
CZ1: *Chiruržka? Jako vážně?!? :-D :-D :-D* [She-surgeon? Really?]

However, purely emotional, ironic, or humorously marked comment on preference of particular language form (representing affective component) are not taken into account in our analysis, e.g.:

SK1: *Páči sa mi to viac.* [I like it more.]
SK2: *Som slniečkar.*[5] [I am slniečkar.]

[5] A person open to the world, liberal, human rights, multicultural and rather left-oriented.

At the same time, the ambivalence factor should be mentioned, i.e. the fact that language attitude often incorporates both positive and negative reactions at the same time, e.g.:

SK3: *Zaváňa to síce feminizmom a emancipáciou, ale subjektívne pocity bokom: aj v tomto prípade je jazykovo korektné rozlišovať profesie genderovo*. [All this seems to smack of feminism and emancipation, but personal feelings should be put aside: in this case it is linguistically correct to differentiate professions with respect to gender.]

This statement illustrates the clash between two types of language attitude: the first is related to the argument of ideology (negative) and the second is related to the argument of representativeness (positive) or, in other words, there is an incongruence between cognitive and affective components of language attitude.

4.1 Argument of representation

The argument of representation was used by Slovak, Czech and Polish respondents in both directions: to support the usage of generic masculine form as being equally representative for both genders, e.g.:

SK4: *Zbytočne vypisovať aj zákazníčka.* [It is useless to write she-customer.] (MC)
CZ2: *... je vidět, že je psán pro všechny.* [... (by using generic masculine form) it is obvious that the text is written for everybody.] (MC)
PL2: *Wszyscy jesteśmy klientami, niezależnie od płci.* [We all are clients independent of gender.] (MC)
CZ3: *Mužský rod jako zástupný naprosto dostačuje pro popis povolání*. [Masculine gender as a representative one is absolutely sufficient for labelling profession.] (PC)

or to validate generic masculine form as male-biased:

SK5: *Viem že aj ako žena mám šancu.* [(Choosing both forms) I know that I have a chance as a woman.] (IC)
CZ4: *První varianta opět ignoruje polovinu populace.* [The first variant (= generic masculine form) again ignores the half of the population.] (IC)
PL3: *Nie uwzględnienie płci w pierwszej ofercie.* [The gender is not taken into consideration in the first choice (= generic masculine form).] (MC)
PL4: *... to jakby kobieta nie istniała w społeczeństwie.* [… as if women did not exist in society.] (MC)
CZ5: *Tady by mi přišlo naprosto nevyhovující a do očí bijící použít výraz politik, to je skoro jako prohlašovat, že je muž.* [Here, I would find it completely

inconvenient and striking to use the expression *politician* (male noun), it is almost like claiming she is a man.] (PC)

The given contradictory statements manifest that different language users have different views on the representativeness of masculine forms. However, when investigating unconscious conceptualization of generic masculine forms, a different picture appears. Since at least the 1970s, gender linguistics and related theories discuss the generic use of masculine noun forms and the mental images they evoke in the minds of speakers. Many empirical studies have shown that masculine generics evoke a male bias in mental representations and make readers or listeners think more of male than female exemplars of a person category (Stahlberg et al. 2007). A detailed review of such studies is presented in the paper by L. Irmen and U. Linner (2010). Most studies have proved and concluded that generic masculine names are male-biased, not gender neutral. These experiments proved that generic masculine forms activate the least or the smallest cognitive inclusion of women (cf. Szcesny – Stahlberg 2005). Recent investigations have brought more precise explanations concerning conceptualization of generic masculine forms.[6]

To sum up, most of the studies have proved that speakers do not understand masculine forms as referring to both genders equally as these forms activate unequal gender representations that are male dominant. It seems that there is an evident incoherence between unconscious conceptualization processes and consciously articulated beliefs of the language users.

