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Aspects of Applied Historical Eurolinguistics*

— edited by Joachim Grzega —

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Joachim Grzega

Preface to Papers from a Project Seminar in Applied Historical Eurolinguistics

During COVID-19 times, my seminars “Language and Politics” and “Applied Historical Linguistics” had to be held as online seminars. The coordinator of the study program had decided that during the lockdown (where also the library could hardly be accessed) students would have to hand in a portfolio (of a small volume) instead of a classical seminar paper (of a larger volume). What experts in teaching at university level mean by “portfolio” is briefly described in Grzega/Klüsener (2012: 54, 78, 142f.): It always consists of self-reflexion, selection and progression (over more than one element). Although the portfolio according to regulations at the University of Eichstätt should encompass fewer pages than the seminar paper, the combination of several tasks is quite demanding. Ideally, a portfolio should be free from grading (in order to give students the chance to try out something without fear of getting penalized), but the university regulations demand a grade. For the portfolios of my online seminars, students were asked to (1) write a few lines of reflexion on their learning progress during the seminar; (2) formulate and carry out a research question; (3) describe the research question, methodology and results in an academic essay; (4) describe the research question, methodology and results in a format for a general audience. I gave an evaluative grade on the third item and only commented on the rest, as long as this rest met the minimum requirements. In this respect, not the length of the expected paper and the number of aspects is important for me, but that it is a research question that can be answered in a reasonable amount of time according to the study program regulations. As already mentioned, access to the university library was restricted during the lockdown phase, but the administration did a great job in providing many academic sources online.

The seminar “Language and Politics” (in April and May 2020) had to be transferred into an online version at very short notice so that there was practically no time to adjust the two half-day and three full-day meetings (it was even not clear whether the online version would be necessary over the whole time). Most students gave up during the course, basically due to the unstable Internet connection or other technical reasons (such as having no printer), some felt overstrained by the whole situation. Finally, there were two students that created posters in a way that we felt we could publish for a broader audience. The posters were originally prepared for an exhibition together with Europa-Union Donau-Ries remembering 30 Years of the Charta of Paris for a New Europe on 9 May 2020 (Europe Day of the Council of Europe). This exhibition was supposed to take place at Volkshochschule Donauwörth, where I lead the section “Innovative Europäische Sprachlehre (InES)”. But also this event had to be canceled. As an alternative, we photographed our posters for brief YouTubes. These are available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1essCXCo7I&list=PLqkJtTltuinsoW73I75VeUMvV0_jYAgHs

The single contributions are:

- Joachim Grzega: Sprache und Russlandbild [“Language and Our Image of Russia”]
- Sabrina Henning: Thema Diskriminierung – deutsche, amerikanische, französische, russische Medien [“The Topic of Discrimination – German, American, French, Russian Media”]
- Julia Hampel: Thema Homosexualität – Deutschland, USA, Großbritannien, Russland [“The Topic of Homosexuality – Germany, the US, Britain, Russia”]

For my seminar “Applied Historical Linguistics” from April to July 2021 (plus the period until the deadline for the students’ final portfolio on 12 September 2021, I had time to think of a specific online adaptation. There were seven students (different study programs, but mostly future teachers). At the end, I asked the 6 students who completed the portfolio to fill out a feedback sheet on the various techniques I had chosen by ticking specific boxes. Each student gave each technique at least one of the labels “was fun”, “solidified old knowledge”, and “brought new knowledge”. I also asked the student to state which didactic techniques should cover a smaller, roughly same, or larger part of the seminar if it is carried out next time. As someone who had always had very positive experience with LdL [Lernen durch Lehren ‘Learning by Teaching’] (cf. Grzega/Klüsener 2012), I had also incorporated, at each meeting except the first, phases where students were asked to prepare tasks as a pair or group in a so-called breakout room of the video conferencing system and then present their results. Furthermore, I had included, at each meeting except the first, phases where I asked students to prepare tasks in a pair or group in the so-called breakout room. As a result, I can observe that from all techniques, students seem to have liked these phases least; the median result of their answers on my feedback sheet was that next time these phases should be fewer in number. However, I could also see that the composition of the essays, which we, this time, focused on more than on a product for a general audience, required more assistance from my part than I had thought. Viewing this, my conclusion would be to stick to these parts and rather give them more time for preparation in the breakout room and possibly change the type of tasks. Also of note, those breakout room tasks where the students needed to get up from their chairs and look for something in their apartment or outside their house should, according to the students’ feedback, get the same or more space in the next virtual seminar. The following list presents the median points from the students on the various didactic techniques (0 points = less space of time next course; 1 point = roughly the same space of time; 2 points = more space of time)

- 0 p.: separate tasks that a group first solves as experts in the breakout room and than moderates in the plenum [which occurred in each meeting except the first]
- 0.5 p.: equal tasks that a group first solves in the breakout room and than presents in the plenum [each meeting except first]
- 1 p.: teacher’s lectures with tasks interspersed [each meeting]; guest lecture [one meeting]; comparisons with other languages [each meeting]; references to other disciplines [each meeting]; questions from the participants [two meetings]; teacher questions that participants need to answer in the plenum spontaneously [each meeting]; working with other online sites [each meeting except first]; number of online meetings
- 1.5 p.: equal tasks that a group first solves in the breakout room and for which they have to collect things in their apartment or in front of the house and than present these things in the plenum [twice during last meeting]
- 2 p.: teacher questions where answers could be clicked on an online survey form [each meeting except first]; answering of questions from school kids and questions relevant at school [one meeting]; (individual) tutoring phases for the portfolio tasks [during one group meeting plus one more individual date before first draft and one more general meeting after first draft]

I would like to comment on the last entry. For the future, the students suggested more time for online meetings where we discuss their research question and intended methodology. Indeed, it turned out somewhat difficult for the students to grasp what was important for the academic essay (as a mini-version of a seminar paper or academic article), although I always give participants a clear evaluation sheet (on which they can see for which aspects they get points). Students were willing to improve their first draft, though, together with my support, which was sometimes less, sometimes more. After discussion with a colleague and final revisions, these papers are now

presented as seminar projects in a special issue of the *Journal for EuroLinguistiX*. I allowed students to work in pairs (which basically meant that each team member concentrated on different languages/countries).

The topics covered are:

- Women and Homosexuals: Some Aspects of Politically Correct Gender-Related Words in the UK, Germany, Spain, France, and Poland
- Gender-Inclusive Job Titles and Gender Gap in Ten European Countries
- A Colloquy Analysis of Answers to Thanks in English, German, Spanish, and French around 1600

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Joachim Grzega
Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
Ostenstr. 26
DE-85072 Eichstätt
joachim.grzega@ku.de
and
Volkshochschule Donauwörth
Spindeltal 5
DE-86609 Donauwörth
joachim.grzega@vhs-don.de

Reference

Grzega, Joachim / Klüsener, Bea (2012), *LdL für Pepe, Pfeiffer und die Pauker: Unterrichtstipps nach 30 Jahren bewährtem, verlässlichem, kreativem und effektivem Lernen durch Lehren*, Berlin: epubli.

Philippa Adolf ♦ Nina Liebe

Women and Homosexuals: Some Aspects of Politically Correct Gender-Related Words in the UK, Germany, Spain, France, and Poland (A Seminar Project)*

Abstract

The contribution contrasts countries concerning aspects of gender-related linguistic correctness: (1) How should women be addressed? (2) How should homosexuals be termed? For this, we look at the UK, Germany, Spain, France, and Poland. We give insights into academic and journalistic observations and consult modern dictionaries in order to find out to what degree countries are linguistically similar. We note that (a) for words that, over time, have been considered inappropriate a lexical gap and/or lexical alternative develops, (b) in case of more words there is preference for an international word, and (c) many alternatives are of academic origin.

