

EXPLORATIONS IN LINGUISTIC SEXISM: A CONTRASTIVE SKETCH

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1. Introduction*

The past decade has witnessed a veritable explosion of interest in the field of sexual linguistics¹, i.e. the study of the complex interaction of language, sex, and gender². This interest can, in part, be understood as arising from a general desire by linguists, anthropologists, and sociologists to elucidate actual interrelated patternings of language, culture, and society. In equal part, however, it is necessary to view the development of sexual linguistics within the context of popular and scholarly feminism, and in fact a large number of the most provocative articles in this field have appeared in journals and newsletters associated with the broader field of Women's Studies rather than in linguistic journals. In a real sense, the politicization of the sexism-in-language issue insured its future prominence in a way that simple linguists could not have hoped to achieve.

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¹ The term is Gregersen's (1979); it is not particularly satisfying, but it is the least cumbersome of the alternatives in the literature.

² Thorne and Henley's (1975:ix) prefatory comment to their anthology: "This book rides on the first crest of what we expect to be an ocean of interest in the topic" has proved prophetic.

Sexual linguistics has concerned itself with three basic areas of inquiry, although the distinctions among these areas are not always clearly demarcable. The first area involves the relation between language structure and the sexes, i.e. how does [some particular] language treat the two sexes? Most of the interest in this realm has centered around topics such as the generic use of "he" and "man" in English, address term systems, professional titles, etc. The second broad area focuses on actual differences in language use by the two sexes, i.e. how do the sexes use language differently? Numerous investigators have examined such issues as differences in pronunciation and intonation, patterns of adjective selection, use of tag questions, patterns of interruption, and so forth. Finally, a third area of research has proposed changes in the language system and attempted to demonstrate the psychological and sociological consequences of findings in the first two areas, i.e. what can be done about this situation and does any of it really matter? Positive responses to this latter question derive directly from a belief that ways of speaking/hearing are intimately tied to ways of thinking and that ways of talking are tied to patterns of self- and other-evaluation (Cf., e.g., Heilman 1975; O'Barr and Atkins 1980). It is not our purpose in this brief paper to review or synthesize even a portion of the now voluminous literature in sexual linguistics. Several excellent overviews are available, e.g. Thorne and Henley (1975a), Frank (1978), Gregersen (1979), McConnell-Ginet (1980), to which the reader is referred.

This paper concerns itself with the first-mentioned area of study, i.e. the encoding of sexist/sex-differentiating treatment into the structure of a language. Such differential treatment of women and men is perhaps most obvious in lexicon where, for example, titles and terms for occupations are listed. However, this is by no means the sole phenomenon which some critics have analyzed as institutionalizing sexist values. In Section 2 we review briefly the major critiques of English as a sexist language. In large part, we do not attempt to evaluate the significance of sexist encoding in the language or specific proposals for nonsexist usage. Several studies have set out to determine and, occasionally, quantify such significance, but the results of such studies are not particularly compelling. However, since one of the authors' present interests focuses on the elimination of sexist encoding — or rather the potential for such elimination — some of the various proposals that have appeared in the literature will be reviewed. In Section 3, the issue of sexism in Polish is considered in some detail. The interest in such a treatment derives, we believe, from several points. First, a contrastive study helps to focus on broader, more general issues and to identify and delimit possible general tendencies operative in sex- and gender-marking languages. The bulk of literature on sexual linguistics concerns itself with English, although there are a few treatments of other languages, especially Romance (e.g. Connors

1971; Frank 1978b). Polish, on the other hand, has not been systematically examined in this regard, and because of its rich derivational and inflectional system, unlike that of English, it provides quite interesting features for study. Additionally, there is some interest in comparing languages from different types of societies, and Poland differs in important ways from American and Western European societies. Note that we do not discuss any differences in social organization or structure between English- and Polish-speaking societies. Rather, we assume 1) that all societies are sexist to varying degrees, 2) that a simple contrastive study of sexism in any two societies is not possible without considering the wholes of the social and cultural systems within which sexism is embedded, and 3) that the different degrees of sexism in two societies (if sexism can be quantified) are not directly correlated with different degrees of linguistic sexism. Finally, in pursuit of an answer to the general question of whether nonsexist language is possible, it is important to compare this potential in languages with natural and grammatical sex-gender.³ Section 4 examines the comparability of one aspect of our analysis of Polish with Russian and highlights different tendencies in these two languages. In the final section of the paper we attempt to provide a synthesis of our current ideas concerning the differential potential for nonsexist usage in different language systems.

2. ENGLISH

The issue of the extent to which English institutionalizes sexist values in its linguistic structure has generated enormous popular interest. One of the first targets identified by feminists was the traditional tripartite address and reference system of Title+Last Name, viz. *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss*. Historically, the latter two were used to distinguish female children and adults (cf. the obsolete distinction *Master-Mister*), but in the late 18th century they became associated with a distinction in marital status. Critics have charged that apart from the inherent sexism in the asymmetrical treatment of men and women and in labelling a woman as "available for mating" or not, the use of *Miss* applied to women over 25 or so developed to connote social undesirability, unattractiveness, or inherent qualities of spinsterhood. The alternate form *Ms.* had been coined as early as the 1940s (Miller and Swift 1970:88), but it was largely unknown until a significant number of women began to object to being labelled according to their marital status in the late 1960s. Reactions to the "new" title ranged from full endorsement to outright ridicule

³ In this regard, one needs to compare languages in which the gender system does not exploit sex as a classificatory feature as well as languages without gender. Hungarian, for example, has no gender, but there are numerous mechanisms and structures exhibiting male sexist bias (J. Szpyra, personal communication).

and hostility. In point of fact, the title *Ms.* is extremely useful in situations where a speaker/writer does not know the marital status of addressee/referent, and this fact, more than any pro-feminist sympathies, probably accounts for its acceptance into the language system⁴ although there are still many speakers who eschew its use.

Viewed from a current perspective, the introduction of *Ms.* seems like a relatively harmless linguistic change,⁵ one which did not threaten a core area of structure, and it is infrequently discussed in the literature now. On the other hand, the so-called generic masculine is the center of active investigation and debate.

2.1 Generic "He"

Two types of structures are usually included under the rubric of the generic masculine: 1) generic "he" and 2) generic "man" and "-man". The basic charges are the same in each case, namely that the generic nature of these structures is a myth, that so-called generics frequently mask an intended male-exclusive interpretation, and that even in cases where a true generic may have been intended language users exhibit a tendency for male interpretation, being biased by the formal surface identity between generic and sexspecific (male) forms. Consider, for example, sentences such as:

- (1) Each student intending to graduate in 1983 must submit an official Declaration of Candidacy form signed by his advisor.
- (2) I asked for volunteers, but nobody raised his hand.
- (3) -Somebody telephoned for you this morning.
-Did he leave his name?
- (4) In such a circumstance, that lawyer will be registered as an Officer of the Court. As such, he will be responsible for ...

Examples such as 1 through 4, which display a range of styles, exhibit supposedly generic *he/his*, i.e. *he/his* in these examples is sex-indefinite, following a traditional rule of English grammar that the masculine term, under certain circumstances, includes both males and females. The history of this rule has been treated in detail by Bodine (1975), who noted that despite more than

⁴ Cf., e.g., the need for a sex-neutral address title in situations where one is writing to an individual known only by Initial+Last Name (e.g. L. Gravesend) or by First Name+Last Name in which the FN is not readily identifiable as sex-indicative (e.g. Taghi Modarressi). As a response to this need, the salutation *Dear FN/I+LN* has gained some prominence (e.g. *Dear L. Gravesend*) where it was virtually unknown a decade ago; to be sure, it is still considered gauche by many writers.

⁵ Note that the real nature of this change varies from one individual to another. Some individuals employ *Mrs.*, *Miss*, and *Ms.*; others employ only *Ms.*; others never use *Ms.* although they understand it; others use *Ms.* only as a substitute for *Miss*; etc.

300 years of prescriptive grammar there is an increased tension between prescription and actual language usage. The problem with such generics, according to critics, is that people do not understand them as such, or, if they do, the interpretation including women is a secondary interpretation as illustrated by (1) and (2). In (3), a true generic may have been intended by the speaker, but the addressee (a male university professor) may have assumed that another male was the more likely referent for *somebody*. Examples such as (4) are particularly objectionable since they imply, it is suggested, that lawyers are men and in this way insure institutionalization of sexism in society. Compare (5):

- (5) A secretary in your institute will provide day-to-day contact with the administration. She will ...

where the sex-expected nature of pronominal reference makes clear that sex-indefinite *he* (such as it is) is inappropriate in certain contexts, although the sex of the antecedent noun is equally unspecified in (4) and (5).

In many dialects of English, the 3rd person plural pronoun *they* serves as a sex-indefinite singular reference:

- (1b) Each student intending to graduate in 1983 must submit an official Declaration of Candidacy form signed by their advisor.
- (2b) I asked for volunteers, but nobody raised their hand.
- (3b) -Somebody telephoned for you this morning.
-Did they leave their name?
- (4b) In such a circumstance, that lawyer will be registered as an Officer of the Court. As such, they will be responsible for ...

Bodine (1975) noted that singular *they* has thrived despite grammatical proscription, for at least two and a half centuries.⁶ As Gregersen (1979) noted, however, such sex-neutral usage bears no relation to the degree of sexism in the speech community or to the attitudes of individual speakers. On the basis of actual usage, Bodine proposed that the English pronominal system in Figure 1 is a more accurate schemata than the traditional arrangement in Figure 2.⁷

Recognizing the grammatical contradiction inherent in singular *they*, some speakers have opted for an explicit sexindefinite reference: *he or she* (alternatively, *she or he*), *he/she*, *s/he*; although the latter two are largely confined to written English, some speakers pronounce *he/she* as a compound. Some feminists have openly advocated such usage whereas others have opposed it on the grounds that 1) it is clumsy and stylistically awkward in actual discourse, or 2) it does not combat sexism in any meaningful way, i.e. it is the equivalent

⁶ In fact, the male author of this paper regularly uses singular *they* in all styles of speech and reports being unaware of its nonstandardness until, while teaching at the University of Calgary (Alberta), such singular *they*-forms would invariably bring forth smiles, laughter, or correction from his students.

⁷ Bodine does not discuss the extension of *you*.

PERSON	NUMBER			
	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
1st	I		WE	
2nd	YOU			
3rd	IT	SHE	HE	THEY

of "Females Allowed" or "Women Too" rather than a sex-neutral reference. A third response strategy to the problem generated by the absence of a true sex-neutral 3rd person singular pronoun in English has been coinage. Specific proposals for new pronouns abound, e.g. *co*, *tey*, *hesh*, *thon*, *xe*, *E*, *po*. Miller and Swift (1977:116) note that such coinages are not new: *thon*, for example, derives from *that one* and was first recorded in 1859 and has been listed in many standard reference works. Many linguists note such proposals with amusement, believing that the pronominal system of a language is such a core element of grammar that it is immune to change.⁸ Apart from speakers whose dialect affords them the luxury of singular *they*, the problem of sex-neutral reference is likely to remain because 1) coinages such as those mentioned above meet with extremely limited success, 2) *he or she*, along with its various inflectional forms, is awkward in discourse, and 3) the various guidelines for nonsexist usage, e.g. recasting singular references in the plural, alternating masculine and feminine pronouns, etc. are more suited to writing, where an author has the opportunity to insure conformance with such guidelines.