4.2 Argument of offensiveness

Offensiveness related to gender issues usually applies to usage of explicitly sexist language. Grammatical forms usually do not evoke insulting overtones. Nevertheless, both generic masculine and feminine forms are amenable to different types of metalinguistic evaluations. This type of argument is closely connected to the former one, i.e. if a respondent views generic masculine form as representative, its usage is not perceived as offensive for him or her and vice versa. Within the first group of arguments, it is emphasized that usage of generic masculine form is not insulting. Such claims were identified among all three language groups of answers within marketing communication, e.g.:

[6] Recent studies have tried to refine the achieved findings. In the work by Braun et al. (1998) or by Braun, Szczesny and Stahlberg (2005) it has been proven that knowledge about typical gender distributions concerning social roles or certain contexts (environments) can weaken the effect of generic masculine forms, i.e. even generic masculine forms can evoke female, not male, associations. The study by Nissen (2013) shows that it is also the time factor that can come into play. It has been proven by comparing the results of two questionnaire investigations that were carried out in Spain in 1995 and 2005 in which native speakers of Spanish were asked to complete specific filler sentences. The results illustrated that a clear male bias of certain masculine forms in the first study seems to have vanished within a time span of ten years.

SK6: *... rodovo neutrálne, takže ma toto oslovenie nijako nedehonestuje.* [... gender neutral so that this kind of addressing does not offend me.] (MC)
CZ6: *Neuráží mě být v jednom oslovení s muži.* [I do not feel offended being addressed together with men.] (MC)
PL5: *…nie czuję się dyskryminowana, gdy widzę zwrot „Szanowni klienci”.* [... I don't feel discriminated against by seeing the expression "dear customers" (male noun-pl.).] (MC)

On the other hand, for some participants, generic masculine forms are examples of "subtly sexist language" as they perpetuate gender stereotypes, e.g.:

SK7: *Neuráža to ani jedno pohlavie.* [It (= pair/feminine form) does not offend either men or women.] (MC)
PL6: *Pierwsza forma może być obraźliwa dla kobiet* [The first form (= generic masculine form) can be offensive to women)] (MC)
PL7: *…są osoby, które mogłyby się poczuć wykluczone, więc lepsza wydaje mi się forma bardziej inkluzywna*. […some persons could feel excluded (= being addressed by masculine noun forms) so the more inclusive form seems to be better.] (MC)

Remarkably, for some participants, feminine noun form in general, regardless of the addressing function, is viewed as insulting. This holds for the Polish word *polityczka*:

PL8: *Forma polityczka jest obraźliwa i deprecjonująca.* [The form "she-politician" is offensive and depreciating.] (PC)
PL9: *Polityczka to mała polityka. Jest to więc słowo, które brzmi pogardliwie lub ironicznie i jako takie nie przysługuje się dobrze osobie, do której się odnosi*. [The word "she-politician" means a small politics. Hence, it is a word that sounds contemptuous or ironic and is not appropriate for the person which it refers to.] (PC)

Arguments of this type often appear in the statements of Polish participants who associate some feminine forms with such qualities as sounding unprofessional, derogatory, colloquial, ironic, comical. This also proved to be case for the Polish words *chirurżka*, *sędzina*, *naukowczyni*:

PL10: *Żeńskie formy brzmią śmiesznie. Są nieprofesjonalne.* [Feminine forms sound comical. They are unprofessional.] (PC)
PL11: (Naukowiec) *Tak brzmi to profesjonalniej*. [(Scientist – male noun) It sounds more professional this way.) (RS)

In some comments, individual generic masculine forms are evaluated differently, e.g.:

CZ7: *Maskulinum "vědec" mi ve spojení s ženou nevadí, "učitel" už více.* [I do not mind the masculine form "scientist" with respect to a woman, however, I do mind the masculine form "teacher".] (RS)
PL12: *Naukowczyni brzmi strasznie! Ale „nauczycielka" jest poprawne* [She-scientist sounds terrible! But "she-teacher" is correct.] (RS)

It is obvious that such interpretations are grounded in background information, i.e. in knowledge about typically male- and female-dominated areas, which promotes or discourages the usage of generic masculine form. Moreover, in the Polish context it seems that the higher-ranking the profession, the stronger the tendency to reject a female-gender specification (cf. Sosnowski – Satoła-Staśkowiak 2019), following the idea that professionality and competencies are relevant, not gender. In the words of one of the respondents, specifying a gender diminishes the significance of the profession:

PL13: *Niektóre określenia, mające formy rodzaju męskiego podkreślają znaczenie danej funkcji. Niestety, dość często forma żeńska może brzmić infantylnie albo wskazywać na mniejszy zakres zadań osoby, ktora pełni daną funkcję*. [Some expressions in the male form emphasise relevance of a given function. Unfortunately, the female form often sounds infantile or indicates a smaller range of tasks of the person performing the function.] (PC)