Sommaire

Cette contribution compare des pays quant à des aspects de “politiquement correct” en ce qui concerne la langue liée aux genres: (1) Comment s’adresser à une femme? (2) Comment nommer les homosexuels? Pour cela, nous regardons aux situations en Angleterre, Allemagne, Espagne, France et Pologne. Nous donnons un aperçu des observations académiques et journalistiques et consultons des dictionnaires pour gagner une impression si ces pays sont pareils sur le plan linguistique. Nous constatons que (a) pour des mots qui, au fil de temps, sont considérés inappropriés se développent une lacune et/ou une alternative, (b) en cas de plusieurs alternatives, on préfère un mot international, et (c) beaucoup d’alternatives sont d’origine académique.

Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag beschäftigt sich länderkontrastiv mit Aspekten gender-bezogener sprachlicher Korrektheit: (1) Wie soll man Frauen anreden? (2) Wie soll man Homosexuelle benennen? Hierfür blicken wir auf Großbritannien, Deutschland, Spanien, Frankreich und Polen. Wir geben einen Einblick in akademische und journalistische Beobachtungen und ziehen moderne Wörterbücher zu Rate, um einen Eindruck zu erhalten, inwieweit sich diese Länder sprachlich gleichen. Wir stellen dabei fest, dass (a) für Wörter, die im Laufe der Zeit als unangemessen empfunden werden, eine sprachliche Lücke und/oder ein Ersatzausdruck entsteht, (b) bei mehreren Wörtern Präferenz für ein internationales Wort besteht, und (c) viele Alternativen akademischen Ursprungs sind.

1. Introduction

This language-contrastive paper examines the similarities and differences found in discriminating language in English, Polish, German, Spanish, and French. The goal is to both show how linguistic taboos and euphemisms compare to each other in different European languages and to reveal what motivates the objection to certain words. First, the essential terms “taboo” and the closely related phenomena “euphemism” and “political correctness” will be defined. In the following study, contemporary examples with focus on gender-related discrimination in Britain, Poland, Germany, Spain, and France will be investigated with respect to the following research question: What are the similarities, differences and effects of linguistic taboos and resulting euphemistic expressions with

* This essay is a revised extract of the written assignment of the project online seminar “Applied Historical Linguistics: English and Other European Languages” in summer semester 2021 at the University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. We thank our instructor, Professor Dr. Joachim Grzega, for valuable suggestions and help.

regard to address terms for women and words for homosexuals? An answer to the research question will be proposed in the conclusion to this essay. The data for this study was extracted from previous research on the above-mentioned topics, as well as from various online articles which served as examples of formal language production. None of the chosen articles which served as source for examples are older than 15 years in order to allow for a synchronic perspective. The purpose of this method was to both find authentic examples and to analyze the context in which they are used and avoided nowadays. Since our focus was on comparing existing and well-documented expressions interlinguistically with regard to their meaning rather than frequency, a qualitative study seemed to cater best to our research question.

Linguistic taboos are a way in which society can express its disapproval of a certain behaviour or, more specifically, a way of speaking which can be considered harmful to its members or violate the morals of the general public (Pan 2013: 2109). The original Polynesian word *tabu* means ‘prohibited’ and ‘untouchable’ (Süwolto 2017: 6). As linguistic features, taboos are subject to political and social change (Reutner 2009: 8) and are highly sensitive to the nature of different cultures and languages (Schröder 2008: 51). The establishment of a word or expression as a new taboo in a society requires that the public is aware of the rules and that the avoidance of a topic is of general interest (Schröder 2008: 52). They can also be understood as pragmatic markers of social limits and prohibited acts (Süwolto 2017: 8). Put in a more general way, taboos are a linguistic means of marking implicit norms within a society and are used to secure its system of cultural values (Süwolto 2017: 101). Euphemisms are frequently correlated with an established taboo in a society or the repression of a linguistic issue (Chilton 1987: 12) and can be described as a part of verbal avoidance strategies (Chilton 1987: 14). Therefore, one could say that the emergence of a euphemism is the direct consequence of a developed social linguistic taboo, as it is used in place of these rather sensitive, unpleasant, and disturbing topics (Ren/Yu 2013: 45). The word *euphemism* comes from Ancient Greek *εὖ* ‘well, good’ and the Ancient Greek verb *φημι* ‘say, speak’. In brief, euphemisms are used to express oneself more politely, to downplay an issue or, generally, to avoid a social linguistic taboo (Pan 2013: 2109).

In present times, the primary function of linguistic taboos in a society seems to be the attempted avoidance of discrimination. This includes expressions which can be considered as sexist, homophobic, or racist. The emergence of these taboos in different languages can be associated with the increasing attention given to political correctness in an increasingly inclusive European culture (Fairclough 2003: 18). Instead of using a term which puts semantic focus on prohibition and negativity, such as the term *taboo*, political correctness conveys a different approach of using language in a way that is maximally inclusive and respectful. The comparison between these two terms can give us an idea of how the perception and the meaning of the linguistic taboo has changed in recent years. Rather than transmitting the idea of “banning” certain words from the media and other public contexts, political correctness focusses on encouraging inclusive and non-discriminatory language in order to combat acts of discrimination and intolerance (Halmari 2011: 828). To which degree politically correct words can be regarded as euphemisms frequently lies in the eye of the beholder.

2. Sexist Ways of Addressing Women in Formal Speech across European Languages and Alternatives

In many languages, there are multiple ways of addressing women which usually depend on their marital status, age, or profession (Connor 1986: 545). The following table lists the relevant dictionary entries from the selected languages.

| Dictionary | Word | Entry with Additional Information on Usage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| DWDS | <i>Fräulein</i> | [veraltet] unverheiratete (jüngere) erwachsene Person weiblichen Geschlechts; tritt vor Namen, Titel unverheirateter (jüngerer) erwachsener Personen weiblichen Geschlechts |
| DWDS | <i>Frau</i> | erwachsene Person des weiblichen Geschlechts; Ehefrau; tritt vor Namen, Titel verheirateter, heute auch älterer unverheirateter Personen weiblichen Geschlechts; zur Personifizierung; Herrin/Gebietlerin |
| Cambridge Dictionary | <i>Miss</i> | a title used before the family name or full name of a single woman who has no other title; used as a form of address for a girl or a young woman; sometimes used by children to address or refer to teachers who are women; a title given to a woman who wins a beauty contest, combined with the name of the place that she represents |
| Cambridge Dictionary | <i>Ms</i> | a title used before the family name or full name of a woman, used to avoid saying if she is married or not |
| Cambridge Dictionary | <i>Mrs</i> | a title used before the family name or full name of a married woman who has no other title; used when expressing the idea that a woman is typical of or represents a quality, activity, or place; |
| Diccionario de la Lengua Española | <i>Señorita</i> | hija de un señor o de una persona de representación; como tratamiento de cortesía aplicado a la mujer soltera; como tratamiento de cortesía que se da a las maestras de escuela, profesoras, o también a otras mujeres que desempeñan algún servicio |
| Diccionario de la Lengua Española | <i>Señora</i> | como término de respeto con el que dirigirse a una mujer superior en edad, dignidad o cargo; como término de cortesía con el que dirigirse a una mujer cuyo nombre se desconoce o no se quiere mencionar; esposa o mujer; mujer del señor |
| Le Petit Robert | <i>Mademoiselle</i> | titre donné aux jeunes filles et aux femmes célibataires; titre de la fille aînée du frère du roi |
| Le Petit Robert | <i>Madame</i> | titre donné à une femme qui est ou a été mariée; titre donné à la femme du frère du roi, à la cour de France; la maîtresse de maison |
| Słownik języka polskiego | <i>Pan</i> | «mężczyzna» oficjalna forma grzecznościowa używana przy zwracaniu się do mężczyzny lub w rozmowie o nim |
| Słownik języka polskiego | <i>Panna</i> | kobieta niezamężna; dorastająca dziewczyna |

Table 1

In English, *Miss* is traditionally used for unmarried or young women (Cambridge Dictionary). Today, many women reject being referred to as *Miss* since they do not feel comfortable to reveal their marital status (Lawton 2003: 215). *Mrs* has traditionally been a title for a married woman or a widow, but has become increasingly outdated, especially in professional settings (Warhurst 2015). During the 1970s, the form *Ms* gained popularity since it was regarded as a suitable equivalent of *Mr* – a form used for both married and unmarried men (Le Blanc 2017: 25).