2.2 Generic "Man"

Similar to the critique of generic "he", the use of *man* as a generic term has also come under feminist attack. For example, Schneider and Hacker (1973) claimed that the term "man" is generally not interpreted to mean "people" or "human beings" but rather "males". In a study investigating sex-role imagery among college students, they found that phrases such as *Political Man*, *Economic Man*, and *Urban Man* generated more "male-exclusive imagery" than comparable phrases such as *Urban Life*, *Political Behavior*, etc. However, it should be noted that even the latter phrases frequently elicited male-exclu-

⁸ Cf., however, the history of 2nd person pronouns in English.

sive imagery, albeit less often than the "man" phrases. Similarly, Nilsen (1973) found that young children interpreted *man* in sentences such as "Man needs food to survive" and "Man is the highest form of life on earth" to mean "male human being". Some feminists have argued that English (and especially male speakers of English) conspires to promote the "visibility and primacy of males" over females (Spender 1980:153). It has been claimed that women employ such structures less often than men and that women do not perceive themselves as being included in the terms "he" and "man" (Martyna 1980). Stanley (1977) provides a detailed treatment of the problems inherent in generic reference in English.

Apart from its uses above, "man" also functions as a derivational suffix in English in words such as *postman*, *mailman*, *salesman*, *policeman*, *spokesman*, *milkman*, etc.⁹ Here, the claim is that speakers, including children who are acquiring both linguistic and sociocultural competence, exhibit a preferential interpretation of *-man* as sex-specific (male). This claim is difficult to test, however, since even young children have acquired certain sex-role expectations, thereby confusing separate linguistic and cultural issues. E.g., if people tend to think of a *spokesman* as male, is this due to any overt marking in the term, or is this due to the fact that males tend to fill such roles? It has been suggested that such terms be replaced by sex-neutral alternatives, e.g. *spokeperson*, *mail carrier*, *police officer*, *salesperson*, etc. However, such terms also frequently exhibit preferential male-interpretation, suggesting that the real problem is one of cultural stereotyping rather than linguistic labelling. Of course, sex-biased labelling contributes to the maintenance of such cultural stereotyping. Further, though, a good argument can be made in support of synchronic non-identity between the suffix *-man* and the word *man*: *-man* is phonetically always [mən] rather than [mæn]. Matthews (1974) objects to such an argument since one cannot explain the irregular plural of *-man* as *-men*, i.e. if *-man* and *man* are separate units, then the irregular plural of *man* as *men* should be irrelevant to the independent *-man*, and Matthews claims that we should then hear *policemens*, etc. However, in point of fact, there is non-identity in the plural of the two forms *-men* [men] and *men* [mən], at least in some dialects, including that of one of the present authors, where the singular/plural distinction is phonetically neutralized. A stronger objection to a reanalysis of *-man* as distinct from *man* lies in pairs such as *policeman-police-woman*. Since the latter is, for Matthews, a compound, he is forced into analyzing the former as such too. In such oppositions, however, the male-denoting term is necessarily [pəli : smæn] rather than [pəli : smən], i.e. it is clearly not

⁹ These occurrences of *-man* are treated as derivation by suffixation as opposed to forms such as *company man*, *preacher man* (dial.), *insurance man* which have an unreduced vowel; these latter are presumably compounds.

the generic. Rather, both of the above terms are compounds marked for sex reference and both are subsumed by the generic [pɛli : smən].

2.3. Occupational Terms

The issue of sexism in occupational reference and professional titles is not confined to forms involving the suffix *-man*. Stanley (1977) posited a theory of "negative semantic space" for women, based on several important observations. First, there are fewer nouns that refer to women than to men in English, and more importantly the former are less valued. As Bolinger (1973:541) observed: "Women are taught their place, along with other lesser breeds, by the implicit lies that language tells about them." When women move outside traditional roles (wife/mother) they enter semantic space "already occupied by the male sex" Stanley (1977:67). Woman's anomalous position must then be marked by a female-specific marker. There are two sets of such markers in English: 1 prefixal units such as *lady*, *woman*, *female* placed before prestigious occupations, e.g. *woman doctor*, *female dentist*,¹⁰ and 2 derivational "feminizing suffixes" e.g. *-ette/-ess* as in *majoritte*, *waitress*, *poetess*, *aviatrix*. The compound-forming *-woman*, e.g. *congresswoman*, *spokeswoman*, might also be added here. The only professional terms that do not require overt marking are those which are semantically specified as [-MALE], e.g. *prostitute*, *nurse*, *secretary*, *homemaker*, *kindergarten teacher*.

Several interesting points arise in an analysis of the above forms. First, as Schultz (1975) correctly observed, there is a tendency for nouns referring to females to undergo semantic derogation or trivialization over time. Consider historically parallel pairs such as:

- (7a) steward-stewardess
- major-majorette
- governor-governess
- Sir-Dame
- master-mistress
- bachelor-spinster

where the female-referring term now denotes a trivial occupation, e.g. *majorette*, *governess*, has acquired sexual connotations, e.g. *mistress*, *dame*, or has

¹⁰ Note that the corresponding *male-* prefix occurs in a very limited inventory, viz. professions stereotypically practiced by females, e.g. *male nurse*, *male secretary*, *male prostitute*, *male stripper*, *male exotic dancer*.

¹¹ Cf. also the pair *priest-priestess*, which exhibits asymmetry. *Priestess*, in addition to specifying "female practitioner" implies that the religion involved is a cult or "primitive religion". When the Anglican Church allowed the ordination of women, such women were referred to as *women priests* or simply *priests*, never *priestesses*.

been otherwise subject to derogation, e.g. *spinster*.¹¹ Cf. also semantic shifts such as the following:

- (7b) whore — a lover of either sex (not negative)
- slut — a person negligent of his (generic) appearance
- harlot — a fellow of either sex
- wench — a child of either sex

In addition to narrowing so that only females are now included in the scope of reference, all of these terms have acquired strongly negative connotations (Schultz 1975:68-70).

Certain feminists object to sex-specific occupational terms of any sort precisely because of the above tendency. The term *chairperson* (replacing *chairman*) generated great discussion in the 1970s as academic departments and administrations sought a sexneutral reference for "department head". Although the debate is less active now, many individuals simply acquired a new sexspecific reference, i.e. a male would still be a *chairman*, but a female became a *chairperson* rather than a *chairwoman*. Some departments attempted to avoid the awkwardness and political issues involved by substituting the term *chair*, but this tendency has not met with great success. The problem is a serious one though. Even such relatively neutral sex-specific terms (at least for some speakers) as *actress* and *poetess* are under attack since, it is claimed, they do not compare women to the whole class of professionals but only to the subclass of women. Compare:

- (8a) Patricia Neal is one of the greatest actresses in the history of American film.
- (8b) Patricia Neal is one of the greatest actors in the history of American film.

Similarly, it is alleged that the work of "poetesses" is expected to be trivial, silly, or simply "women's poetry" (whatever that might be), and the term *poetess* is therefore demeaning or insulting. It has been argued that only by designating all practitioners of a profession by a single term will equality of opportunity, expectation, and evaluation be achieved. A certain success has been attained in reaching the goal of nonsexist professional terms, reflecting the fact that the lexicon does lend itself to conscious manipulation and change. The impact of such sex-neutral terms is regarded as minimal by other critics: "The mere fact that there are two sexes gives rise inevitably to two ways of perceiving human life: the 'us' of one view and the 'them' of the other" (Scott 1978:198). It must be pointed out that not all feminists, then, support unmarked terms since they believe that it will only contribute further to the invisibility of women in society. Such feminists are likely to avoid the feminizing suffixes, e.g. *-ess*, and to employ locutions such as *woman artist*, *woman lawyer*, *woman's art*, etc.

2.4 Lexical Gaps

A final aspect of English that is consistent with Schultz' theory of negative semantic space is the absence of certain terms relevant to women's experiences, i.e. lexical gaps in English. For example, Beatty (1979) noted that there is no term in English to refer to female sexuality, corresponding to *virility* for male sexuality. Other examples mentioned by Kramarae (1981:8) (attributed to Spender) include: a term for normal sexual power in women (counterpart to *potent*), a word equivalent to *effeminate* for a woman with "manly" qualities, a term for a woman that connotes an individual rather than a qualifying term calling attention to the woman/man division, a positive term to take the place of *nonsexist*.

2.5 Conclusion

The above survey has not been intended as an exhaustive one. On the one hand, it has not been possible to treat several important topics, e.g. the politics of names and naming. On the other hand, constraints of space preclude a comprehensive treatment of any of the above topics. Rather, our purpose has been to provide an orienting overview of the questions, issues, and data raised in the ongoing examination of the sexist bias of the English language as a prelude to an examination of other languages. We have dealt only peripherally with actual proposals for change. Those researchers active in the field believe that patterns such as those reported above can be taken as indexical of culturally shared attitudes and patterns of social role and status distribution. Such an assumption has long been employed as an operating principle in historical linguistics, e.g. in the reconstruction of a proto-culture on the basis of proto-lexicon. What is novel is the attempt to apply this assumption to an analysis of current usage in order to connect language with a widespread misogyny (e.g. Schultz 1975; Spender 1980; Kramarae 1981). Inherent in such an approach is the belief that sexist language perpetuates and institutionalizes sexist values and attitudes. "Just as we can suppose that the young child is an incredibly talented linguist, comparing rival hypothesized grammars against the evidence she encounters in the speech around her, so we can suppose that the child has some talent as a linguistic anthropologist, figuring out the cultural clues dropped in language use" (McConnell-Ginet 1980:8).

3. Polish

In the present section, we intend to provide a fairly detailed linguistic analysis of certain sex-differentiating features of Polish. This discussion will, at times, be rather more technical than that provided for English in § 2,

due — at least in part — to inherent differences in the nature of the data observed. Additionally, we attempt to be more comprehensive in our treatment here since, unlike the situation for English where there is a wealth of information available, virtually no treatment of this topic is available for Polish either in Polish or in English and, further, the Polish data will be unfamiliar to many readers. Prior to the presentation of our analysis, it is necessary to address a few words to certain preliminary differences in the structures and organizing systems of the two languages under comparison, especially gender systems.

3.1. Gender Systems

It is common in discussions of gender to distinguish between natural gender and grammatical gender. A *gender system* is essentially a system for classification, and *natural gender* refers to a system which employs natural, i.e. inherent, qualities in an object for classification. Modern English is said to possess such a system since nouns are classified into one of three categories, Masculine, Feminine, or Neuter, on the basis of inherent sex characteristics of each object named. There is no overt nominal marking in English (for gender or any other category except plurality) and gender distinctions are relevant only in pronominal reference and certain selectional restrictions. Thus, a male person or animal is referred to by *he*, a female by *she*, and an inanimate object by *it*. There are several well-known counterexamples to this generalization, e.g. ships and cars are frequently *she*, unborn children are frequently *it*, inappropriate sex reference can be used (frequently derogatorily) in reference to homosexuals, and there is the interesting question of appropriate pronominal reference for hermaphroditic organisms.