According to some linguists (Mokrý 1938; Kolek – Valdrová 2020, p. 41), the demand of invisibility of female gender within profession/title label points, in fact, to the social inequality of men and women and the inferiority complex of female gender. In order to support the endeavour to reach gender equality, the issue is also discussed in the answers to the questionnaire, e.g.:

CZ8: *…nepovažuji práci političky za méně hodnotnou než práci politika, tudíž by se za svou profesi neměla stydět*. […I do not find the job of she-politician less valuable than the job of he-politician, thus she should not be ashamed of her profession.] (PC)
PL14: *Skoro nie ma problemu ze słowem „nauczycielka" – dlaczego miałby być ze słowem „naukowczyni"?* [Since no-one has a problem with the word she-teacher, why should there be a problem with the word she-scientist?] (RS)

Finally, offensiveness of the feminine form is sometimes explained as an example of different reference, e.g.:

CZ9: *... ženský rod může někomu evokovat, že je daná žena vnímána jako schopná kandidátka v zúženém okruhu žen-kolegyň, generické maskulinum naopak podtrhuje její význačnost mezi všemi konkurenty bez ohledu na gender.* [… usage of the feminine form can evoke that a given woman is viewed as a capable candidate only in a narrow circle of women – colleagues whereas generic masculine form emphasizes her excellence among all competitors irrespectively of gender.] (PC)

4.3 Argument of addressing

Taking into consideration the relationship of the speaker and the listener, language has an interpersonal or interactional function aiming at establishing social relations between people and helping to fulfil communication intentions. Interactionally-oriented approaches to the study of language have evidenced that linguistic structures function as resources for organizing social interaction and achieving communication goals. In this respect, usage of either generic masculine or pair/feminine forms can maintain or debilitate the interactive potential of texts.

Data from our questionnaire show that a large part of respondents evaluates generic masculine forms as adequate means for establishing the relationship between speaker and listener or the addressing itself is irrelevant compared to the following content of the message, e.g.:

PL15: *Nie potrzebuję podkreślania mojej płci (jako odbiorcy) w ten sposób.* [I do not need to emphasize my gender (in the role of addressee) in such a way.] (MC)
SK8: *Verného zákazníka nezaujíma oslovenie, ale akú dostal výhodu za svoje "verné služby"...* [A loyal customer (male noun) is not interested in the form of address, but what advantage he got for his "loyalty"...] (MC)
CZ10: *…je mi úplně fuk, jak mě oslovují, zdržuje to ve čtení podstatného*. [I absolutely don't care how I am addressed, it prevents me from reading the important content.] (MC)

Contrary to these opinions, many respondents express their preference for pair/feminine forms because they consider them as more addressing means in the given types of text:

SK9: *Pôsobí to osobnejšie.* [It looks more personal.] (MC)
CZ11: *U druhé možnosti se mi líbí, že autor zahrnuje obě dvě pohlaví a dal si tu práci a oslovil každé zvlášť.* [Within the second option, I like that the author includes both genders and he made an effort and addressed each one individually.] (MC)
PL16: *To osoba kupująca jest adresatem ogłoszenia i staramy się zdobyć jej względy.* [The buying person is the addressee of the advertisement, and we should try to win her favour.] (MC)

As to the potential of generic masculine forms to target both genders equally (in job recruitment materials, job advertisements, etc.), it should be mentioned that there have been many experiments which discovered that generic masculine forms diminish the willingness of women to apply for various jobs and thus perpetuate gender inequality in male-dominated areas (e.g. Born – Taris 2010, Gaucher et al. 2011).

The data also show that strong preference of gender-balanced language relates to texts with a singular addressee whereas generic masculine forms were more preferred in texts with a plural addressee.[7] As the plural form targets the gender-mixed collective, it is not viewed as a personal form of address which thus keeps demands for gender sensitivity at bay, e.g.:

CZ12: ... *forma klienti mi jako generické maskulinum nevadí, nejsem si jistá proč, možná proto, že u množného čísla to působí obecněji.* [... I do not mind the generic masculine form "clients", I am not sure why, maybe because of the fact that plural is more general.] (MC)

SK10: *Oslovovanie väčšej skupiny ľudí iba mužským ekvivalentom sa mi už zdá menej nevhodné, ako keď je oslovená jedna osoba.* [I consider addressing a bigger group of people only by the masculine equivalent less inappropriate when compared with addressing a singular person.] (MC)

The findings from empirical studies corroborate those intuitions: in the studies by Rothermund (1998), Łaziński (2006), Karwatowska – J. Szpyra-Kozłowska (2010, p. 238) it has been shown that male association is more frequent when the masculine form is used in the singular, however, plural forms are more neutral, and their generic sense is more easily activated.