In Spanish, two main forms for addressing women exist: *Señora* is used for married women, whereas *señorita* refers to unmarried or young women (Diccionario de la Lengua Española). Today, many Spanish women postulate for the use of *señora* only since the existence of *señorita* is regarded as unnecessary and discourteous (Pérez Ruiz 2019) (Bosque: 2012).

In Polish, we face the same contemporary problem as in English and Spanish. While the term *panna* (“Miss”) is still being used to address unmarried women, *pani* (“Mrs”) is the appellation for married females (Cambridge Dictionary). In recent years, there has been an outcry about this linguistic phenomenon, as a “Mr” is simply called *pan* without any further categorising (Toga 2017).

The same applies to French, where the forms *madame* and *mademoiselle* are used to similarly distinguish between married and unmarried or young women. Contrary to the previous examples, though, the form *mademoiselle* was removed from any official and administrative documents in 2012 (Le Petit Robert). However, it continues to be used as a means of referring to the age of a young woman in semi-formal settings.

The German language outlawed the formerly criticized term *Fräulein* in official documents even earlier, in 1971 (Novy 2021). As the word was seen as describing a woman with a low paying job who is not married yet (WDR 2011), past feminist movements deemed it as not being up to date anymore, similar to the criticisms faced in the afore-mentioned languages.

Having compared the forms of addressing women in these different languages, several parallels can be observed. All of these languages share the characteristic that traditional forms of addressment for women depend on (1) the marital status of a woman, (2) her age. All of the languages mentioned in this paper share the existence of titles for addressing females based on these criteria. There is, however, one crucial difference that should be highlighted, which regards the fact that some countries have officially outlawed these sexist forms. In France and Germany, the forms *Fräulein* and *mademoiselle* have been officially banned from official documents, thus declaring that these forms are clearly outdated and inappropriate. In other languages, such as English, Spanish and Polish, the forms *Miss*, *señorita* and *panna* are still used and endorsed by official authorities (Real Academia, Oxford English Dictionary, Słownik języka polskiego) and, even though they may have become less common in formal settings, they may still be widely used in semi-formal to informal contexts of language use. The demand for either officially devaluating traditional forms or for introducing neutral forms is valid since defining the identity of women based solely on their affiliation with a husband is deeply sexist in its very nature. As long as there are no such forms for men, women's titles should not depend on their marital status or age. In some languages, alternative forms have become common, for instance *Ms* in English. We could therefore assume that, in the future, titles for addressing women, but also men, may partially fall out of use or be replaced by neutral alternatives.

3. Discriminatory Expressions Used to Refer to Homosexuals in Formal Speech across Different European Languages and Alternatives

First, we present a table with the relevant entries from dictionaries on our selection of languages.

| Dictionary | Word | Entry with Additional Information on Usage |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Cambridge Dictionary Middle English Dictionary | <i>gay</i> | sexually attracted to people of the same sex and not to people of the opposite sex; [slang offensive] not good, reasonable, or suitable; [old-fashioned] joyous, merry, light-hearted |
| Cambridge Dictionary | <i>homosexual</i> | sexually attracted to people of the same sex and not to people of the opposite sex |
| Cambridge Dictionary | <i>queer</i> | not fitting traditional ideas about gender or sexuality, especially the idea that everyone is either male or female or that people should only have sexual relationships with the opposite sex |
| DWDS | <i>schwul</i> | sexuelle Neigung zum eigenen Geschlecht empfindend; [Jugendsprache, Jargon, abwertend] drückt Ablehnung, Herabwürdigung aus, unangenehm, schlecht, langweilig, andersartig, blöd |
| DWDS | <i>homosexuell</i> | zum gleichen Geschlecht sexuelle Zuneigung empfindend, besonders Mann zu Mann |
| Diccionario de la Lengua Española | <i>marica/cón</i> | [despectivo] afeminado; homosexual; falto de coraje |
| Diccionario de la Lengua Española | <i>homosexual</i> | dicho de una persona: inclinada sexualmente hacia individuos de su mismo sexo; perteneciente o relative a la homosexualidad o a los homosexuales |
| Le Petit Robert | <i>pédé</i> | [familier et injurieux] homosexuel |
| Le Petit Robert | <i>homosexuel</i> | personne qui éprouve une attirance sexuelle plus ou moins exclusive pour les individus de son propre sexe |
| Słownik języka polskiego | <i>gej</i> | Synonimy: "homoseksualista"; gejowski |
| Słownik języka polskiego | <i>homoseksualny</i> | pociąg seksualny do osób tej samej płci |

Table 2

In most languages, there are multiple words and expressions used to refer to homosexuals with very different connotations. Many of these words' origins have little to do with today's meanings and ways of employment. In English, common words are *gay*, *homosexual*, *queer*. The English word *gay* is a cognate of French *gai* and is a word which originally had the meaning of 'happy' (17th century) or 'carefree', then developed to be associated with prostitution (18th century), arriving at the contemporary meaning of 'homosexual' during the 19th century (Cambridge Dictionary, Middle English Dictionary). The once rather descriptive word has undergone significant linguistic changes towards the negative in the past decades, depending on the context. The word *queer* has undergone an equally interesting development. With the original meaning 'different; strange' (Cambridge Dictionary), it has lost its pejorative meaning and come to be used as a similarly neutral term, similar to *gay*, to denote homosexuality.

German uses *schwul* (referring to male homosexuality) or *lesbisch* (referring to female homosexuality). Similar to the English examples, the word *schwul* originally had a very different meaning, being closely related to *schwül* ('hot, muggy weather'). Over the years, this feeling has been connected to the expression of "feeling warm towards the own sex/gender", thus coming to mean 'homosexual' (DWDS). With the introduction of *lesbisch* at a later point, *schwul* ended up being used predominantly for describing male homosexuality (Piorowski 2020). Again, it is difficult to say whether it truly is a taboo word in the present. More unproblematic expressions in German would either be *queer* 'queer', as a loan word from English, or *homosexuell* 'homosexual'. Apart from these almost neutral words, the expressions *Schwuchtel* 'faggot' or *Lesbe* 'lesbian' are still being used derogatorily (Kreienbrink 2020).

In Polish, there is a similar problem with the word *gej* ‘gay’, as it can be used as a more or less neutral description for homosexuals, but, due to the relatively strong negative connotation of homosexuality in Poland, it can also be considered a tabooed word (Kellermann 2020; Fijolek 2020).

Spanish uses *homosexual* and *gay* as neutral words, but also older words with a more pejorative meaning such as *marica* or *maricón*. The origin of the latter expressions is yet again quite distinct. Etymologically, they are related with the name *María*, which has been one of the most common names for Spanish women over many centuries, and which can therefore be understood as a synonym for the most typical woman. This way, *marica* and *maricón* highlight that homosexuals are typically associated with women’s interests or attitudes (Diccionario de la Lengua Española). Moreover, the Anglicism *queer* is used.

In French, the word *pédé* has been used as an abbreviation of *pédéraste*, which means ‘homosexual’ (Le Petit Robert). The use of *pédé*, however, is also more and more being replaced by the word *homosexuel*, similar to what can be observed in the other languages. Besides, the Anglicism *gay* is also employed.

