

Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého

**Breaking the Silence: Translating Non-binary Identities
in Literary Texts from English to Czech**

(Diplomová práce)

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**Prolomení ticha: Překlad nebinárních identit v literárních textech
z angličtiny do češtiny**

(Diplomová práce)

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracoval samostatně a uvedl úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne

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INTRODUCTION

In the past years, the LGBTI+ community and its issues have been slowly penetrating mainly American mass media and entertainment. The most frequently tackled identities are those of gay and binary transgender individuals, but as the visibility of other identities rises throughout media, the need to tackle their language expression in translation is rising as well. With the latest introduction of a new non-binary¹ character in the CBS TV series *Star Trek: Discovery*, many translators worldwide, including the Czech ones, started contemplating the choices in translating such identity for the subtitles and dubbing. While English, from which these non-binary identities often stem, can deal with the issue of de-gendering through a mere change of pronouns, be it the singular *they/them*, or a variety of neo-pronouns, Czech language would have to implement a whole new system within the system to make such de-gendering possible. While a wave of discussion has been sparked, many obstacles arose, majority of which were caused by the false perception of such problem being a strictly linguistic one. In hopes of broadening this discussion, the present thesis deals with the translation of non-binary identities in literary texts from English to Czech.

While the discussions within the Czech translation community seem to be gaining certain traction, the contributors tend to, in better cases, focus mainly on the language components of such translation of identities, and in the worst cases, dismiss the idea of suitable non-binary language in translation altogether.² The idea of simply taking a linguistic form and applying it to a non-binary identity is a very optimistic one, however, it is the identity that is often being forgotten. In particular, the commentaries that sparked the initial passion for creating this thesis were very similar to those published in the Facebook group *Tváře překladu* under a post about possibilities of translating non-binary language. In the commentary section, Ruščák (2020) states that the idea of not belonging to the gender groups of a man or a woman will hardly ever cross any Czech person's mind, therefore it is unlikely that any natural language for such identities would develop in the Czech

¹ A non-binary identity is that which does not identify with neither the female or male gender.

² See for example the discussions in a Czech translation facebook group *Tváře překladu* (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TvarePrekladu/permalink/882851088904167> or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TvarePrekladu/permalink/943270569528885>).

environment, and subsequently, we, as translators, will not find a way of naturally translating it either.

Such identities, however, actually do exist in the Czech environment and they can be quite easily found – such as the members of the Transparent group, which publicly deals with the issues of all transgender identities in the Czech environment, or a solely non-binary focused group TakyTrans. Subsequently, the notion that there would never be any means of expressing such identity in Czech, either for spoken every-day communication or a written variety suitable for literary translation, is false as well, as these transgender-oriented groups keep pointing out in their posts, articles, and panels. It only seems fair that the community, which clearly tries to find its way of functioning within the highly binarized Czech environment, gets the language that would make such functioning easier, no matter how small this community is. In fact, a number of the Czech non-binary community members have already found their way of expressing their identity through Czech language in every-day communication.

A problem, however, arises, when we try to apply such expression to translation. Returning to Ruščák's commentary Janiš (2020) points out under the same Facebook post that while “speakers can experiment to their liking, a translator has to tackle the issue here and now” and “the service to the community can be in contradiction to the service to the author” (my translation). It is true that, for the use of literary translation, especially that of non-fantasy and non-sci-fi literature, a unified way of translating such identities would be an advantage for any translator. However, Janiš in his commentary alludes to the fact that many of the language means the non-binary community chooses in Czech is not fully developed, is ill-planned or, in case of written language, works to the reader's and/or the author's disadvantage due to its low readability. Similarly, as Rose (2016, 2017) points out in her translation works, the identity of such individual can fluctuate throughout the text and thus requires different translation strategies at different occasions.

At first glance, this problem might seem as that of the linguistics community, rather than the Translation Studies one. However, as stated above, this problem is far from dealing with the language only. With activism intertwining with the translators' profession more and more (and with the notion that non-binarity permeates the Czech environment mainly through English in mind),

it is the translators' community that could possibly help the Czech non-binary community shape the language, at least for literary use, should the two communities decide to cooperate.