4.4 Argument of economy

Arguments relating to the criterion of language/textual economy often occur in the comments. The opponents of gender-balanced language frequently evaluate pair/feminine forms or alternative forms (such as abbreviated forms with slashes, e.g. Slovak š*tudent/ka*, brackets, e.g. Czech *lékař(ka)*,[8] or the so-called capital-I form, e.g. German *SpezialistIn*) as less economic and thus not suitable for usage in texts. In our questionnaire, this was the case especially within marketing communication where quick availability of content is often expected, however, the requirement for economy often also appeared elsewhere, e.g.:

[7] The marketing text with the addressee the in singular was the only text in the Polish version of the questionnaire where gender-balanced option gained over 50% preference by Polish respondents, cf. Kyseľová – Wojnarowska – Dohnalová (2021).

[8] In Czech, using brackets is sometimes rejected due to fact that it imposes hierarchization, cf. Valdrová (2008). This is not the case in Polish, where, on the contrary, brackets are preferred to slashes.

SK11: *Čím menej slov tým lepšie!* [The fewer words, the better!] (MC)

CZ13: *Je pro mě podstatnější stručnost a čitelnost textu než genderová rovnost.* [For me, the brevity and readability of the texts are more important than gender equality.] (MC)

PL17: *Pierwszy jest krótki i dlatego lepszy.* [The first text is shorter and therefore better] (MC)

SK12: *Nepriame označenie (nie oslovenie) nie je pre mňa dôvodom na používanie rodovo citlivej verzie. Nevnímam to hodnotovo ako v oslovení (nedostatok úcty v „nerodovej" verzii), skôr pragmaticky (účel textu a jeho ekonomika)* [Indirect labelling (not addressing) is not a reason for me to use a gender-sensitive version. I do not perceive it in sense of value as in the address (lack of respect in the "non-gender" (=masculine) version) but, rather, pragmatically (the purpose of the text and its economy)] (IC)

Those attitudes reflect the generally widespread belief that those language forms that meet the requirement of language economy are *ab ovo* better and more correct than longer forms (Lanstyák 2016, p. 19). However, Levinson's I-principle includes two subparts: the Speaker's Maxim of minimization (Do not say more than is required) and the Recipient's Corollary following Enrichment rule (Amplify the informational content of the speaker's utterance, by finding the most specific or precise interpretation), cf. Huang (2019). From this, it follows that it is possible to flout the Maxim of minimization on the part of the speaker to achieve the easiness of reception on the part of the listener (there are many examples in language usage which illustrate this phenomenon, e.g. polite directive speech act: *Nemohol by si prosím ťa otvoriť okno?* [Could you please open the window?] is, for sure, less economic than the imperative form: *Otvor okno!* [Open the window!]). In certain contexts, an uneconomic pair/feminine form can be preferred to ensure the understandability of the text, as illustrated in the following comment:

CZ14: *Tady je zmínění obou rodů naopak fajn, protože je zřejmé, že se hledají učitelé i učitelky, pokud by to tam napsáno nebylo, tak bych nad tím musela chvíli uvažovat.* [In this case, using pair/feminine form is fine as it is obvious that both male and female teachers are recruited and if the feminine form had not been used, I would have to think about it for some time.] (IC)

In several studies, it has been proven that generic masculine forms hinder the easiness of the reception process as has been shown in the study by Irmen – Köhncke (1996), investigating reaction time measures reflecting cognitive availability of male and female concepts from generic masculine forms, specific masculine and unspecific feminine forms, or in the study by Irmen – Roßberg (2004, experiment 1) which investigated the reading time necessary for correct interpretation of anaphoric reference to generic masculine forms.