Systems of grammatical gender, on the other hand, classify objects arbitrarily, i.e. there are no inherent similarities or connections between objects in any single category. Perhaps the most common system of grammatical gender is the sex-gender type found in most European languages. It should be mentioned, however, that grammatical gender systems do not necessarily exploit sex as a basis for classification e.g. the Bantu system of classification recognizes between 7 and 13 genders, but sex reference is not a feature of any category; males and females belong to the same gender category, that specified for most human references.¹² There has been an unfortunate confusion in the literature among the terms *sex*, *gender*, and *sex-gender* (not to mention *sex-role* and *gender-role*), but current usage is now institutionalized. The

¹² Of course, systems of natural gender are not necessarily based on sex either. The noun classification system of Proto-Bantu is assumed to have been a semantically real and natural system based on inherent qualities such as animation, shape, size, function, etc. The essential difference between grammatical and natural gender is that noun classification in the latter is predictable by regular semantic principles.

grammatical (sex-) gender systems of European languages distinguish either two, Masculine/Feminine, genders, e.g. French, Danish, or three, Masculine/Feminine/Neuter, e.g. German, Old English, Russian. There is a partial overlap in these languages between natural and grammatical gender: nouns referring to males tend to be Masculine and nouns referring to females tend to be Feminine. There are, however, numerous exceptions to this generalization, and nouns referring to inanimates may appear in any gender category. For a fuller discussion of gender systems, see Adler (1978); Frank (1978b).

3.2 Sex and Gender in Polish

Polish, like most Slavic languages, distinguishes three grammatical gender categories, Masculine/Feminine/Neuter, in the singular.¹³ The citation form for nouns is generally the nominative singular, and there is some correspondence between the phonological shape of a noun and its gender category (Szober 1967:119):

- (9) a) nouns with -e, -o, -ę endings are Neuter, e.g. *słońce* "sun", *jajko* "egg"
 b) nouns with final -a, -i are Feminine, e.g. *róża* 'rose', *pani* "woman, Ms."
 c) nouns with final consonant are either Masculine or Feminine, e.g. *dom* /M/ "house, *twarz* /F/ "face"

In the majority of cases, nouns with animate referents are either Masculine or Feminine, depending on sex characteristics. There are, however, important exceptions to this generalization:

- (10) a) *mężczyzna* — "male, man (nongeneric)" is historically Feminine and still exhibits certain Feminine case endings although agreement is as for Masculine nouns
 b) *babsztyl* — "woman" (pejorative) — Masculine
 c) *podlotek* — "teenage girl" — Masculine
 d) *dziewczę* — "girl" — Neuter
 e) *pachole* — "boy" — Neuter
 f) *chłopina* — "man (nongeneric)" — Feminine¹⁴

¹³ Mańczak (1956) takes issue with this traditional analysis and proposes, on the basis of distinctions in adjective concord, that one needs to distinguish six genders in Polish (singular and plural) nouns. The complexities of this reanalysis are not relevant here.

¹⁴ Terms such as *chłopina* are frequently listed as having Masculine gender since they take masculine demonstratives and concords although they decline as Feminine nouns. The derivational suffix *-ina* is a feminine suffix, and all derivatives displaying it are unquestionably Feminine, e.g. *psina* "poor small dog" (<*pies* "dog"), *zakięcina* "miserable old jacket" (<*zakięt* (M) "jacket"), *dziecina* "little child" (<*dziecko* (N) "child"), except those derivatives referring to male human beings, e.g. *aktorzyzna* "actor" (pejor.), *adwokacina* "lawyer" (pejor.), etc.

- g) *babisko* — "woman" (pejorative) — Neuter
matczyisko — "mother" — Neuter
mężczyznisko — "man" — Neuter

It is probably true that there is a greater overlap between male-referent terms and Masculine gender than between female-referent terms and Feminine gender; this distinction is observed in many languages.

The three-way distinction Masculine/Feminine/Neuter is replaced in the plural by a two-way distinction between Virile and Nonvirile nouns. Virile nouns are those that refer to male human beings whereas the category Nonvirile includes all other semantic types (females; inanimates; male (nonhuman) animates). There is, thus, only a partial overlap between the Masculine and Virile categories; once again, there are exceptions to the above generalization, which are discussed below.

3.2.1. Singular Concord

The most reliable overt indicators of gender in the singular and plural are demonstrative pronouns and adjectival concord. Polish displays a rich case inflectional system and distinguishes seven cases: Nominative, Genitive, Dative, Accusative, Instrumental, Locative, and Vocative. There are at least four declensional patterns, but these are not of direct relevance here. Taking the nominative and accusative singular and plural as examples, the following concord patterns are observed:

	<i>Nominative</i>	<i>Accusative</i>
(11)		
	{ ten stary stół	ten stary stół "that old table" /M/
	{ ten stary profesor	tego starego profesora "that old prof" /M/
	ta stara kobieta	tę starą kobietę "that old woman" /F/
	to stare krzesło	to stare krzesło "that old chair" /N/
pl.	ci starzy profesorowie	tych starych profesorów "these old professors" /V/
	{ te stare kobiety	{ te stare kobiety "these old women" /NV/
	{ te stare stoły	{ te stare stoły "these old tables" /NV/
	{ te stare krzesła	{ te stare krzesła "these old chairs" /NV/

Several points require mention at this time. First, there is always inflectional concord between the demonstrative and the adjectives in any given NP. Second, although the grammatical gender of a noun usually (and historically) determines the appropriate concord, there is a certain amount of flexibility with regards to the treatment of nouns in which grammatical gender and sex of referent conflict. In many such cases, the expected pattern of grammatically-determined concord is observed:¹⁵

¹⁵ The subscripts_{n, f, m} are used to indicate Neuter, Feminine, and Masculine inflection respectively as well as inherent gender specifications for nouns. Similarly, (M),

- (12) ten_m $sympatyczny_m$ $podlotek_m$ "that pleasant teenage girl" /M/
 to_n $sympatyczne_n$ $pachole_n$ "that pleasant boy" /N/
 to_n $sympatyczne_n$ $dziewcze_n$ "that pleasant girl" /N/

It is worth noting that there are no grammatically Feminine nouns referring exclusively to males in which grammatical concord (i.e. Feminine concord) occurs; in such situations of conflict (male referent vs. Feminine gender), sex-determined ("natural") agreement obtains, e.g.

- (13) ten_m $stary_m$ $chlupina_r$ "that old man" /F/

despite the fact that male referent vs. Neuter gender conflicts are resolved in favor of grammatical agreement:

- (14a) to_n $stare_n$ $chlupisko_n$ "that old man" /N/

or, more rarely, in favor of sex-determined concord:

- (14b) ten_m $stary_m$ $chlupisko_n$ "that old man" /N/

Note, however, that in conflicts involving female referent nouns, sex-determined concord is generally not possible:

- (15) $*ta_r$ $stara_r$ $babsztyl_m$ "that old woman" /M/

$*ta_r$ $sympatyczna_r$ $podlotek_m$ "that pleasant teenage girl" /M/

$*ta_r$ $sympatyczna_r$ $dziewcze_n$ "that pleasant girl" /N/

Viewed from a feminist perspective, such facts easily lend themselves to a change of sexist bias in the grammatical system. That is, male referent nouns are permitted sex-determined concord (male sex is stronger than grammar) if they are grammatically Neuter and are obliged to display sex-determined concord if they are Feminine. On the other hand, the agreements for female referent nouns are always grammatically determined; the language system (and its users) tolerate Neuter and Masculine concords for female referent nouns without difficulty.

This same sexist pattern is observed with certain sexindefinite nouns in Polish, i.e. nouns that may refer either to females or males, e.g. *leń* /M/ "lazy person", *brudas* /M/ "slob", *flejtuch* /M/ "slob", *drań* /M/ "scoundrel", *fajtlapa* /F/ "klutz", *sknera* /F/ "miser", *kaleka* /F/ "handicapped person"; *sierota* /F/ "orphan". These substantives are specified as grammatically Masculine or Feminine. The Masculine group always takes masculine concords, regardless of sex of referent:

- (16) ten_m $wstrętny_m$ $flejtuch_m$ $Zosia$ "that abominable slob Sophie"
 ten_m $wstrętny_m$ $flejtuch_m$ $Janek$ "that abominable slob John"

Both sentences display masculine concords. Compare, however,

- (17) ta_r $stara_r$ $fajtlapa_r$ $Zosia$ "that old klutz Sophie"
 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} ta_r \text{ stara}_r \text{ fajtlapa}_r \text{ Janek "that old klutz Johnny"} \\ ten_m \text{ stary}_m \text{ fajtlapa}_r \text{ Janek} \end{array} \right.$

(F), or (N) following a noun is an indication of its lexical gender. Subscript v and nv refer to Virile and Nonvirile respectively.

Male referent nouns exhibit either grammatical or sex-determined agreement. The only restriction here, as mentioned above, is that concord within the NP be consistent: $*ta_r$ $stary_m$ $fajtlapa_r$. Nouns specified as Neuter with sex-indefinite reference exhibit the expected sexist patterns of agreement, i.e. grammatical concord is obligatory for female referent nouns whereas male referent nouns allow either grammatical or sex-determined concord:

- (18) to_n $wstrętne_n$ $skapiradło_n$ $Zosia$ "that abominable miser Sophie"

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} to_n \text{ wstrętne}_n \text{ skapiradło}_n \text{ Janek} \\ ten_m \text{ wstrętny}_m \text{ skapiradło}_n \text{ Janek} \end{array} \right.$ "that abominable miser John" (as above)

although certain informants prefer grammatical agreement for both of the above cases.

Polish also exhibits NP-external agreement in the verb form, which agrees with its grammatical subject in person, number, and gender. The gender distinctions are most relevant in the past tense whereas person and number inflections are pervasive throughout the verbal system. Consider the following sentences:

- (19) Ta $sympatyczna$ $kobieta$ $tańczyła_r$. "That pleasant woman danced"

Ten $sympatyczny$ $chłopiec$ $tańczył_m$. "That pleasant boy danced"

To $sympatyczne$ $dziecko$ $tańczyło_n$. "That pleasant child danced"

Sex-specific referent nouns involving conflict between grammatical and natural gender (cf. (12)) resolve the conflict in favor of grammatical agreement:¹⁶

- (20) Ten_m $sympatyczny_m$ $podlotek_m$ $tańczył_m$ ($*tańczyła$)

"that pleasant teenage girl danced"

To_n $sympatyczne_n$ $pachole_n$ $tańczyło_n$ ($*tańczył$)

"that pleasant boy danced"

In situations where natural sex overrides grammatical agreement within the NP, the verb also exhibits sex-determined agreement

- (21) Ten_m $stary_m$ $chlupina_r$ $tańczył_m$ ($*tańczyła$)

- (22) to_n $stare_n$ $chlupisko_n$ $tańczyło_n$ ($*tańczył$)

Ten_m $stary_m$ $chlupisko_n$ $tańczył_m$ ($*tańczyło$)

Note, however,

- (23) $*Ten_m$ $stary_m$ $chlupisko_n$ $tańczyło_n$

where NP-internal agreement is sex-determined but verbal agreement is grammatical. This impossibility follows from Greenberg's (1963) Universal 31, which claims that grammatical agreement within a verb implies grammatical agreement within the NP. Thus,

¹⁶ However, in cases where subject NPs include additional information, sex-determined concord may override grammatical agreement: Ten_m $sympatyczny_m$ $podlotek_m$ $Zosia$, $tańczyła_r$ "That pleasant teenage girl Sophie danced." The precise nature of the necessary additional information within the NP is not of interest here. Also, note that there is NP-external concord in predicate adjectives, which is not treated in this paper.