Overall, a certain trend in the usage of the available words can be observed. Since many of the words mentioned have ambiguous meanings with respect to connotation, a preference towards neutral and universal terms such as *homosexual*, *gay*, and *queer* has developed in many European languages (Le Monde 2012). Words with nowadays clearly pejorative connotations such as *marica* or *Schwuchtel* have come to be taboos (Maad 2019). Furthermore, the existence of the word-type “homosexual” in all of the above-mentioned languages can be observed, along with the borrowing of English *queer* into other European languages. This might reveal a certain trend in which words that bear an increased probability of being possibly understood as homophobic, such as *gay* or *schwul*, seem to be more and more rejected, and replaced by alternatives that sound academic or technical, such as the word-type *homosexual*.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can observe definite connections between the addressed languages across Europe, as words have become taboos or uncommon due to similar reasons. Some processes in the historical development of discriminatory words almost seem universal, as there are many resemblances in the examples shown. Furthermore, all of the above-mentioned European languages show similar strategies and coping mechanisms in order to avoid or replace problematic, discriminatory words.

- (1) If traditional expressions are found to be no longer appropriate, they are preferably omitted when not obligatory (like a lexical/pragmatic gap), or replaced by innovative neutral forms (such as *Ms*).
- (2) If multiple ways of addressing a certain group of people (such as the homosexual community) exist in a language, the preference is to recur to international words (such as English *homosexual*, French *homosexuel*, Spanish *homosexual*, Polish *homoseksualny* and the Anglicism *gay*).
- (3) In many cases, the words used as alternatives to problematic or ambiguous words are words which originated in academia. Academic words seem to be adequate alternatives since they are mostly connotated with formal and official language, and can therefore be considered as the most “neutral” words.

That being said, we should note that it is far easier to agree on terms that should not be used than the designations that should replace them. Be it sexism or homophobia, there is no doubt that we

still have not reached a situation in which we can say that all linguistic taboos in these fields have been replaced by commonly used alternatives. While there has been considerable progress in overcoming offensive language in official settings, the discussion in the media shows that there is still a lot to be done when it comes to informal and everyday speech.

Philippa Adolf
86668 Karlshuld
Philippa.Adolf@stud.ku.de

Nina Liebe
86633 Neuburg
Nina.Liebe@stud.ku.de

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Lisa Marie Frauenknecht ♦ Hanna Sofie Heizmann ♦ Joachim Grzega

Gender-Inclusive Job Titles and Gender Gap in Ten European Countries (A Seminar Project) *

Abstract

The aim of this study was the investigation of the relationship between gender equality and gender-inclusive language. Ten job-related expressions, traditionally associated with men, in ten different countries (UK, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Russia, Slovenia) were compared on the basis of their gender-inclusiveness. We expected (1) a positive association between gender equality according to the Global Gender Gap index 2020 and gender-inclusive words and (2) significantly more gender equality in countries using more gender inclusive words. The quantitative analysis revealed a small but insignificant correlation between the two variables with $\tau = .0698$ and $p = .8553$. Furthermore, the conduction of a Welch's t -test revealed a non-significant difference between countries with more gender-inclusive words compared to countries with fewer gender-inclusive words with $p = .9338$. Possible limitations of these outcomes are discussed.

Sommaire

Le but de cette étude était l'analyse du rapport entre l'égalité des genres et la langue inclusive. Dans ce but, dix expressions autour d'emplois traditionnellement liées à des hommes, sont analysées, dans dix pays (Angleterre, Allemagne, France, Espagne, Italie, Suède, Finlande, Pologne, Russie, Slovaquie), quant à leur inclusivité genrée. Il est attendu qu'il y a (1) une relation positive entre le Global Gender Gap Index de 2020 et un vocabulaire inclusif et (2) une égalité des genres plus élevée dans les pays qui emploient un taux élevé de mots inclusifs. L'analyse quantitative montre une corrélation petite, mais non-signifiante entre les deux variables ($\tau = .0698$ et $p = .9338$). De surcroît, un Welch's t -test montre une différence non-signifiante entre les pays avec plus d'expressions inclusives et les pays avec moins d'expressions inclusives ($p = .2385$). Des limitations à ces résultats sont discutées.

Zusammenfassung

Das Ziel dieser Studie war die Untersuchung des Zusammenhangs zwischen Geschlechtergleichstellung und geschlechtergerechter Sprache. Dazu wurden zehn traditionell mit Männern verbundene berufliche Bezeichnungen in zehn verschiedenen Ländern (Großbritannien, Deutschland, Frankreich, Spanien, Italien, Schweden, Finnland, Polen, Russland, Slovenien) auf ihre Gender-Inklusivität hin verglichen. Erwartet wurde (1) ein positiver Zusammenhang zwischen Geschlechtergleichstellung gemäß dem Global Gender Gap Index 2020 und geschlechterinklusive Ausdrücken und (2) eine signifikant höhere Geschlechtergleichstellung in Ländern, die geschlechtergerechtere Wörter verwenden. Die quantitative Analyse ergab eine geringe, aber nicht signifikante Korrelation zwischen den beiden Variablen mit $\tau = .0698$ und $p = .9338$. Darüber hinaus ergab die Durchführung eines Welch- t -Tests einen nicht signifikanten Unterschied zwischen Ländern mit mehr geschlechtergerechteren Wörtern und Ländern mit weniger geschlechtergerechten Wörtern mit $p = .2385$. Mögliche Einschränkungen zu diesen Ergebnissen werden diskutiert.

1. Introduction: Gender-Inclusive Language and its Effects

An issue that has increasingly received scientific and public attention throughout the past few years is gender-inclusive language. As research shows, gender-inclusive language, defined as “speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender

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identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes” (United Nations 2020), not only leads to increased tolerance toward women and non-binary people (cf. Tavits/Pérez 2019: 16781), but also impacts people’s job choice (cf. Bem/Bem 1973: 6; Horvath/Sczesny 2015: 2). In a study conducted by Bem & Bem (cf. 1973: 6), women were less likely to apply for a job if grammatically masculine job titles were used. Furthermore, they were less likely to actually receive the job at the same level of qualification (cf. Horvath/Sczesny 2015: 2) In addition to this, Vervecken & Hannover (cf. 2015: 76) were able to show that primary school girls felt more self-efficient towards traditionally male occupations in contexts where gender-inclusive language was used.

This paper will focus on the analysis of gender-inclusive language and gender equality in the respective speech communities in order to find out whether the usage of gender-inclusive language is associated with a greater degree of equality between the genders. This will provoke a deeper understanding of the role that language plays in the development of individual attitudes.

First, this paper will provide some theoretical background information with regard to gender-inclusive language, on the basis of which two concrete hypotheses will be derived. Section three outlines the methodology used for the study. Including multivariate analyses, section four contains the primary findings of this study, which will be interpreted and discussed in section five. Lastly, the conclusion summarises the main findings and relates them to the hypotheses as well as the research question stated above.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

“The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality” (Sapir 1929: 209). The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, also referred to as the hypothesis of linguistic relativity, is based on the works of Sapir (1929) and Whorf (1940) (cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 465; Hussein 2012: 642). The hypothesis states that language has a causal influence on speakers’ perception of reality (cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 465; Hussein 2012: 642; Khalfan et al. 2020: 117). Due to the fact that there exists a wide variety of languages across the world, the perception of reality thus depends on the specific languages that are spoken by speakers of a certain speech community (cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 465; Hussein 2012: 642).