4.5 Argument of textual qualities

The opponents of gender-sensitive language often argue that usage of pair/feminine forms makes texts less comprehensible (readable). With respect to textual qualities, the opinions often refer to the value of "incomprehensibility", "stylistic inadequacy", "lower readability" of feminine/alternative forms, i.e. they are often viewed as a kind of communication distractor.

This type of arguments is also present in our dataset. Generic masculine forms were preferred by those participants who view pair/feminine forms as a kind of distractor in communication.[9] Lower readability is such a strong factor that it prevents respondents from choosing a gender-balanced option despite the fact that they otherwise prefer gender-sensitivity in language:

SK13: *stredna forma uz je zbytocne prekomplikovana*. [The middle form (= pair forms) is unnecessarily complicated.] (IC)

SK14: *Snaha o diverzifikáciu rodov vo vetách pôsobí nejasne a zahlcuje text nepodstatným štylizovaním*. [Efforts to diversify genders in sentences seem vague and overwhelm the text with insignificant stylization] (MC)

PL18: *Pierwsza forma jest prosta i zrozumiała. Pozostałe dwie formy komplikują odbiór treści.* [The first form (= generic masculine) is simple and understandable. The other two options make comprehension of the message more difficult.] (IC)

CZ15: *otrocké opakování muž a žena muž a žena muž a žena za sebou několikrát v jednom odstavci nedávám :) bohužel to není čtenářsky přívětivé, hyperkorektnost... ač bych tam ráda viděla ten ženský tvar, tak tohle je šílené*. [Unbearable repetition of the words *man* and *woman* and *woman* and *man* after each other in the same paragraph is too much for me, it is not reader-friendly, hypercorrect… although I would like to see the female form there, this is crazy.] (IC)

The arguments relating to textual qualities include such kind of labels as "non-compactness", "lack of clarity", "stylistic deformation", etc., however, it is not always clear what is really meant by the speakers when describing the qualities of

[9] In the questionnaire, especially amongst Czech respondents, slashes proved to be a considerable distractor from comfortable comprehension and, along with the argument of economy, one of the main reasons for non-acceptance of gender-balanced expression. For example, within marketing communication, only 6% of Czech respondents voted for gender-balanced addressing using slashes by singular forms, and 4% preferred slashes by plural forms (compare it with 16% of Polish respondents and 37% of Slovak respondents by singular, and 8% of Polish respondents, 19% of Slovak respondents by plural), while the majority of Czech respondents justified their rejection of slashes by the argument of bad readability (cf. Kyseľová – Wojnarowska – Dohnalová 2021). However, the issue of usage of slashes in gender-fair expression is not in the focus of the present study.

texts with pair forms or alternative forms. There is a question whether the worse comprehensibility of a text with pair forms is merely the subjective feeling of a language user or an objective fact.[10] For example, in the study by Friedrich and Heise (2019), students read a randomly assigned text that either used masculine-only forms or consistently used both masculine and feminine forms and after that, they answered a comprehensibility questionnaire. The authors proved that participants who had read a text in gender-fair language did not give statistically significant lower ratings of comprehensibility than participants who had read a text that used masculine-only forms. The results indicate that the use of gender-fair language does not impair the comprehensibility of texts.[11]

The investigation indicates that the alleged "incomprehensibility" and "distractive nature" of pair/feminine forms probably have more to do with their less economical character. However, further research is necessary to prove whether pair/alternative forms truly are distracting and less comprehensible in communication.

4.6 Argument of language naturalness

Many participants argue in favour of either using or avoiding generic masculine forms and pair/feminine forms by calling them natural or, by contrast, unnatural. One part of the respondents rejects the usage of some feminine forms as they perceive them as unnatural, untypical and infrequent, e.g.:

SK15: *V tomto konkrétnom prípade by mi, osobne, úplne stačila prvá možnosť (možno preto, že slovo „klientka" nepočuť tak často ako „zákazníčka"*. [In this first case, the first option (= masculine form) would be sufficient (maybe because the word "klientka" is not as frequent as the word "zákazníčka".)] (MC)

SK16: *... slovo „chirurgička" mne osobne príde dosť neprirodzené* [I perceive the word "she-surgeon" as rather unnatural.] (PC)

CZ16: *Slovo chirurzka jsem v životě neviděla a asi ani už vidět nechci :D* [I have never seen the word "she-surgeon" in my life and I do not want to again.] (PC)

PL19: *Nie podoba mi się jak brzmi forma naukowczyni, trochę jakby była wymyślona na siłę.* [I don't like the sound of the form she-scientist, a bit like it was made up artificially.] (RS)

PL20: *Nie słyszałam o naukowczyni*. [I have not heard of she-scientist.] (RS)

[10] In theoretical studies, it is often emphasized that readability cannot be considered a property of texts alone but one of the text-reader interaction.