(24) to_n stare $_n$ chłopisko $_n$ tańczył $_m$

does not violate Universal 31; NP-internal agreement is grammatical and verbal agreement is sex-determined. Sentence (24) is acceptable for some speakers.

The treatment of grammatically specified sex-indefinite nouns (cf. (16–18)) allows some variation, but verbal agreement is generally sex-determined; occasionally it is grammatical when no further information is contained in the subject NP.

(25) Ten_m wstrętny $_m$ flejtuch $_m$ tańczył $_m$ (Female referent)

tańczyła $_f$

Ten_m wstrętny $_m$ flejtuch $_m$ tańczył $_m$ (Male referent)

Ta_f stara $_f$ tańczyła $_f$ fajtlapa $_f$ (Male referent)

?tańczył $_m$

Some informants find *Ta stara fajtlapa tańczył* unacceptable since male-referent nouns allow sex-determined concord and prefer *Ten stary fajtlapa tańczył*. When subject NP's are further specified, however, verbal agreement tends to be sex-determined, although this area requires further investigation.

3.2.2. Plural

As mentioned above, the dominant distinction in plural genders is Virile—Nonvirile, and this distinction is marked within the NP and externally in the verb:

(26) a) Ci_v młodzi $_v$ artyści $_v$ tańczyli $_v$. "These young artists danced"

Te_{nv} młode $_nv$ artystki $_nv$ tańczyły $_nv$. "These young female artists danced"

c) Te_{nv} młode $_nv$ dziewczyny $_nv$ tańczyły $_nv$. "These young girls danced"

The Virile category includes male human being referents (exclusive and non-exclusive). That is, as in many other languages, in situations of mixed sex referents the male appropriate reference predominates and (26b) necessarily refers only to an exclusively female group of artists, whereas (26a) may refer to either an exclusively male group or mixed-sex group. This situation is not unlike the neutralizing of the Masculine—Feminine opposition wherein Masculine Plural is both generic and sex-specific.

Generic-referent nouns allow different treatment in the plural depending, in part, on the grammatical gender specification in the singular. That is, grammatically Feminine nouns do not permit Virile concords even when the group referred to is exclusively male: so that

(27) Te stare fajtlapy "These old klutzes"

may refer to all-male, all-female, or mixed-sex referents and **Ci starzy faj-*

tlapy/i is ungrammatical. On the other hand, *some* grammatically masculine nouns permit virilization when the referent group is exclusively male or mixed: e.g.

(28) a) Ci_v starzy $_v$ dranie $_v$ "These old scoundrels"

b) Te_{nv} stare $_nv$ dranie $_nv$

are both acceptable: (28b) is unmarked for sex interpretation whereas (28a) does not allow a female-only interpretation. Note, however, that not all grammatically Masculine nouns allow optional virilization, e.g.

(29) **Ci_v starzy_v flejtusi_v* "These old slob"

**Ci_v starzy_v brudas_v* "These old slob"

The conditions on virilization seem to be lexically specified for individual nouns, i.e. it is not possible to predict which (Masculine) nouns will permit this process.¹⁷

Stankiewicz (1968:37) noted that the virile gender is neutralized in nouns of an expressive (mainly pejorative) meaning, e.g. *snoby* "snobs", *chamy* "boors", *pijaki* "drunkards", *kaleki* "cripples", *sieroty* "orphans", *psubraty* "scoundrels". In point of fact, however, most informants allow virile forms for certain of these substantives, e.g. *snobi*, *pijacy*, *kalecy* (but **chami*, **sieroci*, **psubraci*) Again, individual nouns seem to be lexically marked as to whether a virile form is allowed. In all cases the nonvirile form is more derogatory. More importantly, the process of devirilization is observed, in which a male referent noun (nongeneric) may occur in the nonvirile form:

(30) ci_v chłop $_v$ "These male peasants"

te_{nv} chłop $_nv$ (pejor.)

ci_v muzykanc $_v$ "those male folk musicians"

te_{nv} muzykant $_nv$ (pejor.)

ci_v starzy $_v$ profesorzy $_v$ "these old professors"

te_{nv} stare $_nv$ profesory $_nv$ (pejor.)

Some of these substantives are clearly not generic since Feminine counterparts are found: *chłopka* "female peasant", *muzykantka* "female folk musician". The essential point here is that the process of devirilization is strongly pejorative and that, functionally, devirilization means placing men in the category normally reserved for non-male-human referents, i.e. the nonvirile.¹⁸

¹⁷ The nominative Virile ending *-owie* is semantically restricted in Modern Polish (although historically conditioned by root vowel) and attaches only to prestigious occupations, positions, kinship terms, etc. or at least to semantically neutral terms: *pan-panowie* "sir-sirs", *wódz-wodzowie* "leader(s)", *profesor-profesorowie* "professor(s)", *ojciec-ojcowie* "father(s)". This ending cannot attach to any of the indefinite reference nouns discussed above. Many of these generics are pejorative, but it is not clear whether the syntax (optional viriles) or the semantics (pejoratives) precludes *-owie* suffixation. Cf. Szober (1967:173).

¹⁸ This process is also observed with other classes of substantives, e.g. names for nationalities are typically Virile since they refer to male (and female) human beings. Certain derogatory references are, however, Nonvirile:

Thus, it is clear that the two plural genders, Virile/Nonvirile, are hierarchically ordered and the Nonvirile is less valued than the Virile.¹⁹ Thus, one could argue that the sexist bias of the language is evident in two facets of this dichotomy: 1) females are included in the more highly valued category (Virile) only in the presence of accompanying males; exclusively-female references are always Nonvirile, and 2) males can be "demoted" to Nonvirile, i.e. to the category of women, animals, and inanimates for the purpose of semantic derogation. Traditional grammars tend to explain this asymmetry on the basis of the general rule that "the male species subsumes the female", but it is clear that such a claim cannot be maintained in light of 2) above and the hierarchical ordering of the two plural genders. These facts, coupled with those observed for singular nouns, viz. the tendency for male referent nouns to warrant sex-determined rather than grammatical concord whereas no such tendency is observed in female-referent nouns, reflect sexist bias/values within the grammatical system of Polish. Obviously, a language is used by its speakers; it may seem more appropriate to speak of sexism in speakers rather than in the language system. As many researchers have noted, however, the two are intimately related. Feminist critics would point out that a language such as Polish encodes sexist values, ensures the perpetuation of such values in language acquisition, and in this way contributes to a maintenance of the (sexist) status quo. That is, children acquiring Polish learn that males and females are treated in different fashions grammatically (and in other areas of behavior) and that — in some nontrivial sense — males are more highly valued than nonmales. It must be admitted here though that it is difficult to imagine what kind of deliberate manipulation of linguistic structure might succeed in eliminating/reducing sexism in the concordial system. Rather, one can hope that the primacy of sex-determined agreement over grammatical concord will increase and that females and males will be treated equally at some future stage in the language's history. There are no similar trends observed in Virile/Nonvirile plural agreements, but more careful investigation of actual language use may reveal interesting patterns of variation.

Szwaby _{nv}	"Germans" (pejer.)
szkopy _{nv}	"German soldiers" (pejor.) (but, cf. Niemcy _v , "Germans")
zabojady _{nv}	"Frenchmen" (lit. "frog-eaters") (pejor.)
gumożuje _{nv}	"Americans" (lit. "gum-chewers") (epjor.; slang)

¹⁹ Corresponding to the tendency for male reference nouns to be more highly valued than female reference nouns, one occasionally observes the "promotion" of female-references to a masculine category in certain styles of speech. Brooks and Nalibow (1970) cite the example of obituaries where masculine forms may be used in reference to a deceased woman to convey "a feeling of esteem or respect while the feminine-gender referential remains neutral" (1970: 139).

3.3 Generics

There are a certain number of true generic personal nouns in Polish in addition to the sex-indefinite forms such as *sierota* "orphan", *leń* "lazy person", *fajtlapa* "klutz" discussed in §3.2.

For example:

- (31) *człowiek* /M/ "man (generic)"
osoba /F/ "person"

the first of which is grammatically Masculine and the second Feminine. Unlike the sex-indefinite forms in 3.2, these true generics require strict grammatical concord, e.g. *osoba* cannot occur with masculine concord if the referent is a male (**ten młodym osoba* "that young person", but *ta młoda osoba*); further, true generics never permit virilization in the plural. *Osoba*, according to informants, is truly unmarked for sex and a sentence such as *Pewna osoba mi to powiedziała* "A certain person told me that" suggests nothing about the sex of the referent. Some informants, however, report that *człowiek* in certain contexts functions as a true generic and in other contexts as English *man*. *Pewien człowiek mi to powiedział* "A certain man told me that" has a preferred nongeneric reading for some speakers. The difference between *osoba* and *człowiek* may be that the latter admits a generic interpretation only as a reference to some unknown, abstract individual whereas a reference to a real (unnamed) individual will more likely produce the male reading. Here, too, further study is required to determine the distribution of generic and nongeneric readings. Note the following example, a prominent social slogan of some years ago: *Kobieta — to też człowiek* "Woman is also a man", which shares none of the ambiguity or humorous suggestions of the English gloss. It is worth noting that although the grammatically Masculine noun has developed a dual function ((1) generic, (2) male) no such corresponding tendency is observed for the grammatically Feminine *osoba*, i.e. *osoba* has only a true generic reading and does not suggest female referent.²⁰ *Osoba* is often used by speakers when they specifically want to avoid any suggestion as to the sex of the person referred to; *człowiek* is not employed for this purpose. The asymmetry of the treatment afforded these generics is, it might be claimed, further evidence of sex-differentiating treatment in linguistic structure.

In addition to the question of sex-indefinite or generic interpretation of certain substantives, there is the question of pronominal reference for such substantives. Polish distinguishes three 3rd person pronouns in the singular and two in the plural:²¹

- (32) *ona* — she /F/

²⁰ Derivatives from *osoba* may be sex-specific, e.g. *osobnik* "male person" (freq. pejor.), *osóbka* "little person (female or child)" (F). The suffixes in such cases are themselves marked for gender, e.g. *-ek* (M), *-ka* (F).

on — he /M/
 ono — it /N/
 oni — they /V/
 one — they /NV/

Several interesting points require mention in this context. First, anaphoric pronouns are generally sex-determined rather than grammatically determined. The pronoun is usually optional in discourse, but agreement is sex-determined:

(33) Ten_m sympatyczny_m podłotek_m tańczył_m (cf. (20))

(Ona_f) robiła_f to bardzo dobrze.