2.2. The Realisation of Gender in Different Languages

When it comes to grammatical gender languages, masculine word forms can be used to refer to groups of people consisting of men only (cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 465; Misersky et al. 2019: 644). However, they can additionally be used for groups of people consisting of men and women, or groups in which the members’ gender is either not of interest or uncertain. These latter usages of the masculine are perceived as its generic use. In contrast to the masculine word forms, the feminine word forms are reserved for groups of women only (cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 465; Misersky et al. 2019: 644). Despite the theoretical inclusion of all genders when using the generic masculine, feminist linguistics assumes that these forms lead to a decrease of the visibility of women in society (cf. Stahlberg/Sczesny 2001: 131). This hypothesis is supported by empirical studies proving that the generic masculine serves a male bias through primarily evoking pictures of males (cf. Payr 2021: 1).

Furthermore, a study by Prewitt-Freilino et al. (cf. 2012: 268) revealed that the equality between the genders is smaller in countries with a grammatical gender language as an official language than in countries with languages other than a grammatical gender language. The Global Gender Gap Index, which considers various areas like education or politics to determine the inequalities between men and women (cf. Crotti et al. 2020: 8-9), served as an operationalisation of the degree of gender equality (cf. Prewitt-Freilino et al. 2012: 272).

2.3. The Realisation of Gender-Inclusive Language

In order to achieve gender-fairness in languages, processes like neutralisation or feminisation can be applied (cf. Sczesny et al. 2016: 1, 3). Neutralisation is the creation and use of forms without any marking of gender instead of the masculine word form, like *police officer* instead of *policeman*. Another means of achieving gender fairness in language is feminisation, the mentioning of the feminine word forms in addition to the masculine ones when referring to groups of people (cf. Sczesny et al. 2016: 1, 3). There are several possibilities with regard to the word-formation of feminine role-nouns (cf. Grzega 2017: 31-32). One possibility is the adding of a suffix to the masculine word form, as in G. *Lehrer* > *Lehrer-in* ‘teacher-woman’. Another word formation process takes place through adding suffixes for either the masculine or the feminine word form, as in *maestr-o* and *maestr-a*. Suppletion refers to pairs of words with divergent forms, as in *father/mother* (cf. Grzega 2017: 31-32).

In that context, Grzega (cf. 2017: 32-33) found that the use of suppletions in a language is associated with several aspects of a greater degree of social progress within the respective speech community. Thus, an increased use of suppletions is not only connected to more respect towards women, but also to more tolerance towards immigrants, less homophobia, and other progressive socioeconomic factors (cf. Grzega 2017: 32-33).

2.4. Hypotheses

As mentioned before, gender-inclusivity in languages can be achieved in various ways, for example through neutralisation or feminisation (cf. Sczesny et al. 2016: 1, 3). Instead of using the generic masculine that is said to support a male bias (cf. Payr 2021: 1) and decrease the visibility of women in society (cf. Stahlberg/Sczesny 2001: 131), gender-inclusive language many benefits, such as increased tolerance towards women (cf. Tavits/Pérez 2019: 16781). In addition to this, due to the varying realisations of grammatical gender in different languages (cf. Stahlberg et al. 2007: 164-166) there are some languages that are naturally more gender-inclusive and also display more gender equality in society (cf. Prewitt-Freilino et al. 2012: 268, 279). On the other hand, in some gendered languages, such as Russian (cf. Stahlberg et al. 2007: 164), job titles only exist in the generic masculine, even though the jobs are occupied by both men and women. Based on the fact that there is a connection between lexical gender-inequality and social progress, such as respect towards women (cf. Grzega 2017: 32-33), as well as the fact that the generic masculine supports a male bias (cf. Payr 2021: 1), we hypothesize that

H1: based on the analysis of traditionally male job titles, there is a positive association between gender equality and gender-inclusive language.

H2: based on the analysis of traditionally male job titles, there is significantly more gender equality in speech communities using more gender-inclusive language than in speech communities using less gender-inclusive language.

3. Methods and Data

To determine each language's gender inclusiveness, ten "job titles" (in the sense of occupations and company positions) with male connotations were investigated in ten distinct languages. On the basis of previous research investigating gender associations in job titles (cf. Gabriel et al. 2008: Appendix B) and the selection of these used by Gygas et al. (2008: 473), the following ten expressions were examined, as they are experienced to be some of the most associated with maleness: spy, golfer, politician, police officer, statistician, boss, computer specialist, surgeon, technician and engineer. For their underlying patriarchal notion, the analysis of traditionally male job titles seemed an appropriate sample when examining gender equality. As in the study conducted by Prewitt-Freilino et al. (2012: 272), the Global Gender Gap Index (Crotti et al. 2020: 9) served as a measure of gender equality.

The job titles were analysed in Swedish, Finnish, Russian, Slovenian, Italian, Spanish, English, French, German and Hungarian. These languages were chosen not only to represent Europe adequately, examining an equal number of languages from northern, eastern, southern, western as well as central Europe, but also to include roughly the same number of gendered (German, Italian, Spanish, French, Slovenian, Russian) and non-gendered languages, in the form of natural languages (English, Swedish) and genderless languages (Hungarian, Finnish), where nouns, such as job titles, do not carry any grammatical gender (cf. Stahlberg et al. 2007: 165-166). The latter classification into gendered and non-gendered languages was carried out on the basis of the criteria given by Stahlberg et al. (2007: 164-166) and the overview provided by Prewitt-Freilino et al. (2012: 274-276).

To analyse the languages' gender-inclusiveness, every language was examined as to whether the ten job titles normally occur just as a masculine form, as a feminine and masculine form or as an inclusive form addressing all genders (see table 1). The analysis was based on the online dictionaries provided by dict.cc (Hemetsberger 2002–), Langenscheidt (Langenscheidt 1856–), Linguee (Frahling/Fink 2009–), PONS (PONS GmbH 2001–) and Wiktionary (Wikimedia Foundation 2002–).

Drawing on methodology from previous research on kinship terms and societal parameters (cf. Grzega 2017: 32), a linguistic index system was developed here, namely a Lexical Equality Index. Using an adapted procedure, scores were calculated as follows: 0 points for different forms for men and women, 1 point for one (inclusive) term only, and 0.5 points for cases where either the article expresses a gender difference or where the standard variety shows both gender-expressing and gender-inclusive forms in a neutral way. (Stylistically and connotationally marked lexemes were not included). The scoring system was created based on the provided definition claiming a language to be gender-inclusive, if it "does not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity" (United Nations 2020). In all languages, it is, of course, possible to create gender-specific expressions through derivations, compounds or additional adjectives.