[11] The authors mention several empirical studies that show no statistically significant effects concerning the differences between generic masculine and pair/alternative forms regarding simplicity or concision but a statistically significant effect on aesthetic appeal. The use of pair forms and gender-neutral forms yielded to lower ratings of aesthetic appeal than the use of generic masculine forms.

The majority of Czech respondents questioned or even rejected the word *chiruržka* as unnatural, untypical and odd:

CZ17: *slovo chiruržka bohužel není příliš zažité a působí nepřirozeně* [The word she-surgeon is not very well established and appears unnatural.] (PC)
CZ18: *Chiruržka snad ani neexistuje...* [She-surgeon perhaps does not exist.] (PC)

The statements concerning "unnaturalness", "untypicality", or "non-existence" of certain feminine forms reflect an approach that is rooted in language intuitiveness.

On the other hand, pair/feminine forms are preferred with the argument of naturalness with respect to the gender of the persons they refer to or with respect to the language system, e.g.:

SK17: *... prirodzené oslovenie s ohľadom na pohlavie človeka* [… it is a natural way of address with respect to the gender of a person] (RS)
PL21: *jeśli da się zgodnie z regułami języka utworzyć rodzaj żeński – to należy go utworzyć i używać (...) Nie przyjmuję „argumentu", że niektóre brzmią „dziwnie", „trudno wymówić" (...) „Kwas dezoksyrybonukleinowy" też trudno wymówić, a jakoś nikt nie postuluje zmiany nazwy lub zaprzestania używania* [If a language system allows female forms to be created – they should be created and used (…) I do not accept the argument that some of them sound "strange", are "difficult to pronounce" (…). "Kwas dezoksyrybonukleinowy" [DNA] is also difficult to pronounce and yet nobody proposes to change the name or to stop using it.] (MC)

It seems that the concept of naturalness is viewed from two different perspectives by the speakers: within the first group of respondents, "naturalness" results from the frequency of the token (masculine forms are more frequent, therefore they are evaluated as more natural); within the latter group of respondents, the concept of "naturalness" has something to do with the criterion of representativeness ("natural" dichotomy of animates into "male" and "female") or is justified by the possibilities of the language system.

As the frequency of the token can change with the course of time, feminine forms can become more frequent and thus established in language usage which results in its "naturalness", e.g.:

CZ19: *... politička zní jako slovo přirozeně a je v jazyce již zavedené – byť uznávám, že míra zavedenosti je pravděpodobně čistě otázka vývoje jazyka v čase.* [… the word "she-politician", as a word, sounds natural and is established in language – however, I admit that the degree of being established is probably only a question of development of language in the course of time.] (PC)

4.7 Argument of tradition

The arguments related to tradition with respect to linguistic expressions is often articulated not only in the questionnaire but also in linguistic studies as has been shown in the article by Košková – Satoła-Staśkowiak (2017) in Section 2. The entrenchment[12] of generic masculine forms in the language system and the preference to keep the current system unchanged (defending the linguistic status quo) is understood as justification for their usage.

In the questionnaire, the preference of generic masculine forms is often explained with reference to language tradition and stability:

SK18: …*zákaznícka nie je veľmi zaužívané asi.* [She-customer is perhaps not very well established.] (MC)
PL22: *Naukowczyni to neologizm. Kłuje w oczy* [She-scientist is a neologism, it sticks out.] (RS)
PL23: (Lektorzy) *Zgodnie z polską tradycją językową…* [(Lecturers – male noun plural) In accordance with the Polish language tradition…] (IC)

Within pragmatic theories, this attitude is explained on the basis of axiological preference principle: what is stabilized, is preferred. The idea of language stability is often an incentive for preferring generic masculine forms.