However, to fully understand the potential and principles of such translation, it is important to understand the principles of one's identity and its role not only in the translation, but in the society as well.

Such theoretical base stems from the Queer Studies and the subsequent Queer Translation Studies. Unfortunately, the mere notion of these fields themselves might prove to be problematic. As both these fields' names contain the word *queer*, it is quite tempting to automatically understand them as fields dealing with the LGBTI+ community. As much as it is true that this community is somewhat in the centre of queer theory, as Epstein and Gillett (2017) note, it is important to understand that there is a wide, almost endless scale of different identities and concepts that can fall under this umbrella term due to not adhering to the widespread notion of 'normalness'. The queer studies also rarely stand alone, as Spurlin (2014) points out, being often in intersection with feminism, gender studies and postcolonial studies, while often seemingly dealing with the issue of sexuality alone. Additionally, through touching politics and activism, a queer translation can introduce the reader to much more than a queer story or a queer concept. Should the translator choose to dive into the touchy subjects, for certain readers the translation can suddenly contain information essential for survival, as Berlant and Warner (1995, 348) remind us.

Queer translation (or the act of *queering* a translation) of such texts can therefore entail much more than just using suitable language in the target culture. Applying this notion to the identities the present thesis deals with, instead of asking how to translate the language of a non-binary identity, the question asked should rather be: How do we translate the non-binary identities that are seemingly non-existent in other cultures outside the US and UK? How can we address such identities in a highly binarized language without losing the identity in the process? And, if the seeming non-existence of such identities in the Czech environment is caused by the fact that they simply cannot express themselves due to the lack of suitable language, is there a way queer translation could possibly bridge this void?

Modern Translation Studies do not deal only with texts themselves. Now more than ever, the role of the author, translator, and the recipient are being taken into consideration and questioned throughout this field (see for example Bermann 2014 or Chávez 2009). With new and complex topics authors are willing to write about not only in the academic environment, but also in literary texts, and with activism being present in more pieces of writing than ever, the translator's deed is being intertwined with activism as well (see for example Spivak 1999, or Spurlin 2014). As many new ideas and concepts are introduced by foreign writers, the translator faces a difficult task of introducing these concepts into the target culture. While dealing with identities such as the non-binary ones, there are new notions of translation available, such as the "translation of bodies" or "embodied translation" proposed by Chávez (2009), which goes hand in hand with the idea of language and gender performativity proposed by the feminist writer Judith Butler (1999) and subsequently worked into the translation theory by Sandra Bermann (2014), according to which the focus of the translation process shifts from the text, its author, and the translator, to its environment and the discourse in which the translation is performed. Needless to say, queer translation theory has recently experienced an academic boom through the publishing of two comprehensive anthologies – Epstein and Gillett's (eds.) *Queer in Translation* (2017) and Baer and Kaindl's (eds.) *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer* (2018), which look at the queer translation from different and often international viewpoints.

All these concepts, notions and ideas present in queer theory and queer translation theory can help the translator look at a text containing a non-binary identity in a new light. Through the notion of queer theory and queer translation, a brand new relationship between the translator and the reader emerges as well. In this process of looking for a suitable language expression, the translator should not be the one prescribing new language to the non-binary community. However, the translator could potentially be the one giving the community a new voice by pushing the language stemming from the community towards a new standard.

To explore this potential, the aim of the present thesis is to give an overview of the current possibilities of Czech language in translation of non-binary identities

in non-fantasy/non-sci-fi literary texts.³ Subsequently, a perception of such translation strategies by the Czech non-binary community is explored.