| Swedish (Sweden) | | Finnish (Finland) | | Russian (Russia) | | Slovenian (Slovenia) | | Italian (Italy) | |
|---|-----|------------------------------------|-----|---|---|--|-----|---|----|
| GGG Index: 0.820 | | GGG Index: 0.832 | | GGG Index: 0.706 | | GGG Index: 0.743 | | GGG Index: 0.707 | |
| spion | 1 | vakooja | 1 | шпион / шпионка | 0 | špijon / špijonka | 0 | lo spione / la spiona | 0 |
| golfspelare | 1 | golfari | 1 | игрок в гольф | 1 | igravec / igralka golfa | 0 | il giocatore / la giocatrice di golf | 0 |
| politiker | 1 | poliitikko | 1 | политик | 1 | politik / političarka | 0 | il politico / la politica | 0 |
| polis | 1 | poliisi | 1 | полицейский | 1 | policist / policistka | 0 | il poliziotto / la poliziotta | 0 |
| statistiker | 1 | tilastotieteilijä | 1 | статистик | 1 | statistik / statističarka | 0 | lo statistico / la statistica | 0 |
| chef | 1 | johtaja | 1 | босс ~ шеф | 1 | vodja~šef / vodja~šefinja | 0.5 | boss ~ capo | 1 |
| informatiker | 1 | informaatikko | 1 | программист | 1 | informatičar / informatičarka | 0 | l'informatico/ l'informatica | 0 |
| kirurg | 1 | kirurgi | 1 | хирург | 1 | kirurg / kirurginja | 0 | il chirurgo / la chirurga | 0 |
| tekniker | 1 | teknikko | 1 | техник | 1 | tehnik / tehničarka | 0 | il tecnico / la tecnica | 0 |
| ingenjör | 1 | insinööri | 1 | инженер | 1 | inženir / inženirka | 0 | l'ingegnere / l'ingegnera | 0 |
| LE Index: | 10 | LE Index: | 10 | LE Index: | 9 | LE Index: | 0.5 | LE Index: | 1 |
| English (UK) | | Spanish (Spain) | | French (France) | | German (Germany) | | Hungarian (Hungary) | |
| GGG Index: 0.767 | | GGG Index: 0.795 | | GGG Index: 0.781 | | GGG Index: 0.787 | | GGG Index: 0.677 | |
| spy | 1 | el espía / la espía | 0.5 | l'espion / l'espionne | 0 | der Spion / die Spionin | 0 | kém | 1 |
| golfer | 1 | el golfista / la golfista | 0.5 | le golfeur / la golfeuse | 0 | der Golfspieler / die Golfspielerin | 0 | golfjátékos | 1 |
| politician | 1 | el político / la política | 0 | le politician / la politicienne | 0 | der Politiker / die Politikerin | 0 | politikus | 1 |
| police officer; policeman / policewoman | 0.5 | el policia / la policia | 0.5 | le policier / la policière | 0 | der Polizist / die Polizistin | 0 | rendőr | 1 |
| statistician | 1 | el estadístico / la estadística | 0 | le statistician / la statisticienne | 0 | der Statistiker / die Statistikerin | 0 | statisztikus | 1 |
| boss | 1 | el patron / la patróna | 0 | le patron / la patronne | 0 | der Chef / die Chefin | 0 | főnök | 1 |
| computer specialist | 1 | el informático / la informática | 0 | le informatician / l'informaticienne | 0 | der Informatiker / die Informatikerin | 0 | informatikus | 1 |
| surgeon | 1 | el cirujano / la cirujana | 0 | le chirurgien / la chirurgienne | 0 | der Chirurg / die Chirugin | 0 | sebész | 1 |
| technician | 1 | el técnico / la técnica | 0 | le technician / la technicienne | 0 | der Techniker / die Technikerin | 0 | technikus | 1 |
| engineer | 1 | el ingeniero / la ingeniera | 0 | l'ingénieur | 1 | der Ingenieur / die Ingenieurin | 0 | mérnök | 1 |
| LE Index: | 9.5 | LE Index: | 1.5 | LE Index: | 1 | LE Index: | 0 | LE Index: | 10 |

Table 1: Lexical Equality Index (LE) and Global Gender Gap Index (GGG Index) for 10 job titles in 10 languages

4. Results

Table 2 represents both the Global Gender Gap Index 2020 (cf. Crotti et al. 2020: 9) as well as the Lexical Equality Index for each language examined, starting with the speech community with the highest Global Gender Gap Index and finishing off with the lowest. As can be seen in Table 2, Finland has the highest and Hungary the lowest Global Gender Gap Index. However, they both achieve the same value on the Lexical Equality Index. The table also summarises the descriptive data for the Global Gender Gap Index and the Lexical Equality Index. The Lexical Equality Index among the ten countries examined ranges from 1.0 to 10.0. The average Global Gender Gap Index is 0.766, while the mean Lexical Equality Index lies at 6.45.

| COUNTRY | INDEXES | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| | GGG | LE |
| Sweden | 0.820 | 10 |
| Finland | 0.832 | 10 |
| Russia | 0.706 | 9 |
| Slovenia | 0.743 | 0.5 |
| Italy | 0.707 | 1 |
| UK | 0.767 | 9.5 |
| Spain | 0.795 | 1.5 |
| France | 0.781 | 1 |
| Germany | 0.787 | 0 |
| Hungary | 0.677 | 10 |
| DESCRIPTIVES | | |
| N | 10 | 10 |
| mean | 0.762 | 5.25 |
| median | 0.774 | 5.25 |
| minimum | 0.677 | 0 |

Table 2: GGG, LE and descriptive data

To examine H1, postulating a positive association between gender equality and gender-inclusive language, a Kendall tau correlation test was carried out. Figure 1 reflects the link between gender equality, as measured by the Global Gender Gap Index 2020, and gender-inclusive language, as measured by the Lexical Equality Index. The data suggests an extremely small positive correlation ($\tau = .070, p = .8553$) between the two factors, and this correlation is not significant.

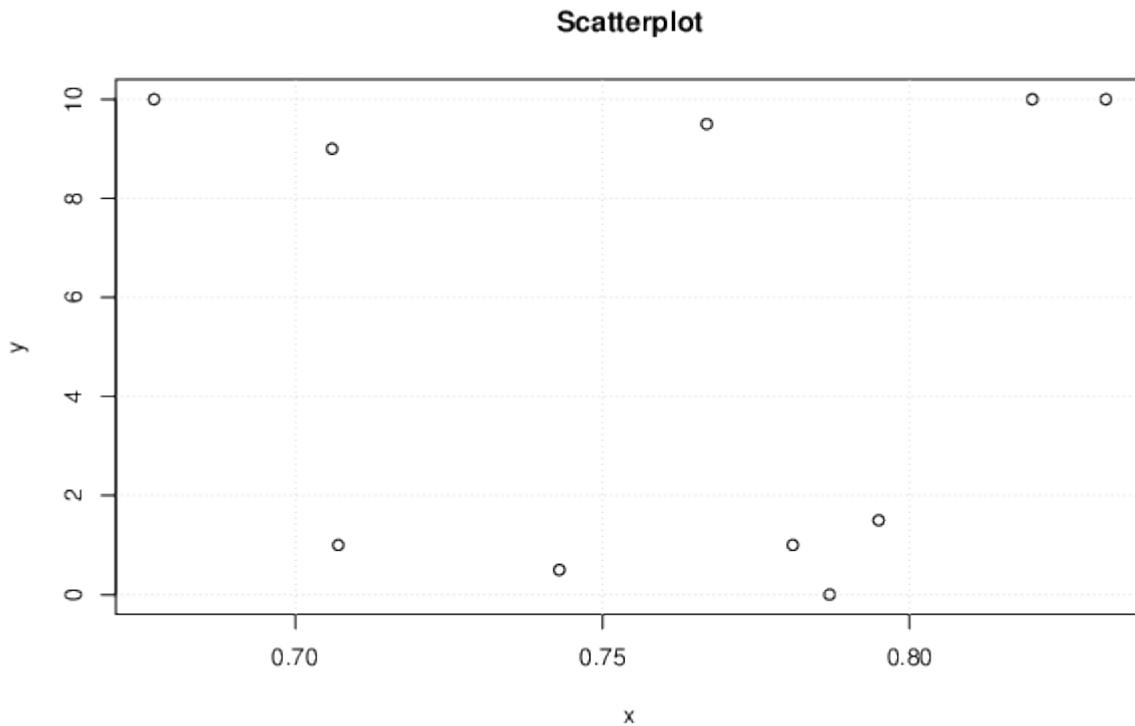


Fig. 1: Scatterplot for the correlation between the Global Gender Gap Index (=x) and the Lexical Equality Index (=y)

To test H2, a Welch's t -test for independent samples was conducted. For this purpose, the ten countries were divided into two groups on the basis of their Lexical Equality Index by performing a median split. Therefore, countries with a high and a low Lexical Equality Index were compared regarding their Global Gender Gap Index. This is shown in Table 3.

| | | Global Gender Gap Index | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| | | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Standard Error of the Mean |
| Group 1 | High Lexical Equality Index | 5 | 0.760 | 0.0683 | 0.031 |
| Group 2 | Low Lexical Equality Index | 5 | 0.763 | 0.0369 | 0.017 |

Table 3: Group statistics regarding the GGG value for countries with a high and a low LE value

The Welch- t -test (with $t = -.0865$) revealed a non-significant difference between the two groups, with $p = .9338$. Therefore, H2, which predicted a significantly higher Global Gender Gap Index in countries with a higher Lexical Equality Index, cannot be confirmed.