On the other hand, pair/feminine forms are preferred as a symbol of modernity and progress:

SK20: *V súčasnej dobe už asi prirodzenejšia akceptácia rodu*. [Currently, it is more natural to take account of gender.] (IC)
SK21: … *dnes už by to mal byť štandard, používať rodovo citlivý jazyk*. […Usage of gender-sensitive language should be the standard today.] (MC)
CZ20: *Takováto vyjádření podle mého poukazují hlavně na to, že mluvčí nevládne jazykem 21. století.* [These expressions (= generic masculine) are proof of the fact that the speaker doesn't have a command of the language of the 21st century.] (PC)

As far as language tradition or long-term stability is concerned, attitudes of non-expert language users are, of course, based on their current language experience, while, naturally, they do not have a perfect insight into how the language has been used in previous decades or even centuries.[13] When it comes to modernity, what is

[12] The term "entrenchment" is used in cognitive grammar to refer to the degree to which the formation and activation of a cognitive unit is routinized and automatized.

[13] According to a statement given by the Polish Linguistics Committee by PAN in 2019, the usage of feminine forms beside masculine ones at the beginning of the 20th century was a common phenomenon in Polish. This changed in the second half of the 20th century, where generic masculine (preceded by

now seen as modern and rejected based on the argument of fashion, was previously quite common and vice versa.[14]

The historical development concerning the usage of generic masculine forms and gender balanced language within the Slovak, Czech and Polish context proves that "tradition" and language stabilization is not a static concept. As Hornscheidt (2006, p. 37) puts it, language standards and norms are "the manifestations of a dominant language use, which, as authorizing source, nurtures the idea of their own pre-existence to language usage".

4.8 Argument of ideological markedness

Finally, the argument of ideology is often used in the comments of the participants. The recommendations for usage of gender-balanced language strategies are often marked with an ideological label of "feminism" or "genderism":

SK22: …*Vo zvyšných formách mi to prišlo silené, len aby sme vyhoveli moderným snahám o korektnosť.* [...I found the other options artificial so that we conform to the modern endeavour for correctness.] (MC)

CZ21: *působí jak z propagační brožury gender studies.* [it looks like from a propaganda brochure for gender studies.] (MC)

PL24: *Próba uwzględnienia wszystkich, zgodnie z polityczną poprawnością, doprowadza do tego, że nie chce mi się czytać całej wiadomości.* [The endeavour to take account of everybody corresponding to political correctness yields to the result that I do not want to read the whole message.] (MC)

On the other hand, there are comments which reveal the belief that language can be used as a means for elimination of social inequalities:

CZ22: *... s ohledem na druh profese považuji za vhodné použít oba rody, mimo jiné i v rámci přispění ke genderové vyváženosti profese, nebo alespoň tomu, jak to vnímá veřejnost.* [… with respect to this kind of profession, I consider it appropriate to use both genders, amongst other things, to contribute to the

a word *pani*) started to prevail over feminine forms and began to be regularly used especially in order to label new professions and functions associated with high prestige. Then again, by the beginning of the 90s, feminine forms began to be promoted more, new ones appeared (*socjolożka*, *polityczka*) or old ones came back to life (*posłanka*) (cf. PAN 2019).

[14] According to findings by Kolek and Valdrová (2020), usage of feminine noun forms to label professions of women and academic titles was greatly supported by Czech linguists publishing in the journal *Naše řeč* in the first half of the 20th century. Labelling women by generic masculine forms and usage of collocations as *slečna doktor*, *paní doktor*, etc., was considered non-Czech, unnatural, incorrect, and called fashion and an unwanted sign of modernity. During socialism, contrary to the language development of profession labelling in Polish, usage of feminine nouns persisted and was supported in terms of equality of men and women in socialist society (Kolek – Valdrová 2020, p. 41).

gender balance of the profession or, at least, to the way it is perceived by the public.] (IC)

It is apparent that the term "ideology" automatically carries negative connotations in these cases. Even within the linguistic community, the usage of generic masculine forms is often articulated as an expression of "common sense". Such opinions are substantiations of language "intactism", i.e. the belief that language cannot or should not be interfered with from "outside".