The first chapter of the theoretical part deals with the Queer Theory, Queer Studies and Queer Translation Studies. Going from the different notions of the term *queer* itself (Epstein and Gillett 2017; Berlant and Warner 1995) through the gender theory (Butler 1999) from which the Queer Studies subsequently stemmed, to the ways of linking the Queer and Translation Studies together, this part gives the reader an overview of the notable theoretical concepts which might help place this thesis into the concept within the queer discourse. As of the Queer Translation Studies, the reader is introduced to works on topics such as queer translation (Spurlin 2014), embodied translation (Bermann 2014), critical approaches (Kedem 2019), the so-called ‘translatxrsation’ (Concilio 2016) or social responsibility (Drugan and Tipton 2017), as well as to the previously mentioned anthologies (Epstein and Gillett 2017; Baer and Kaindl 2018).

In the second theoretical chapter, the non-binary identities are discussed, taking the possibilities of non-binary language in English and Czech into account. First, Hord's (2016) distinction between the ‘natural’ and ‘grammatical gender’ languages is explained. In English, the focus is mostly on the possible neutral pronouns (Wayne 2005; Stotko and Troyer 2007), while in Czech the theoretical part focuses on the rather gender-equal, than gender-neutral, possibilities proposed by Čmejrková (2003), Valdřová, Knotková-Čapková, and Paclíková (2010) or Kolek and Valdřová (2020), with addition of the more trans-friendly and gender-neutral options proposed by the activist groups Transparent and TakyTrans.

Within the methodological part, nine possible translation strategies are chosen based on the previous theoretical part. Each of the strategies is introduced, described and demonstrated on a short translation excerpt. These excerpts are taken from the 2019 young adult novel *I Wish You All the Best* written by a non-binary author Mason Deaver and dealing with a life of a non-binary main character. Each of the strategies is evaluated and its advantages and disadvantages are explored.

³ The reason for excluding fantasy and sci-fi literary texts for now is the possibility of using different language for non-human, anthropomorphic characters, such as the character of Death in Terry Pratchett's early *Discworld* books.

To examine the perception of the translation strategies by the Czech non-binary community, a questionnaire was created. This questionnaire deals with three translation strategies selected from the previously examined group of nine. The layout of the questionnaire is described in the Methodology chapter, as well as shown in the Appendixes, and the answers collected through this questionnaire are dealt with in the subsequent Discussion chapter.

By including the voices of the Czech non-binary community itself, it is clear that present thesis is not meant as a new prescriptive language manual for the translator community. Finding a suitable language for the non-binary identities in literary translation might start a chain reaction of allowing books with such identities included to be translated and published in the Czech Republic, therefore raising awareness of such identities existing, and thus urging the Czech society to find the gender-neutral way of expression suitable for such identities. The act of including the non-binary community in the translation process through the perception questionnaire opens a much needed discussion between the two communities and could potentially lead to freeing the non-binary community from the restraints of the heavily gendered language. At the same time, such discussion might give the non-binary community a sense of independence, as the language expression is not decided for them and without them. The translator community is here to give suggestions and to discuss them, not to prescribe their precise use. This way, such cooperation may help the Czech non-binary community to break from the silence and become vocal.

1 QUEER STUDIES, QUEER THEORY, QUEER TRANSLATION STUDIES

“Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant...an identity without an essence.”

(Halperin 1995, 62)

1.1 Queer Studies

It is not easy to define the objective of Queer Studies as there are as many objectives as there are branches of the studies themselves. What these branches have in common is the fact that they try to bring some new movement into the world – Queer Studies do not produce mere theorists who operate within the academic sphere, these theorists have a set goal to cause a change, to have their theories implemented into the real world and to change the society’s view on the obscure, as opposed to the normal (Berlant and Warner 1995, 344). But what is obscure and what is normal? In their article ‘What does queer theory teach us about X?’ Berlant and Warner point out one of the problems with queer theory – “it makes queer and nonqueer audiences [...] imagine a context (theory) in which *queer* has a stable content and pragmatic force” (1995, 344). That, unfortunately, has never been the case. To this day, the mere word *queer* is a thorn in the heel not only of theorists throughout different fields, but of laymen from the queer communities as well, as what used to be an unmarked adjective, which later changed into a homophobic slur, is now by many considered a valid identity label again⁴. Similarly, we can look for a definition of *queer* in the Introduction written by Epstein and Gillett (2017) for their *Queer in Translation* editorial, and, similarly, we will not get to a satisfying conclusion of what exactly *queer* means. Even they see the term as “notoriously slippery” and besides linking it to non-normative sexualities and genders, they mention its focus on “multifaceted set of political and theoretical interventions, at once ludic and profoundly serious, that originate in the sexual but are by no means limited to it” (Epstein and Gillett 2017, 1).