“That pleasant teenage girl /M/ danced. She did it very well.”

To_n sympatyczne_n pachole_n tańczyło_n

(On_m) robił_m to bardzo dobrze.

“That pleasant boy danced. He did it very well”.

In many situations, the grammatically determined pronominal reference is unacceptable, e.g. *Ten_m podłotek_m ... On_m robił_m* “That teenage girl /M/ ... He did”. This tendency is in keeping with Moravcsik’s claim that every language with grammatical gender may pronominalize according to sex (cited in Baron 1971). The treatment is parallel for sex-indefinite nouns such as *leń*, *sierota*, *fajtlapa*, etc. and pronominal reference (as well as subsequent verbal agreements) in such cases frequently serves to indicate sex reference, e.g.

(34) Ten_m wstrętny_m flejtuch_m tańczył_m ale bardzo dobrze (ona_f)

to robiła_f.

“That abominable slob danced but she did it very well”.

Ten_m wstrętny_m flejtuch_m tańczył_m ale bardzo dobrze (on_m)

to robił_m.

“That abominable slob danced but he did it very well”.

Pronominal agreement with true generics, e.g. *osoba*, is grammatical rather than sex-determined. Certain sex-indefinite substantives also exhibit grammatical agreement within a single sentence, e.g. *ofiara* “victim” /F/, *postać* “character” /F/, but either sex- or grammatically-determined pronouns outside the simple sentence. Consider the following sentence, spoken about a male accident victim:

(35) Ofiara_f została_f przewieziona_f do szpitala.

Lekarze podali { jej_f } krew.
 { mu_m }

²¹ These pronouns also inflect for case agreement, e.g.

	feminine	masculine
nom.	ona	on
gen.	jej	jego, go
dat.	jej	jemu, mu
acc.	ją	jego, go

“The victim was taken to the hospital. The doctors gave him some blood.”

In the first sentence, both the verb *została* and the past participle *przewieziona* are marked for grammatical agreement with the Feminine antecedent *ofiara* “victim” despite the speaker’s knowledge that the victim was male. The personal (dative) pronoun in the second sentence may be either feminine *jej* (agreeing with *ofiara*) or masculine *mu* (agreeing with sex of referent). The tendency for sex-determined concord rather than grammatical concord is observed in many languages and principles of discourse may account for the distribution of forms. This topic requires further study.

True indefinites, e.g. *ktoś* “someone”, *nikt* “nobody”, *ktokolwiek* “anybody” etc. also exist and decline as masculine pronouns; for example, *ktoś* (nom.), *komuś* (dat.), *kogoś* (gen., acc.), etc. *Każdy* “everybody” is also indefinite, but as an adjective it declines in all three singular genders (*każdy_m*, *każda_f*, *każde_n*). The masculine form is used for generic reference, e.g. *Każdy wie, że ...* “Everybody knows that ...”. Verbal agreement with these indefinites is always masculine:

(36) Ktoś zapomniał_m ... *Ktoś zapomniała, *zapomniało

“Somebody forgot ...”

Ktokolwiek widział_m ... *widziała_f, *widziało_n

“Anybody who saw ...”

even when addressed to a female-exclusive group:

(37) Czy ktoś zapomniał ...?

“Did anyone forget ...?”

“Czy ktokolwiek widział ...?”

“Did anyone see ...?”

The pattern here, then, is akin to the so-called generics of English, i.e. grammatical agreement is necessarily masculine. Pronominal reference is also sex-biased:

(38) Każdy wie, czego mu potrzeba.

each know what him need

(gen) (dat)

“everybody knows what he needs”

*Każdy wie, czego jej potrzeba.

(39) Kto nie pracuje, ten nie je.

who not work that-one not eat

“He who doesn’t work doesn’t eat”

*Kto nie pracuje, ta_f nie je.

By way of provisional summary, the concordial and pronominal system of Polish, despite the historical prominence of grammatical agreement and gender, exhibits certain sexist tendencies in which the higher valuation of masculine forms and male referents is evident. In part, these tendencies are displayed in the introduction of sex-determined agreement for certain male

referent substantives and in devirilization as a process of pejoration, but the prominence of masculine concords with indefinites also contributes linguistically to the expression of male superiority.

3.4 Lexicon

3.4.1 Occupational Terms

There are other areas of language, in addition to the syntactic features described above, which point to sex-differentiating treatment of women and men. In particular, the Polish lexicon easily demonstrates the same male bias found in many other languages. As a preliminary point, consider the simple fact that in most masculine-feminine pairs of parallel terms, the feminine term is derived from the masculine by means of a derivational suffix:

(40)	<i>masculine</i>	<i>feminine</i>	
	pan	pani	"Mr./Ms."
	student	studentka	"student"
	Szwed	Szwedka	"Swede"
	dozorca	dozorczyńi	"caretaker"
	Mirosław	Mirosława	(personal name)
	Cygan	{Cyganka Cyganicha}	"gypsy"

As in English, the reverse process of masculine derivation is decidedly rare:

(41)	wdowiec	wdowa	"widower/widow"
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There are other pairs where a masculine term is historically derived from a feminine term:

(42)	położnik	położna
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However, the terms are not parallel semantically: the form *położna* "midwife" is the historical base for *położnik* "obstetrician". Note that the (derived) masculine term is the more valued one and that female obstetricians are referred to by the more prestigious masculine form, i.e. the masculine is used generically. The same asymmetry is observed in pairs such as *sekreтарь-sekretarka* where the feminine term means "(clerical) secretary" and the masculine "secretary; organizational official"; the masculine form is also used generically, e.g. the First Secretary of the Communist Party, if a woman, is necessarily *Pierwszy Sekretarz Partii*, never *Pierwsza Sekretarka Partii*.

In many other instances where a particular occupation was traditionally practiced only by females, the sole professional term is a feminine derivative: *przędka* "spinner", *maszynistka* "typist", *niańka* "baby-sitter", *prostytutka* "prostitute", *kosmetyczka* "cosmetician", *przedszkolanka* "kindergarten teacher", *modystka* "milliner", *gorseciarka* "corset maker", *gosposia* "house-

keeper", etc., most of which exhibit the feminizing suffix *-ka*. It is not possible, however, to back-form a parallel male professional term, e.g. **prząd/prządek*, ** prostytut*, **przedszkolaniń*, etc. Male practitioners of these professions are necessarily referred to by alternate terms, e.g. *kosmetolog* (actually a medical practitioner, male or female), or more commonly by circumlocutions, e.g. *wychowawca przedszkolny* (lit. "tutor male of kindergarten"), or by explicit "male" marking, e.g. *prostytutka-męska* (lit. "prostitute-male"), *niańka-męska*, etc. Such forms directly parallel English ones such as *male prostitute*, *male belly dancer*, etc.

It is worth noting in this context that the so-called feminizing suffix *-ka* is formally identical to the suffix used for diminutivization. This identity between feminine and diminutive is not uncommon in languages (cf. English *-ette* <Fr.) Functionally, *-ka* attached to a grammatically Feminine base typically has a diminutive reading (e.g. *dziewczyna* "girl" — *dziewczynka* "little girl" whereas when attached to a masculine base it tends to have the "female counterpart to" interpretation. *-ka* has a number of other functions, e.g. it can serve to derive the name of an object associated with a particular profession:

(43)	marynarz	"sailor"	marynarka	"jacket"
	kawaler	"bachelor"	kawalerka	"studio apt"
	tokarz	"lathe operator"	tokarka	"lathe"

or the name of the craft or profession:

(44)	marynarz	"sailor"	marynarka	"navy"
	stolarz	"carpenter"	stolarka	"carpentry, woodwork"
	murarz	"bricklayer"	murarka	"masonry, brickwork"

There is a grammatically masculine suffix *-ek*, which serves to form diminutives from masculine bases (e.g. *człowiek* "man" — *człowieczek* "little man", *pies* "dog" — *piesek* "little dog"). This suffix cannot serve any of the other functions listed above, e.g. it cannot derive "male counterpart to" terms from feminine bases, which, as mentioned above, are not synchronically derivable.²²

Corresponding to professions traditionally associated with females for which no male terms exist, there are professions traditionally practiced for which the parallel female terms are not in general use. Consider, e.g.

(45)	szofer	"chauffeur"
	murarz	"bricklayer"
	marynarz	"sailor"

²² The only other function associated with the *-ek* suffix is illustrated when it attaches to masculine professional terms to form a pejorative reference as in *profesorek* "professor", *dyrektorek* "director", *oficerek* "officer". The feminine suffix *-ka* can attach to certain professional terms, used for both female and male practitioners, for pejorative feminine reference, e.g. *docentka* "female associate professor", *profesorka* "female university professor". This topic is treated in the following section.

oficer "officer"
 kominiarz "chimney sweep"

The general non-occurrence of female counterparts is related to the appropriate lexical slots (STEM+ *-ka*) having been filled by one of the other *-ka* functions:

(46) szoferka "drivers' booth"
 murarka "masonry, brickwork"
 marynarka "jacket, navy"
 oficerka "officer's boot"²³
 kominiarka "(type of) hat"

Since women did not fill professional roles in the occupations in (45), there was no need for female counterpart terms, and the existence of forms such as those in (46) blocks such derivations, cf. Satkiewicz (1981). This is not true in all cases: certain *-ka* forms function both as the female counterpart term and as the object associated with the profession:

(47) konduktor "conductor"
 konduktorka "conductor (female), type of bag"
 pilot "guide, pilot"
 pilotka "guide (female), type of hat"

On the whole, though, such "female counterpart" meanings are secondary and many such interpretations are semantically blocked. Thus, there are certain instances in Polish in which lexical gaps arise in the professional vocabulary for women, and there are other situations in which gaps occur in the professional vocabulary for men. Note, however, that the two types of situations are quite distinct: 1) female professional terms are blocked when the appropriate form already functions in the language with a separate meaning 2) male professional terms are not blocked by any such identity of form, but rather by restrictions on deriving masculine terms from feminine ones. This asymmetry again points to bias in the language system, a bias derived from cultural history and values, but which is linguistically encoded nonetheless. The question of professional terms is discussed in further detail in §3.5.