Nevertheless, as was elaborated in Section 2, in post-structuralist linguistics, it has been emphasized that language is a socially determined phenomenon and the conceptualization of language and discourse is always construed from a position of a particular social or cultural group of users as it is anchored in social experience (grammar is viewed not only as phenomenon that entails meaning but also as a tool that triggers and produces meaning, cf. Posch 2015).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The comparison of attitudes of Slovak, Czech and Polish respondents has proven the similarity of arguments in favour of and against gender-sensitive language, the only exception being a more frequent refusal of feminine forms among Polish speakers (due to the historical development in the usage of feminative forms in the second half of the 20th century). The investigation of attitudes towards gender-sensitive language reveals important dimensions of understanding the status and function of language and its structures in three West Slavic language communities:

(1) Status quo approach versus language progressivism: Language users often decline to use pair forms and enforce the usage of generic masculine with the argument of tradition (generic masculine forms are believed to represent traditional, established forms). The possible change of their linguistic behaviour (to use gender sensitive language forms instead of generic masculine) is thus rejected as something unnecessary. On the other hand, the proponents of gender-sensitive language view language as a possible way of eliminating social inequalities. Language forms are believed to bear the traces of the social structure that they both express and help to reproduce. Many respondents admitted the influence of the social debate on the usage of gender-sensitive language (it was reflected in the usage of many "expert" expressions, e.g. gender linguistics, transgender people, balanced, sensitive language, gender correctness, etc.).

(2) Economy versus representativeness and addressability: The opponents of gender-sensitive language often mention its uneconomic nature (pair forms are longer and thus less economic). On the other hand, those who prefer gender sensitive strategies often support their choice with the argument of representativeness and addressability of forms.

(3) Language "intactism" versus language as a socially determined and determining phenomenon: Whereas in the reflexive-logic approach, the interaction of the linguistic and extra-linguistic is deplored ("the language consciousness of language speakers is exposed to pressure based on different sociological and psychological experiments"), in the pragmatic-logic approach, the idea of a language system existing independently (as a kind of self-regulating system) is abandoned.

The conclusion from the investigation of gender sensitive language, especially in the context of the various research experiments and studies concerning cognitive representations of masculine forms, is that the language we use *matters*. Many sociological and psychological experiments prove the inadequacy of the Saussurean idea concerning the arbitrariness of generic masculine forms and their capability to cognitively represent and evoke both male and female individuals in an equal way: "In a sense, the neglect of research on linguistic sexism and discriminatory language evoked by so-called 'generic' masculine forms is well embedded into an increasingly post-factum society, in which evidence is denied and outvoted by mere opinions; it is the climate change debate of language: research keeps providing evidence, scientists and advocates spread such knowledge, yet it is widely ignored and silenced by loud voices of a backlash." (Schütze 2020, p. 115). In this sense, the study represents a first probe into the investigation of language speakers' attitudes towards gender balanced language to uncover persistently repeating patterns of argumentation of both its supporters and deniers.

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Resumé

POSTOJE K RODOVO INKLUZÍVNEMU JAZYKU U SLOVENSKÝCH, ČESKÝCH A POĽSKÝCH HOVORIACICH

Cieľom štúdie je analýza argumentačného inštrumentária vo vzťahu k používaniu generického maskulína a tzv. párových foriem (mužských podstatných mien spolu s prechýlenými ženskými podstatnými menami). Východiskom analýzy sú dáta získané z dotazníkového prieskumu, ktorý sa realizoval v októbri 2019 na vzorke slovenských, českých a poľských respondentov. Celkovo sme analyzovali 519 odpovedí a komentárov slovenských hovoriacich, 893 odpovedí a komentárov českých hovoriacich a 470 odpovedí a komentárov poľských hovoriacich. V príspevku sa venujeme dvom základným typom postojov k používaniu generického maskulína, kto-

ré sa v teoretických prácach označujú ako arbitrárny a sémantický motivovaný prístup. Argumentačné postoje hovoriacich sú konfrontované s mnohými domácimi aj zahraničnými empiricky, resp. psycholingvisticky založenými výskumami používania generického maskulína a párových foriem. Naším cieľom je kvalitatívne orientovaná analýza materiálu získaného zo spomínaného dotazníka, najmä pokiaľ ide o axiologické reakcie respondentov. Jazykové postoje, ktoré vedú k preferovaniu alebo odmietaniu rodovo vyváženého jazyka, rozdeľujeme do ôsmich podkategórií: argument reprezentatívnosti, ofenzívnosti, adresnosti, ekonómie, textových kvalít, jazykovej prirodzenosti, tradície a ideologickej príznakovosti.