It is fitting to mention that Berlant and Warner’s article gives a wonderful overview of what, in their opinion, the queer studies portrayed (or should have

⁴ You can read more on ‘reclamation’ of the term *queer* in a B.A. thesis of G Ryan called *Is Everyone Queer Now?* (2018).

portrayed) at the time of its publication in the American context. While they disclose that the term *queer* is not “an umbrella for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and the transgendered” and that there are many other groups and individuals that could and should be considered *queer* (Berlant and Warner 1995, 344), they do put the LGBTI+ community into the spotlight as one of the starting forces of this theory. Mainly, they mention the 1980s outbreak of AIDS, which was infamously spread mainly within homosexual men and sex worker communities. This epidemic shone light on the importance of talking about problematic, uncomfortable topics – talking about things that go beyond the so carefully built and guarded mainstream. This is where Berlant and Warner see a distinction between the ‘queer studies’ and the conventional ‘gay and lesbian studies’. While there surely are overlaps in the topics covered by these two fields, the queer theory goes beyond – the AIDS outbreak itself opened the door to brand new conversations about things society thought were normalized and thus set in stone, such as the idea of a “romantic couple, sex for money, reproduction [or] the genres of the life narrative” (Berlant and Warner 1995, 346), all of which are things that go beyond the LGBTI+ issues themselves.

The overall message Berlant and Warner are trying to convey is that *queerness* can be anything and anywhere, and expressed by anyone who identifies as *queer*, no matter what the word means to them specifically. Moving beyond the fight of sexual minorities, the queer theory can as well draw from “cultural politics, [...], exploitation, racial formation, the production of feminine subjectivity, or [...] national culture”, and what ties these topics together into one queer theory is the attempt of “creating new contexts” (1995, 347). But, once again, what has to be stressed is the fact that queer theory and queer studies are far from being just a theoretical field. They can very easily move from a mere political debate into a question of “personal survival”, as many of the works “strike its readers as knowledge central to living” (1995, 348). Unfortunately, despite its potential, for this reason (along with the fact that such pieces of writing are commonly carried out by graduate students), queer studies might have been seen as strange, too revolting or not-scientific-enough by the academic public at the time of the column’s writing (1995, 343).

The previously mentioned LGBTI+ issues and cultural politics are not the only fields queer studies can be linked to, though. One of the fields having

a noticeable overlap with queer studies is gender studies. In this case, one's thoughts usually go straight to the *Gender Trouble* (1990, 1999) by Judith Butler, whose recontextualization of feminism and gender identity lead to the foundation of queer studies. Other fields going hand in hand with queer studies may be for example post-colonialism studies (discussed for example by Spurlin 2014), ethnic and racial studies or, as will be discussed later, Translation Studies.

It is important to mention, however, that the previously discussed notion of queer studies is relevant mainly to the western Anglocentric and Americentric cultures. Although this notion often serves as a precedent for other (both western and non-western) cultures, the focuses in such cultures might be different. In recent years, fields such as geography of sexuality and space have seen their boom and can now help with mapping the different notions of sexualities within different geographic, social and cultural (and often also economic and politic) spheres.

Speaking of the Czech Republic, the situation around the queer studies and queer theory is not exactly fortunate, as it is often being viewed negatively by the general public. There are, however, names in the academic sphere that can be linked to different branches of queer studies and queer theory in the Czech context, such as Valdřová (gender linguistics), Sokolová (comparative history of sexuality, feminist and queer theory, gay and lesbian studies, identity politics, gender and visuality), Kolek (feminist, gender and queer linguistics), Pitoňák (geography of sexuality and space), Nedbálková (sociology and gender theory) and many more. Universities gradually incorporate gender and queer studies into their curriculums (such as the Introduction into the LGBT and Queer Studies classes at MUNI) and, as of the documents available to the general public, in 2019, former ombudswoman Anna Šabatová released a document dealing with the research of discrimination against the LGBTI+ community in the Czech Republic called *Být LGBT+ v Česku* (To be LGBT+ in Czechia).