3.4.2 Lexical Gaps

There are numerous other lexical gaps in the language, some of which are clearly related to cultural and sexist values. A rather interesting gap in Polish is exhibited in the absence of a term for "male virgin" in general use. The general term for virgin, *dziewica*, is grammatically Feminine and refers to females. There is no corresponding male derivative (**dziewiec*), (a backformation), and most speakers view such a derivation as a joke. Some, relati-

²³ The correct form is *oficerek* (M), but it has been replaced by *oficerka* (F) for many speakers. There is identity in the more frequently occurring plural form (Nonvirile) *oficerki* and reanalysis as Feminine singular.

vely few, speakers allow that the Feminine term might be used to refer to male virgins as well as to female virgins, but most informants claimed that this could only occur in very colloquial speech and would have a jocular connotation. An unrelated form *prawiczek* was supplied by one informant. This form, although rejected by other informants, is itself interesting since it appears to be a backformation from *prawiczka*, another term for female virgin that is now somewhat obsolete. Both terms are listed in *Słownik Języka Polskiego*, but this reference lists a second meaning for the male term as "naive, gullible man; uncouth" but no corresponding meanings for the Feminine term. Both of these words are in restricted use (unknown to some informants). It is worth noting the asymmetry in secondary semantic development, i.e. "male virgin" seems to be a concept that is, in the words of one (male) informant, "culturally irrelevant" and the Masculine term therefore developed a secondary meaning. "Female virgin", as in all sexist societies, is a differentially valued concept and the language therefore permitted no further semantic development for the corresponding term. *Dziewica*, similarly, has a single meaning. Many of the other lexical gaps that are observed for Polish, e.g. the absence of terms for "male prostitute", are found in many other languages.

3.5. Professional Titles, Reference, and Address

There is a tendency in Polish, described above, to derive female occupational terms from corresponding male terms via several derivational suffixes, of which *-ka* is the most productive, both synchronically and historically. There is, however, another tendency, observed since the early part of the present century, for practitioners of certain professions to share a single title regardless of their sex (Klemensiewicz 1957), e.g. *doktor* "doctor" *prezes* "president", *adwokat* "lawyer", *magister* "holder of M.A. degree". On the whole, only prestigious occupations allowed this treatment although there is a growing tendency to extend this phenomenon to other professions,²⁴ e.g. *kasjer* "cashier", *sprzedawca* "salesperson", *referent* "office clerk". The official title for such occupations tends to be the generic (masculine) term; practitioners tend to refer to themselves by this term, and the generic is also used when there is a distinction in rank, e.g. *starszy referent* "senior clerk", although feminine derivatives are available for all of these latter terms: *kasjerka*, *referentka*, *sprzedawczyni*. These derived terms are used widely as terms of reference, especially in colloquial speech. It does not seem that feminine derivatives are disappearing, and in fact forms such as *doktorka* "female doctor", *lekarka* "female doctor" (<*lekarz* "doctor"), *adwokatka* "female lawyer"

²⁴ Note that the absence of a definite article in Polish may assist in this tendency. Distinct masculine and feminine articles are said to hinder the development of common gender nouns in Romance languages. Cf. Frank (1978b).

are employed in colloquial speech. Recall, however, that the feminine derivative is considered demeaning for other occupations, e.g. *docentka* "female associate professor", *inżynierka* "female engineer", *profesorka* "female university professor". The latter term is interesting because *profesor* is also the term used for "high school teacher" and in this case the feminine derivative *profesorka* is very commonly found. All informants agree, however, that it would be quite pejorative applied to a university professor, with whom only the generic (male) term may be used. This points clearly to the higher status accorded male titles, especially in cases where the masculine and feminine forms of a single stem have developed asymmetrically, e.g. *sekreтарь*-*sekreterka*; the male term must be used for the higher status profession.

According to Klemensiewicz (1957:109), phonological constraints also contribute to certain gaps in feminine reference terms. Specifically, *-ka* is not suffixed in circumstances where such suffixation would produce non-euphonic consonant clusters, e.g. **architektka* "female architect", **adjunktka* "female lecturer", **elektka* "female elected representative", **geometrka* "female surveyor"; *-ka* is also not suffixed to forms in *-olog*, e.g. *geolog* (**geolożka*) "geologist". It is worth noting, however, that all of these forms are clearly borrowed and refer to relatively high status professions. It is true that nouns marked in the lexicon as foreign tend not to undergo palatalization; this fact might account partially for the unacceptability of **geolożka*, **psycholożka*, **filolożka* (<*geolog*, *psycholog*, *filolog* "geologist", "psychologist", "philologist"), but pragmatic factors must also be considered since these feminine derivatives do occur in jocular speech.

As in other languages, the issue of separate terms for female practitioners has generated considerable interest. Language purists have long insisted on the "correctness" of feminine derivatives and the "need" to distinguish male and female professionals. Various social trends in Poland have tended to pull in the opposite direction. Further, in more formal language it is more economical to use a single generic term, e.g. in official regulations, than to specify male and female practitioners separately. Finally, many female practitioners, recognizing the differential valuation of female and male terms, opted for the masculine/generic rather than the term marked for female-exclusive reference.

Thus, with regard to female occupational terms, one can distinguish three broad classes: 1) terms for professions which are dominated by women; these are the professions that tend not to provide corresponding male terms, 2) terms for professions in which the feminine terms are derived from male terms via suffixation; both male and female terms occur, but there may be a tendency, in certain styles, for the male term to replace the female one, 3) terms for professions in which only the male term is used, "generically"; these tend to be the professions marked for high prestige in the society.

Occupational reference terms are also used as address titles occasionally, usually following *pan* or *pani* e.g. *Pani doktor*, *Pan docent*, *Pani sekretarka*, *Pan konduktor*. When used as full address terms, these forms occur in the Vocative case, and both items decline appropriately, e.g. *Panie docencie* "(Mr.) Associate Professor", *Panie konduktorze* "(Mr.) Conductor". An interesting anomaly appears in the treatment of the parallel terms for females. Female titles decline appropriately when the occupational title is sexmarked, e.g. *Pani dyrektorko* "(Ms.) Directress", *Pani konduktorko* "(Ms.) Conductress". However, when a generic title is used for a woman, then the title does not decline: *Pani doktor*, *Pani docent*, *Pani dyrektor*, etc. In fact, generic titles applied to women as either address terms or terms of reference are indeclinable nouns even though the same forms decline appropriately when they refer to males. The only nouns that are not subject to normal rules of declension in Polish are borrowings. One could thus analyze the use of male titles to refer to females as "intralinguistic borrowings"; that is, although the language tolerates such usage, actual occurrences of such forms are perceived as aberrant in some sense and therefore do not decline according to general principles of Polish morphology. The language conspires in this way to identify female practitioners. Consider:

- (48) Byłam u *doktor* Stankiewicz. "I've_f been to Dr._f Stankiewicz
Dałam to *mecenas* Bielskiej "I gave_m it to Attorney_f Bielska"
Idę na wykład *profesor* Wójcik "I'm going to Professor_f Wójcik's
lecture"
Rozmawiałem z *magister* Malinowską "I've_m talked to M. A._f Malinowska"
- (49) Byłam u *doktora* Stankiewicza. "... Dr._m Stankiewicz"
Dałam to *mecenasowi* Bielskiemu "... Attorney_m Bielski"
Idę na wykład *profesora* Wójcika "... Professor_m Wójcik"
Rozmawiałem z *magistrem* Malinowskim "... M.A._m Malinowski"

Both (48) and (49) display the so-called generic-reference titles *doktor*, *mecenas*, *profesor*, *magister*. The forms in (49) *doktora* (genitive), *mecenasowi* (dative), *profesora* (genitive), *magistrem* (instrumental) refer to male professionals and therefore decline appropriately according to syntactic context; the forms in (48) refer to female professionals and are therefore indeclinable, i.e. they occur only in citation form.²⁵

The situation regarding NP-internal and verbal agreements for such generic professional terms exhibits some variation. On the whole, generic terms used as true generics display the expected masculine concords. Masculine concords can also be used when the title refers to a woman if the focus of the sentence

²⁵ Klemensiewicz (1957) reported a possibility of declining the female terms (in (48)) as masculine nouns and that some speakers preferred this tendency. He predicted, correctly, that the indeclinable feminines would prevail.

is on her professional capacity rather than on characteristics of her as an individual:

(50) Szpital zatrudnił jeszcze jednego lekarza, dr Zofię Bielską.

"The hospital hired another doctor, Dr. Sophie Bielska."

(51) Nowy_m dyrektor został_m przysłany_m z Ministerstwa.

"A new director was sent from the Ministry."

In (50), the NP *jeszcze jednego lekarza* exhibits masculine agreement and could apply to either a male or female doctor, although the name of the doctor here makes clear that the new doctor is a woman. Sentence (52), on the other hand, specifies that the new employee is female in the form of the professional term *lekarke* and reads as "another female doctor", i.e. it compares her to the class of female doctors rather than the class of all doctors:

(52) Szpital zatrudnił jeszcze jedną lekarke, dr Zofię Bielską.

In (51), even if one knows the new director to be a woman, masculine adjectival concord (*nowy, przysłany*) and verbal agreement (*został*) is appropriate since the focus is on a new director's having been sent rather than on the fact that the new director is female. Compare, however,

(53) Nowa_r dyrektor była_r elegancko ubrana_r.

"The new director was elegantly dressed."

where both *nowa* and *ubrana* display feminine adjectival concord and the verb *była* is inflected for a female subject since the focus here is on an individual feature of the new director, i.e. her elegant appearance, rather than on her professional role. There are probably other principles governing the use of masculine and feminine concords with generic occupational terms referring to women, but the above principle accounts for some of the variation. There is, however, a wide range of situations between the cases such as (50) and (51) on the one hand and (53) on the other, in which it is difficult to determine whether the focus of a particular sentence is on the professional capacity of the referent or some individual feature of the person. In such instances the agreement is more commonly sex-determined, e.g.

(54) Co ta_r nowa_r lekarz ci powiedziała_r?

"What did that new doctor tell you?"

It may be that there is a reanalysis of traditionally masculine terms as common gender substantives, i.e. forms which inflect for either masculine or feminine agreement depending on the sex of the referent: forms without any inherent grammatical gender specification, although they necessarily take masculine agreement when used generically. The authors believe that a detailed socio-linguistic survey would document extensive variation in the acceptability of feminine concords for these "common gender" nouns with features of individual speakers (e.g. younger speakers preferring sex-determined concord) as well as style and context acting as determinants of variation. Such a survey is well beyond the scope of the present work.

3.6 Names and Address

The feminist critique of Western naming traditions is well-known, i.e. that children, both female and male, receive their father's name at birth and that in traditional European society not to do so was associated frequently with considerable shame. Consider, for example, the social pressure to marry brought to bear on young unmarried couples to "give the child a name". Further, again traditionally, women surrendered their father's name at marriage only to receive that of another male, their husband. This situation, both in terms of attitude and practice, has recently changed considerably in certain societies. Many women now decline to surrender their "birth names" at marriage and either eschew the husband's name or incorporate both names into a hybrid. More radical approaches to combatting the sexism inherent in such a system include rejecting both father's and husband's names, although the problem in such an instance becomes finding a name not "tainted by the brush of male sexism".