5. Discussion

The present study examined whether there is a positive association between gender equality and gender-inclusive language based on the analysis of traditionally male job titles, and if so whether there is a significantly higher degree of gender equality in speech communities that use more gender-inclusive language.

The data suggests a small positive correlation between the two factors, meaning that in the investigated sample, the more gender-inclusive a language is, the more equality can be observed in

the respective speech communities. However, due to an insignificant correlation, these findings cannot be generalised for the overall population. The findings for this sample still correspond with previous research showing that languages without a grammatical gender in nouns display a higher degree of gender equality in comparison to gendered languages (cf. Prewitt-Freilino et al. 2011: 268). Furthermore, there are no statistically significant differences in the Global Gender Gap Index (cf. Crotti et al. 2020: 9) of countries with a high and low Lexical Equality Index. Several explanations could provide for these findings. One idea is that gender-inclusive language has less impact on the social relations of men and women than expected. In that case, everyday language would not be as powerful in shaping social stereotypes about gender as suggested by feminist language critics (cf. Stahlberg et al. 2007: 170). What defendants of the generic masculine claim is that the grammatical gender does not equal sex (cf. Burkhardt 1985: 309). This is justified with the fact that there is an arbitrary distribution of feminine, masculine and neuter articles in grammatical gender languages, such as German and French. While the German designation of the moon, for instance, is masculine (*der Mond*), it is female in French (*la lune*). Also, there are examples where not just inanimate but also personal nouns carry neuter articles, such as in German *das Mädchen*. Thus, counterarguments to feminist linguistics state that grammatically masculine forms neither exclude women, nor does the alternation of linguistic customs constitute an adequate means in tackling gender inequalities (cf. Stahlberg et al. 2007: 171).

Other explanations for the lack of significant differences in the Global Gender Gap Index of countries with a high and low Lexical Equality Index can be found on the methodological level. Thus, it is possible that the sample size was not big enough to attest meaningful discrepancies. Future research should not only analyse more languages but also focus on more expressions. When it comes to the words analysed, it must also be considered that the dictionaries came up with divergent results in some cases. We respected the information that was in the majority; but the differences could express an on-going change.

Furthermore, the scoring system can be criticised. Highest scores were awarded for the existence of an inclusive expression, which was mostly the case in natural and genderless languages. However, as research shows, even seemingly gender-neutral terms can carry an implicit male bias (cf. Braun 2000: 194). This is the case, for example, when additional gender-specific morphemes are more commonly added to convey the female gender (cf. Braun 2001: 287-295), suggesting that allegedly gender-neutral expressions are not free of a covert male bias. Furthermore, even though nouns in natural and genderless languages address all genders, research has found that the presence of women in society is most emphasised when applying the feminisation technique to make language gender-inclusive, such as in grammatical gender languages (cf. Gabriel et al. 2018: 844). Thus, the scoring system might have impact on the results.

All in all, the present data suggest only a very small association between gender equality and gender-inclusive language. Still, even though language may have an impact on the societal status of women, it is vital not to neglect that language itself cannot alternate gender imbalances, but must come along with other factors, such as political and social arrangements.

6. Conclusion

The study aimed at investigating the association between gender equality and gender-inclusive language and the degree to which gender equality is given in speech communities using more gender-inclusive language in comparison to the ones using less gender-inclusive language. Therefore, ten stereotypically male job titles (cf. Gabriel et al. 2008: Appendix B; cf. Gygax et al. 2008: 473) across ten European languages were analysed regarding their gender-inclusivity in order

to determine a Lexical Equality Index. The Global Gender Gap Index (cf. Crotti et al. 2020: 9) was used as an operationalisation for gender equality (cf. Prewitt-Freilino et al. 2012: 272).

In summary, the quantitative analyses based on the Lexical Equality and the Global Gender Gap Index values revealed a small positive, but no statistically significant correlation between gender equality and gender-inclusive language. Furthermore, even though gender equality was higher in speech communities using more gender-inclusive language, the difference was not statistically significant either. Future studies with a larger sample regarding the languages and words included would be necessary to receive more representative results.

Hanna Sofie Heizmann
DE-85072 Eichstätt
hanna.heizmann@stud.ku.de

Lisa Marie Frauenknecht
DE-85072 Eichstätt
lisa.frauenknecht@stud.ku.de

Joachim Grzega
University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
DE-85072 Eichstätt
joachim.grzega@ku.de

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Carolin Mair ♦ Caroline Wörz ♦ Joachim Grzega

A Colloquy Analysis of Answers to Thanks in English, German, Spanish, and French around 1600 (A Seminar Project)*

Abstract

What are reactions to thanks in English, German, Spanish and French around the year 1600? This is analyzed by using Noel de Berlemont's cross-linguistic *Colloquia et Dictionariolum* (1598 version). As a result, Berlemont's dialogues show no regular reply to gratitude. It is rather typical that there is no reply. Even where a reply occurs, it rather refers to a new idea than being a direct reaction to the thanking. However, since the speech acts "thanking" and "reacting to thanking" are quite rare in Berlemont; the findings need to be supplemented by analyzing further sources even if they are not multilingual and thus not directly contrastive.

Sommaire

Quelles sont les réactions à un merci en anglais, allemand, espagnol et français vers 1600? Cela est analysé dans le livre *Colloquia et Dictionariolum* par Noel de Berlemont (version de 1598). Les dialogues de Berlemont ne révèlent aucune réaction régulière à un merci. Il est plutôt typique de réagir pas du tout à un merci. Même s'il y a une réaction, c'est une nouvelle idée qui est ajoutée plutôt qu'une réaction directe au merci. Pourtant, les actes "remercier" et "réagir à un remerciement" sont assez rares chez Berlemont; les résultats doivent être supplémentés par l'analyse d'autres sources, même si ceux-ci ne sont pas multilingues et ainsi pas directement contrastifs.

Zusammenfassung

Was sind Reaktionen auf ein Dankeschön im Englischen, Deutschen, Spanischen und Französischen um das Jahr 1600? Dies wird analysiert anhand Noel de Berlemonts mehrsprachigem Buch *Colloquia et Dictionariolum* (1598 version). Berlemonts Dialoge zeigen keine regelmäßigen Reaktionen auf ein Dankeschön. Es ist eher typisch, dass gar keine Reaktion erfolgt. Selbst wenn eine Reaktion erfolgt, dann wird eher eine neue Idee eingebracht als direkt auf das Danke zu reagieren. Allerdings sind die Sprechakte "Danken" und "Reagieren auf Danke" bei Berlemont ziemlich rar; die Ergebnisse müssen durch die Analyse weiterer Quellen ergänzt werden, auch wenn diese nicht mehrsprachig und somit nicht direkt kontrastiv wären.