1.2 Queer Translation Studies

1.2.1 Queer Translation

Linking queer theory and queer studies to translation might seem nonsensical at first, but, as proven in the following paragraphs, it is not a concept that has been unheard of. Before presenting the theoretical concepts, however, let us ask ourselves a few questions that translatology students are often faced with during their training: How do we address concepts that exist in the source culture but not in the target culture? How do we address concepts that exist in the target culture in a very similar, yet not identical form? It is quite easy to debate about inanimate objects in such way. How do we deal with an American ‘twinkie’ in a novel translated into Czech culture? We can assume that Czech readers are familiar with the concept of an artificially-tasting cream-filled sponge cake contained by the single word ‘twinkie’, we can pick the route of explanation, or, should naturalization be our main translation strategy, we can simply replace the ‘twinkie’ with a *buchta* or *piškotový řez*. After all, a twinkie rarely carries the burden of the whole plot on its tiny spongy shoulders and such change seemingly cannot hurt.

But is it possible to cut corners in a similar way when it comes to people and their identities? Of course, the translator is tempted to “try and make explicit a certain kind of globally legible and homogenizing queerness” (Palekar 2017, 15), but the Americentric view simply cannot work in every single instance. A great example is given by Spurlin, who speaks of the women of Lesotho, South Africa, who during adolescence commonly establish an intimate relationship with another woman, and thus share “affective and sometimes erotic bonds [...] which often continue alongside heterosexual marriage” (2014, 300). In the Sesotho language, these women are referred to as *motsoalle* (Nthunya 1995, 4), which could be translated as a ‘very special friend’. But how is a translator supposed to tackle such term? Talking about a ‘very special friend’ does not deal with the connotations and leaves out a part of the meaning. Despite the urge of seeking global understandability, we cannot call neither such women, nor such relationships simply lesbian or bisexual because such “reduction [...] inevitably misrepresents

them by effectively eradicating their indigenous senses, that is, their own particular processes of linguistic differentiation and signification” (Kedem 2019, 162).

Let us ask a couple of additional questions then: How does a translator give a voice to someone who does not have any voice in the target culture in the first place?

And can a translator purposefully erase a part of the character’s or even the author’s identity? While the answer to the former question might need a deeper insight, the latter can be answered quite easily: Yes. For example, within the growing popularity of Allen Ginsberg’s work in Poland, any hints of his homosexuality are being strategically omitted in the translation done by Rybowski (Hutchens 2007, 980) – this is in the translator’s powers and can be done, whether the decision stems from the norms of target culture, or from the translator’s own beliefs. However, the question whether a translator *should* participate in such practice, that is, refusing to participate in queering a translation of often already queer text, shows this issue in a brand new light.

The 1990s mark what Bassnett and Lefevere (1990) call a “cultural turn” in translation. Translation Studies experienced a complete “shift in the very understanding of its own terminology, scope, and concerns, which were now challenged most notably by feminist and postcolonial theories that drew critical attention to the intricacies of power, ideology, and ethics involved in the work of translation” (Kedem 2019, 157). In this relation, Kedem (2019) mentions for example Luise von Flotow’s *Translation and Gender* (1997) or Sherry Simons’ *Gender in Translation* (1996) as examples of a feminist theory seeping into the Translation Studies, or a key work of the cultural turn that deals with the motivation of a translator, André Lefevere’s *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992). While the translatology field was getting familiar with these new concepts, queer studies were already slowly gaining momentum within the broad academic community before it could reach the translators’ ears (Kedem 2019, 157).