This situation is observed in Poland, but there is a more interesting linguistic aspect of the politics of naming. Polish employs two derivational suffixes, *-owa* and *-ówna*, to convert masculine surnames into corresponding feminines. The former is equivalent to the traditional meaning of "Mrs." and the latter to "Miss".²⁶ *-owa* attaches to a husband's name so that, for example, a woman married to Mr. Wójcik becomes *Wójcikowa* and their daughter would be *Wójcikówna* whereas a son would bear the same name as the father, *Wójcik*, without any derivational suffix.²⁷ Masculine names in this class decline as regular Masculine nouns whereas the *-owa* and *-ówna* suffixed forms are both adjectivized (although *-ówna*, according to prescriptive grammar, should decline nominally), i.e. the names for wives and daughters are adjectival derivatives of the husband's or father's name. Historically, *-owa* (and the composite *-ówna* < **-ow* + *in* + inflection) is a possessive suffix; this meaning of *-owa* may still be observed in phrases such as *ojcove pole* "father's field" (lit.: "father + poss. field"), *Zygmuntowy dzwon* "Sigmund's bell". Cf. also the

²⁶ These are the two most common suffixes, but others are heard dialectally, especially *-icha* and *-ina* (both equivalent to *-owa*) and *-anka* (equivalent to *-ówna*). The latter also appears in Standard Polish in certain contexts, e.g. with male names in final *-a*. The distribution of forms is not relevant here.

²⁷ There is an archaic Masculine derivational suffix *-ic/-icz* that functioned as a masculine equivalent of *-ówna* or *-anka*, i.e. "son of X". E.g. *starosta* "district governor", *starościc* "governor's son", *starościanka* "governor's daughter", *starościna* "governor's wife"; *król* "king", *królewicz* "prince (king's son)", *królewna* "princess", *królowa* "queen". Cf. Satkiewicz (1981: 152–53). Some family names also display the incorporated reflex of this suffix, e.g. *Staszyc*, *Wójtowicz*. However, the essential point is that the masculine suffix is now obsolete, i.e. sons and fathers are like-named whereas the two (or more) feminine derivational suffixes continue to be employed, although some younger informants claim that these suffixes are heard less frequently in major urban centers.

kinship term *bratowa* "sister-in-law" (lit. "brother—poss.") and the word for queen *królowa* (lit. "king+poss.") which is now used for both 1) wife of male sovereign and 2) female sovereign. The less common suffix (cf. note 21) *-ina* also occurs with a possessive meaning, e.g. *Zosina sukienka* "Sophie's dress". Quite apart from the sexism apparent in labelling a woman as a man's possession, there is the interesting consequence that women are thus denied independent nominal existence, i.e. both linguistically and metaphorically they are possessive adjectives, dependent on masculine nouns for existence. It should be pointed out that there is another class of masculine names that is adjectival and also derives from possessives, viz. names in *-ski*, e.g. *Korzeniowski*, *Bukowski*. The possessive meaning of *-ski* is observed in phrases such as *ojcowskie pole* "father's field", *kaplica Zygmunowska* "Sigmund's chapel". The feminine counterparts of these names are also adjectival. Pairs such as *Korzeniowski-Korzeniowska* serve for husbands/sons and wives/daughters respectively.

Several other interesting facets of the naming situation deserve mention.²⁸ The *-owa* (and to a much lesser extent *-ówna*) suffix is used to form female derivatives from male professional terms. The semantics of such derivation are as above, i.e. the derived terms refer to wives (and daughters). Thus, *Pani profesorowa* is the wife of *Pan profesor* "professor", *generałowa* "the general's wife", *kowalowa* "the blacksmith's wife", *młynarzowa* "the miller's wife", etc. This situation is quite unlike that found in Romance languages, for example, where a single suffix is used for feminine derivatives of this type and for female professional terms, e.g. French *Mme la doctoresse* traditionally referred to the doctor's wife, but, in the absence of a separate derivational suffix, this form now serves as one possible reference for female doctors. This ambiguity is one reason cited by feminists to reject the use of feminine derivatives in these languages. Polish, on the other hand, employs separate derivational suffixes for these two functions, e.g. *-ka* "female practitioner" and *-owa* "wife of". As mentioned earlier, the *-ka* derivatives may be weakening as more and more

²⁸ First names exhibit the same derivational asymmetry in Polish as in other European languages, i.e. female names are derived from male names, e.g. *Stanisława* from *Stanisław*, *Janina* from *Jan*, *Bogumiła* from *Bogumił*, *Romana* from *Roman*, *Józefa* from *Józef*. The only exception to this generalization is the male name *Marian*, derived from the female *Maria*; this exception relates to the special status of the Virgin Mary in Christian Poland. (Cf. Spanish *Mario*, French *Jean-Marie*, etc.)

²⁹ The suffix *-owa* occurs rarely in terms for female professionals, usually in counterparts for male terms in *-owy*, e.g. *aparatura* — *aparatomy* "machine operator" (*aparat* "machine"), *bufetowa* — *bufetowy* "bar/counter attendant" (*bufet* "bar"). Note that these feminine forms cannot be interpreted as "wife of X" since X in these cases is not a male human referent. Additionally, there are very few nouns which are potentially ambiguous between the two meanings "wife of X" and "female practitioner", e.g. *szewcowa* "female shoemaker/wife of shoemaker", *krawcowa* "female dressmaker/wife of tailor", *szefowa* "female boss/wife of boss".

masculine terms develop features of common gender nouns, but no such weakening is observed for *-owa*.

Perhaps the most indicating use of the *-owa* suffix occurs in its use with male personal names. That is, as with (male) family and professional names, *-owa* may be added to a man's given name or nickname in order to derive a term for female reference or address, e.g. *Jurkowa* "wife of Jurek", *Andrzejowa* "wife of Andrzej (Andrew)", *Mietkowa* "wife of Mietek (Mieczysław)". Such patterns seem particularly strong in rural areas, but they are very frequently heard in major cities as well. Thus, the naming situation in Polish, at least from a feminist perspective, is worse than that observed in other European languages where the predominant sexist pattern is observed in surnaming. In Polish, however, a woman may lose her entire identity, being referred to with male names not only as (Mrs.)+Last Name but also (Mrs.)+First Name. In either pattern she is merely a possession: if she is not "(Mr.) Wójcik's wife", then she is "Andrew's wife". This particularly odious pattern, surpressing a woman's birth identity, also occurs with the collective suffix *-owie* used to refer to married couples, e.g. *Wójcikowie* means "Mr. and Mrs. Wójcik; the Wójcik's"; *Andrzejowie* "Mr. and Mrs. Andrew (i.e. Andrew and wife)".³⁰ The counterpart reference derived from a woman's name is impossible, e.g. **Elżbietowie* "Mrs. and Mr. Elizabeth (i.e. Elizabeth and husband)", **Ankowie* "Annie and husband", even when the man's name is unknown to the speaker. In such cases, the necessary references are *Elżbieta z mężem*, *Anka z mężem* ("Elizabeth and husband", "Annie and husband"). That is, it is impossible for a man's identity to be subsumed by that of a woman.³¹ Similarly, the suffix *-ostwo* attaches to professional titles to form collectives (like *-owie* with names),³² e.g. Professor and Mrs. Wójcik are referred to as *Profesorostwo Wójcikowie*. However, in the situation where the prestige title belongs to the woman, collective reference is impossible, i.e. the above cannot mean "Professor and Mr. Wójcik". The only possible forms in such cases are *Professor Wójcik z mężem*, or *Państwo Wójcikowie* "Mr. and Mrs. Wójcik" in which the embarrassing reference to the woman's achievement is surpressed.

³⁰ In certain cases the male name is treated as a regular noun and pluralized to include a wife in the reference. Part of the conditioning here may be phonological, e.g. names with final *o*+labial sequences avoid *-owie* for haplological reasons; there is also stylistic conditioning, e.g. *Boby* (*Bob*+masc. pl.) has been used by colleagues to refer to the present authors, but such forms are rather colloquial.

³¹ Some speakers allow that such forms employing a woman's name as base for collective reference are occasionally heard. The pragmatics such of usage may be complex. One such use has clearly jocular connotations, deriving from the inappropriateness of the collective base. In certain other instances the jocular connotation may be absent, but such usage is situationally marked. Further research on this point is required.

³² The *-ostwo* suffix seems to be disappearing in urban speech.

3.7 Conclusion

The above survey of sexism in Polish is certainly neither exhaustive nor comprehensive. The findings and analysis are preliminary, but we believe that it is representative of the variety of forms which linguistic sexism can assume. There is some variation in actual usage, as noted above, particularly in terms of concord and in the use of generic occupational terms to refer to women who fill these roles. Other taxonomic features seem more stable, e.g. the various gender distinctions within the singular and plural. Szober (1967:119–120) noted that the tripartite system of singular noun classification, Masculine/Feminine/Neuter, derived from an animistic system of world classification whereas the twofold distinction in the plural, Virile/Nonvirile, corresponds to an evaluative system in which one category (men) is more highly valued than others (women, animals, inanimates). Modern Poland, according to Szober, does not subscribe to such a world view and he points out that language systems usually lag behind changes in social organization. While this observation is no doubt correct (cf. Lakoff 1973), one must not neglect the effect of such linguistic encoding in the acquisition of sociocultural competence by young children. Feminists have long claimed that sexist language patterns serve to institutionalize and perpetuate (male) sexist views. The evidence is accumulating in support of their claim. The question then arises, as it has in the past, as to how one combats linguistic sexism. The lexicon is, of course, the most conducive to manipulation and change, and many individuals would point with approval to the tendency for unmarked rather than sexspecific occupational reference. On the other hand, the stability of the derivational suffix *-owa* was noted, and the labelling of women by reference to men is a thoroughly set pattern of classification; tradition is very strong on this point. Popular (Western-style) feminism is not very strong in Poland, and its advent may bring pressure to bear upon this system. Other areas of language are even less conducive to change although certain possible developments might serve to reduce sex-differentiation in the future, e.g. sex-determined concord with sex-indefinite reference terms applied to either women or men. Within the plural category, the Virile/Nonvirile distinction is so ingrained that it would no doubt resist any deliberate tampering.²⁵ What seems clear at this point is that languages do indeed differ in their potential for nonsexist usage and that, in part, this difference can be accounted for by reference to inherent differences in systems of grammatical organization and structure. In the following section of this paper, one aspect of linguistic sexism discussed above will be examined in a related language. The language providing the data is Russian, another Slavic language, and the interest is in a comparison of the ways in which two similarly-structured languages have dealt linguistically with changes in social roles and organization.

4. Russian

Russian, like Polish, classifies nouns according to grammatical gender, although there is again a significant overlap between natural and grammatical genders in the case of substantives referring to human beings. As in Polish, there is an extensive system of concord by which adjectives and verb agree with the gender of relevant nouns. The focus of the present section is on the issue of changes in the inventory of occupational titles caused by the opening of professions to women in this century and on the question of how the language has accommodated (in terms of concord) such changes. The relevant data are discussed in a frequently-cited article by Rothstein (1973) and in somewhat fuller detail in Comrie and Stone (1978). The main point of Rothstein's presentation concerned a theoretical issue of lexical representation, rather than the issue of linguistic sexism, and certain important facts are therefore not apparent in his discussion. The following discussion is couched in very general terms; for the actual data upon which the discussion is based, the reader is referred to Panov (1968) and (Mučnik 1963) as well as the sources named above.