1. Question, Background and Methodology

Some current English, French, Spanish and German phrases that are reactions to thanks are rather young: E. *you're welcome* (20th century), E. *don't mention it* (since the 18th century), E. *my pleasure* (20th century), Fr. *je vous en prie* (20th century), Fr. *de rien* (19th century), Sp. *de nada* (20th century), G. *bitte* (18th century) (OED s.v. *welcome*, OED s.v. *pleasure*, TLFi s.v. *prier*, TLFi s.v. *rien*, FEW s.v. *rēs*, Lanza 1909, DWDS s.v. *bitten*); some may be older, but we do not know how typical or frequent they were. For this study, we would like to know: What are reactions to thanks in these languages around the year 1600? This expressive speech act does not seem to have been analyzed in a historical way so far. We aim to analyse this by using Noel de Berlemont's cross-

* This essay is a revised extract of Carolin Mair and Caroline Wörz's written assignment of the project online seminar "Applied Historical Linguistics: English and Other European Languages" in summer semester 2021 at the University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (instructor: Joachim Grzega). Carolin Mair and Caroline Wörz searched the corpus and formulated first interpretations. Joachim Grzega helped with the transcriptions of the original text and engaged in the final formulation of the interpretations.

linguistic *Colloquia et Dictionariolum* (1598 version; even if a language version is copied from a previous edition it will not be older than about half a century; on the history of versions cf., e.g., Rossebastiano 2000). Berlemont's dialogues are meant to serve as a guide for relevant conversations for European travelers. However, they have not yet been analyzed very much for contrastive historical pragmatics. Exceptions are Radtke (1998) and Grzega (2013). The 1598 version displays eight different languages: Latin, French, Dutch/Flemish, High German, Spanish, Italian, English and Portuguese. We select French (as a western language), English (as a northern language), Italian (as a southern language) and German (as a central and eastern language, spoken in the Holy Roman Empire as well as in parts of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth). If Berlemont's translations of phrases from the Latin source differ, they can safely be considered as idiomatic; but even non-literal translations are likely to reflect real-life language as the number of formal deviations from the Latin original are frequent so that we can assume in general that the translations are not simply literal, but functional translations (Grzega 2013: 109). This, of course, does not deny that some translations may occasionally be literal.

2. Analysis

Surprisingly, the seven dialogs on about 100 pages of Berlemont's book contain only thirteen instances of explicit thanking (although they are many services done to other persons for which some sort of thanking is imaginable—maybe the reader is to imagine a nod or a smile). In nine of the explicit thanking phrases what follows are either turns to another topic—page 20 (asking further about the host's son, after host's thanks for a compliment), page 21 (host's wife asking about well-being, after guest thanking for welcome), page 36 (leaving after declining thanks for an offer), after page 65 (saleswoman offering to get a good deal also next time, after thanking for the money), page 87 (innkeeper asking if the two do not know each other, after thanks for toast), page 86 (after the guest thanking the innkeeper for his service offer), page 88 (innkeeper asking where somebody is from, after thanks for offer of friendship) and page 121 (servant offering the same quality service in the future, after thanks for tipping)—or the end of the scene—page 44 (after Mary thanking Roger for cutting her a piece of meat) and page 93 (guest thanking for a good-night wish). (The page number are the double page numbers according to the photographic PDF file of Berlemont's dialogues in the 1598 version [Berlemont 1598]).

In the other four situations, there is some semantic connection between the thanks and the following passage. They are first quoted in the following table.

| E. | G. | Sp. | Fr. |
|---|---|---|---|
| D. Well then we thanke you / wee must deserve it. M. It is all deserved. P. I thank you also that yee are com. (50f.) | D. VVol dann, so danken wir euch, es stehet uns zu verdienen. M. Es ist lang verdienet. P. Ich dancke euch auch das ihr kommen seydt. (50f.) | D. Pues bien tenemos lo en merced. cumple que los merezcamos. M. Todo es merecido. P. Yo os agradezco tambien que sois venidos. (50f.) | D. Bien doncques nous vous remercions. c'est à nous à le desservir. M. Tout est desservy. P. Je vous remercie aussy que vous estes venuz. (50f.) |
| B. Much good / may it doo you Sirs? E. God a mercy mine hoste. B. I pray you / make good cheere with such as ther is and spare not the wine / for it is hot. (85) | B. Gott gesegne es euch ihr Herren. E. Gott dancke euch mein wirt. B. Ich bit euch seydt frolich mit dem das ihr habt, und spart den wein nit, den es ist heisz. (85) | B. Buen prouecho os haga, Señores. E. Yo os selo agradezco mi huesped. B. Supplico à vs. ms. que hagan buena ciera de lo que ay, y no ahorrays el vino, porque haze calor. (85) | B. Bon-prou vous face Messieurs. E. Grand mercy mon hoste. B. Je vous prie, faictes bonne chere de ce qu'il y a, & n'espargnez pas le vin, car il faict chaud. (85) |
| A. Wee be very well mine hoste/ wee thancke you. B. Sir/ I drinke to you. (86) | A. wir sein gar wol Herr wirdt, wir dancken euch. B. Mein Herr, ich brings euch. (86) | A. Muy bien somos señor huesped, tenemos lo en merced. B. Señor mio, supplico à v. m. de beuer. (86) | A. Nous sommes tresbien mon hoste, nous vous remercions. B. Monsieur, ie boy à vous. (86) |
| C. Yea Sir: I thanke you/ spare nothing that I have/ aswell without money as whit money. B. God a mercy sir. (118) | C. Ia herr, ich dancke euch, und sparet nichts das ich habe, so wol sonder geldt als mit geldt. B. Danck habet herr, (118) | C. Señor si: yo se lo agradezco, no ahor rays cosa que yo tenga tan libremente sin dinero, como con dinero. B. Beso os las manos señor. (118) | C. Ouy Monsieur: ie vous remercie, n'espargnez chose que i'aye, aussy bien sans argent, qu'avec argent. B. Grand mercy Sire. (118) |

Table 1

The first scene (p. 50f.) is at the end of the dialog. David (and Roger) had wanted to pay for the drinks, Peter said that, of course, they do not have to pay. Now they thank Peter (and Mary) expressing doubt whether they deserve it. Mary first says that it is deserved and then Peter returns the thanking for the meal by thanking for their presence.

The second dialogue (p. 85) shows a conversation between a host and guests at a hostel. After the innkeeper has brought food and drink, one guest thanks him. The host again does not react to the thanking with a short phrase, but asks the guests at the table that they should be happy with the things they have in front of them and drink enough wine.

The third dialogue (p. 86) deals with another form of replying to expressions of thanks. The event of this conversation plays again in the lodging, where the host serves wine to the guests and asks them to enjoy themselves before the hostess comes for further service. Guest A reassures him that they feel well and thanks him. In the Spanish and French version (as in the Latin original *propino tibi*) the host answers with 'I drink to you'. In English and German the answer is 'I bring it to you', meaning 'I (will) bring a toast to you'.

The fourth conversation (p. 118) takes place during a purchase conversation. Here, the buyer does not want to buy the goods at first, but then gives the seller the money. Person C expresses thanks to the interlocutor and immediately returns a reassurance of using his service, which speaker B returns with another type of thank you. In the German and French version, this is done with the same stem

for thanks (Fr. *merci*, G. *dank*). In English, speaker B replies with *God a mercy*, which may be a slurred, shortened “God [h]a[ve] mercy [with you]” (cf. OED s.v. *God-a-mercy*). In Spanish, the reply means ‘I kiss you the hands’; this translates L. *ago gratias*, which on p. 85 is given by *yo os se lo agradezco*, but this is presumably avoided in this dialog because it is already used by the other interlocutor. A relevant thing seems to be variation; however there is never a variant “thánk you—thank yóu”. Also of note, a slot in the Latin reference form is always given by some form, never by zero.

3. Conclusion and Outlook

In sum, Berlemont’s dialogues shows no regular reply to gratitude. It is rather typical that there is no reply. Even where a reply occurs, it rather refers to a new idea than being a direct reaction to the thanking for a service completed, and the structure of pattern sequences is thus different from today. However, since the explicit speech acts “thanking” and “reacting to thanking” are rather rare in Berlemont, the findings need to be supplemented by analyzing further sources (with also more occurrences of diverse reasons for thanking) even if these sources may not be multilingual and this not directly contrastive.

Carolin Mair
DE-85072 Eichstätt
carolin.mair@stud.ku.de

Caroline Wörz
DE-85072 Eichstätt
caroline.woerz@stud.ku.de

Joachim Grzega
University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
DE-85072 Eichstätt
joachim.grzega@ku.de

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