Dividing queer translation into the *queer* and the *translation*, there is still no consensus on whether queer translation as a concept “belong[s] to one field more than the other or to neither” (Kedem 2019, 161). Similarly, there is no particular answer to the question of what the relationship between the translator and their work is. Kedem (2019, 161) aptly asks – “does [queer translation] imply that one is firstly

a translator who then translates queerly, or that one is already queer when one begins to translate?” As well as Queer Studies, queer translation can be understood in two different ways – that of dealing with LGBTI+ issues and that of dealing with anything strange, unnormal, ‘other’. Which of the approaches is the correct one? Is there even a correct way of understanding queer translation?

This chapter certainly does not aim to answer all these questions. It rather focuses on giving a solid overview of all the possibilities available within the scope of the queer translation field to this day in hope to bring more understanding to its nuances and heterogenous nature.

1.2.2 Translation and Embodied Translation

Before moving forward to the more particular examples of queer translation writings and its history, let us backtrack a bit and draw a difference between ‘translation’ as understood by Translation Studies, and ‘translation’ as understood by fields such as intercultural communication.

When Jaaware (2002, 737) wonders what exactly translation concerns – whether it is words, paragraphs, genres or entire discourses, Chávez (2009, 24) promptly answers that, while in the usual notion translation concerns all of these units, they do not apply to a ‘translation of bodies’ in the same way as they do apply to a translation of texts. She first asks a number of well-aimed questions:

Is the translation of bodies like translating at the level of the sign where bodies are regarded for individual signifiers on an individual basis? Or are the signifiers too enmeshed with each other to isolate them? Do culture and history (one’s own and others) inform the translation of bodies in that people rely upon their experiences with those who possess similar signifiers to create meaning in the current interaction?

(Chávez 2009, 24)

She stresses out the importance of asking and answering these questions because, since translation is not only strongly gendered, but it also does contain remainders of the colonialist past and thus is interlaced with racist implications, they might help us understand what exactly people focus on and what they use

as an aid during translating (2009, 24). She thus speaks of the ‘embodied translation’, which consists of six different ‘scapes’ that are parallel to the units of analysis found in classical translation theory – textual signifiers of the body (similar to the genre of a translated text), nonverbal communication (the needed cultural knowledge), verbal communication (unit of a sign), primary context (the text to be translated), historical context (the cultural and national history of the text) and metaphysical communication (“the cultural artifacts or words that may not exist between cultures, the political or ideological elements that undergird a text, and the system of discourse that needs to be under scrutiny in a translation endeavour”) (2009, 25). She then emphasizes that “each of these scapes, which constitute bodies as texts to be read, requires constant embodied translation between communicators” (2009, 25).

The biggest differences between translation and embodied translation are not just in the understanding of translation itself, but they come with the understanding of the author/translation/translator relationships as well. As Chávez (2009, 25) explains, embodied translation challenges the established notion of an author who creates a text that can be translated – in other words, that there is an author first and translation next. However, what stands in the centre of embodied translation is not the text or the author, it focuses on the discourse – Chávez pinpoints that if we agree to view bodies as texts, it will allow us to see that the “communicators rely upon both the non-foundational author and their discursive interpretation of that text, thus discourse becomes both author and translator” and “because translation is never innocent, the dominant discourse presumably has the most authority” (Chávez 2009, 25).

This newer understanding of translation was seen as worth noting, as in Queer Translation Studies these two notions often intertwine. Embodied translation shows potential which might set the new trends and new norms in translation of identities in the future.

1.2.3 Queering Translation

Nevertheless, the queer translation studies have been on the rise in recent years and a number of articles and essays dealing with this new field were published in numerous periodicals, often bringing up new concepts as well. Going back