As noted in Section 3, there is a tendency in Polish to use generic professional terms in occupations where a female practitioner form did not traditionally exist. These are mainly prestige occupations, closed to women until this century, and although the language has derivational devices by which feminine terms could be derived, such derivations are avoided and considered demeaning by some, especially the actual referents. These generic nouns are grammatically Masculine and concord may be grammatical when the focus is on professional role or sex-determined when on the individual practitioner. NP-internal and verbal agreement generally coincide.

Panov (1968) reports that pressure on the system of occupational terms in Russian first developed late in the 19th century (about the same time as in Poland) as women began to enter professional life. This was a restricted phenomenon, and the number of women involved as well as the professions entered was quite small, e.g. prestige professions such as medicine and certain social functions. There was, however, a need, particularly among the intelligentsia (from whom these female professionals were drawn), to refer to female professionals. The initial tendency was to use the pre-existing male term to apply to practitioners of either sex.

The World War and subsequent October Revolution of 1917 brought significant changes in the make-up of the Russian work force. Many occupational roles were now filled by women and it was therefore necessary for all levels of society to be able to refer to the vast array of female professionals. The initial post-Revolution tendency countered the single-term approach of

the pre-Revolutionary intelligentsia; official policy was for separate male and female practitioner forms, a policy motivated by notions of sexual equality, i.e. women are entitled to their own professional titles. It is worth noting that in addition to official support this policy was endorsed by various post-Revolutionary women's groups. The need to create large numbers of occupational terms for women strained the morphological system as individual speakers found themselves referring daily to women professionals. Several derivational suffixes were employed, including at least one rescued from obsolescence, and it was not uncommon for a single masculine term to coexist with multiple feminine derivatives, e.g.

(55) masculine	feminine	
sanitar	sanitarka	"hospital orderly"
	sanitarnitsa	
kontroler	kontrolerka	"controller"
	kontolerša	
nepman	nepmanka	"follower of a certain economic
	nepmanša	policy known as <i>nep</i> "
	nepačixa	

The creation of these parallel terms for women was seen, both popularly and officially, as a way of ensuring sexual equality.

At about the same time, there were changes in the sociopolitical organization and vocabulary, e.g. the introduction of terms such as *tovarišč* "comrade", *organizator* "organizer", *predsedatel'* "chairman". These terms lacked feminine counterparts and the masculine term was applied to both sexes. These words were of very high frequency and are credited, in part, with reversing the tendency for sex-specific occupational terms. Second, there was a linguistic vogue for abbreviations as terms of reference:

(56) domxoz	domašnaja xozajka	"housewife"
ženkor	ženskij korespondent	"women's correspondent"
upravdom	upravljajuščij domom	"building administrator"

These abbreviations were initially subject to morphological processes and were derivationally marked for female reference. Perhaps because they were perceived as abbreviations, however, they soon become unmarked for sex reference, and this fact also contributed to the general return to single occupational terms for both sexes. Thus, in the 1920s and 1930s there was enormous variation in the actual reference terms for female professionals. Some speakers continued to employ any of the several derivational types available, but other speakers employed a single term generically. Eventually, this latter tendency triumphed linguistically and even traditional female reference titles were replaced by sex-neutral terms. This situation contrasts with that in Poland, where sex-neutral terms are strong only in prestige occupations and derivational forms in other spheres, especially in colloquial speech.

It is interesting to note that proponents of both naming tendencies (feminine derivatives, sex-neutral terms) cited concerns of sexual equality in their support. Most modern feminists point to current Russian with some approval as a language that has eliminated/reduced sexism in its professional vocabulary. The issue of concord for sex neutral terms is therefore of some interest. Presumably, the feminist preference is for the elimination of all sex-marking in language. Since adjectival concord and verbal agreement are such core aspects of the grammar otherwise, arguments could be advanced in support of either sex-determined or grammatical concord — in the same way that some feminists exhibit a preference for sex-marked rather than sex-neutral terminology.

Initially, the tendency in Russian was for generic terms to be treated grammatically as invariable Masculines and they therefore generated masculine concords and agreements. However, this treatment apparently caused speakers some discomfort and verbs began to inflect for sex-determined agreement in past tense forms where gender distinctions were traditionally marked. Note that this sex-determined verbal marking thus served to distinguish between female and male practitioners in the way the separate reference terms had done so previously. That is, whether a *vrač* "doctor" was male or female was now marked verbally rather than by distinct occupational terms, although marking was possible only in past tense sentences. Similarly, however, the nonconcord between feminine verb forms and masculine adjectives also generated discomfort, and there is some tendency to use sex-determined concord here as well. This tendency is weaker than that for sex-determined verbal inflection, but both are strongest among younger speakers, suggesting that both tendencies will increase over time. The weaker tendency for sex-determined adjectival concord follows from Greenberg's previously cited Universal 31 that gender within a NP is more resistant to change than gender marking in the predicate (1963:74). The growing tendency for a general principle of sex-determined concord in both NP-internal and predicate positions would ensure maximum syntactic differentiation of sentences referring to female and male professionals, i.e. while verb marking restricts this distinction to past tense sentences, NP-internal sex concord allows for such differentiation in any sentence. Prescriptivists still tend to require grammatical concord and although they admit that it seems inappropriate to refer to a female subject with a masculine verb form, they point out that "correctness" allows no other treatment. This view is clearly expressed by V. D. Kudrjavcev: "Grammar has come into conflict with life, but I am still on the side of grammar." (Cited in Panov 1968, volume 3, p. 29).

Panov (1968) and Mučnik (1963) report a rather detailed sociolinguistic survey of concord usage among Russian speakers. As expected, older speakers are more conservative and prefer grammatical concord; the tendency for sex-determined verbal agreement is strongest among younger speakers although

the youngest age group surveyed showed slightly less strong tendencies than the preceding age group, perhaps as a lingering influence of school prescriptive grammar. Insofar as adjectival concord is concerned, the masculine adjective is still preferred by all age groups, although here too younger speakers display an increased preference for sex-determined concord. The survey upon which the present discussion (as well as those of Rothstein (1973) and Comrie and Stone (1978)) is based is now more than 25 years old, and it would be instructive to have more current information on this topic. In any event, the contrasts with the Polish situation discussed in §3 are quite obvious, ranging from the differential use of sex-neutral professional titles in the two languages to the treatment of such terms as regard verbal and adjectival concord. The distinction between generic nouns and common gender nouns is blurred in the Slavic data, precisely because of the agreement question, and we have therefore tried to avoid the term "common gender" in this paper.

5. Conclusion

The issue of sexism in language is a complex one, in part because one tends to view the structure of any given language as an arbitrary collection of principles that are only remotely (if at all) tied to real world attitudes and values. In the comparison of English, Polish, and Russian data, we have tried to exemplify the various ways in which sexist values can be encoded into a language and, to a limited extent, some ways in which sexist values have been/could be eliminated. Apart from lexicon, which has been noted to change in response to social pressure, languages vary considerably in the degree to which nonsexist usage is possible. The most difficult problem for English seems to be that of a sex-neutral 3rd person singular pronoun. Other problems will not be easily resolved, e.g. generic reference *man*, but they do not involve core areas of grammatical structure. Polish, on the other hand, provides several interesting examples where sexism is highly encoded directly into the language structure itself, deriving from the system of grammatical sex-gender in the singular and the Virile/Nonvirile opposition in the plural. The problem of a sex-neutral 3rd personal singular pronoun also arises in Polish, but only to a limited extent since some indefinite reference nouns are specified with a particular grammatical gender. True indefinites always generate a masculine pronoun; rules of grammar can be cited to support this usage, but it must be borne in mind that rules of grammar can reflect values and attitudes as well (Bodine 1975).³³

³³ In certain dialects, however, it seems that the Virile has been reanalyzed as Masculine and now includes male human beings and animals. Females, of course, are still classed with inanimates.

It is relatively easy to document potential cases of sexist bias in a language, but it is far more difficult to determine the ultimate significance of such bias. We believe that certain grammatical tendencies observed in Polish, e.g. the concord whereas female referent nouns accept masculine concord, the tendency for divirilization in the plural to equate with semantic pejoration, etc. can easily be viewed as potentially affecting the world view of a young child who has embarked upon the (related) tasks of linguistic and sociocultural development. While it is certainly true that the amount of sexism in a language is not indexical of the degree of sexism in a society, feminist critics may well be correct in claiming that linguistic sexism serves to ensure the perpetuation of sexist social patterns. Gregersen (1979) is suspicious, perhaps rightly so, of the significance of feminist findings in this area to date. For example, he noted that the spread of nonderogatory terms for homosexuals and blacks in American society has not in itself resulted in significant attitude shift. He cites the example of bathroom graffiti and notes that in place of "Kill all faggots" and "Kill all niggers" one now finds "Kill all gays" and "Kill all blacks", and he finds these latter even more disturbing.³⁴

The coming of popular feminism to Poland will no doubt result in an increased awareness of the sexist bias in the language system. It is impossible to predict at this time how sexist grammar will fare in the long run. Tendencies already operative in the language as well as some similar to those reported in the 1960s for Russian suggest that changes are already underway. We do not doubt that other linguists will dispute some of our analysis of Polish, especially the interpretations that we have assigned to the phenomena observed. Also, we recognize that detailed sociolinguistic studies must document the extent of variation in such phenomena and its determinants.

Given the very intimate links between social organization and language,

³⁴ The correlation between male social dominance and sexist bias in language structure, e.g. generic "he", would be most clearly tested in languages spoken within female-dominated societies. An interesting case, discussed by Beatty (1979) and Gregersen (1979), is that of Iroquois languages, e.g. Mohawk, which are spoken by groups that are matrilocal and matrilineal (although power is still wielded by men). Mohawk distinguishes three genders in the 3rd person singular: Masculine, Neuter-zoic, and Feminine-indefinite. The Masculine is used largely for human males and occasionally for animals if the speaker wishes to stress the animal's maleness. The Neuter-zoic is used for inanimates, nonhuman animals, and certain women, generally nondiminutive women and women of child-bearing age not related to the speaker, i.e. marriageable women. Finally, the Feminine-indefinite category includes small children, diminutive women including those past childbearing age, and female relatives, i.e. unmarried women, on the basis of age or kinship. This latter form is also used generically for "one". However, the female sexism does not prevail elsewhere in the grammar, e.g. the dual and plural pronouns for mixed-sex groups are the masculine forms. Other language structures also reveal the more common pattern of male dominance.

true nonsexist language may be an impossibility in Western (or any) society. Attention to concerns such as those discussed herein may result in proposals for modification in language structure/usage. We are personally not optimistic about the success of some language changes which have been proposed precisely because they have been generated in a (largely) unchanging social context. Language change follows social change rather than being causative of it (Lakoff 1973), and the gap between the two may be very considerable. Nevertheless, the study of sexism in language, interesting in its own right, may also serve to heighten social consciousness and thereby to generate attention to broader social issues. This result is surely a worthwhile aspect of sociolinguistic scholarship, one which testifies to the real world value of studying language in the context of culture and society.

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