to the case of a missing English counterpart of *motsoalle*, Spurlin (2014), in relation to works of Khatibi, Spivak or Cassin, talks about the so-called ‘space of untranslatability’, which he considers to be the link between the queer and the translation. He considers such a place of obscure untranslatability a “queer space, [that is] one that challenges any normative idea of straightforward translatability” (Spurlin 2014, 303). In practice, we can observe such a space in the term *motsoalle*, where any counterpart in English (other than a full-sentence-explanation) misses parts of the meaning. In Spurlin’s notion, it is precisely “these slippages, these silences, these spaces of indeterminacy, these irreducible remainders in working across languages” due to which translation becomes queer (2014, 300). These untranslatable spaces in the text and meaning then call for special attention and desire a critical viewpoint from the translator, who is not to reduce their meaning into something universally known (Kedem 2019, 162). In his writings, Spurlin builds on Khatibi’s “focus on what cannot be translated directly, that is, on what is deferred, what is absent, what is *untranslatable*” (Spurlin 2014, 302), as well as on Spivak’s concept of “translation as a form of social activism against the capitalistic conveniences of monolingualism that demand the homogenization of linguistic differences in a globalized world” (Spurlin 2014, 303). What we see in Spurlin’s writing is thus the idea of *queer* as a term with much broader meaning than just the linked-to-the-LGBTI+-community – even in his earlier writings (Spurlin 1998) he argues that when a translation deals with topics such as sexuality or gender, it cannot simply be assigned as a piece of a feminist translation or queer translation, as all these fields intersect (Spurlin 2014, 300).

Other writings Spurlin builds on are those of Shread (2011) and Mukherjee (2011), which he uses to discuss the question of gendering a translation. In Mukherjee’s words, the need to deal with gender (adding, switching, erasing, substituting) in a translation not only causes a translation to automatically become politicized, it also shows that creating a translation that would be fully faithful to the original is impossible (Mukherjee 2011, 133). Spurlin notes the gender binary in translation and the journey to its dismantling – even though (or maybe because) masculine gender is seen as the default in language, translating in a way of switching the feminine gender into such ‘default’ causes the translation to become depoliticized, erases all the efforts to “situate the translation socially”

and “masks relations of power in the very act of translation” (Spurlin 2014, 302). He compares such procedures in translation to those used during the colonialism era to strengthen its power (2014, 302).

Going briefly back to the ‘defaults’ in language, Spurlin points out Spivak’s critique of the globalized use of Western labels when it comes to sexualities and gender identities, as it contributes to a sort of “discourse (re)colonization” from the Western academic community (2014, 303), which gradually attempts to create “a static ethnicity to the Other in order to locate critique or confirmation of the most sophisticated thought or act of the West” (Spivak 1999, 110).

Spurlin’s approach was, however, later subjected to criticism. Kedem’s main criticism concerns the relationship Spurlin establishes between the queer and the translation. He argues that Spurlin builds this relationship on the notion of resemblance, as opposed to the notion of difference (Kedem 2019, 163) and mentions instances such as the assumption that “the work of translation, like the work of queer, is never finished, as both modes of inquiry are committed to the endless proliferation of difference(s)” (Spurlin 2014, 307), or the assumption that translation is “an instance” of a queer praxis (2014, 300). Kedem especially disagrees with Spurlin’s logic that the spaces of untranslatability are identical to the queer spaces of indeterminacy (2019, 163). He argues that “the concept of untranslatability and that of queer indeterminacy cannot mean the same thing, nor in the same manner” simply because “if the endless proliferation of irreducible differences becomes thinkable through the conceptual power of both untranslatability and indeterminacy, the two will be not only different from one another but from themselves, too” (Kedem 2019, 163).

Besides the sporadic articles, chapters and essays in various periodicals, the recent years mark release of two anthologies concerning the queering of translation – Epstein and Gillett’s (eds.) *Queer in Translation* (2017) and Baer and Kaindl’s (eds.) *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer* (2018), both of which look at the topics given from an international point of view, thus concerning other norms than purely the Americentric or Anglocentric ones.

Despite the confusingly similar names of the anthologies, again, these two differ in the perception of the *queer*. While *Queer in Translation* works with the “tiredly rehearsed deconstructionist strategy” (Kedem 2019, 158) and focuses more on the broader (non)differentiation between ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’,

Queering Translation, Translating the Queer on the other hand uses the term *queer* as a synonym for the LGBTI+ community and relies on “any nonnormative experience or expression of sexual desire” (Baer and Kaindl 2018, 2). Nevertheless, both these anthologies give a great overview of the modern queer translation issues one might encounter, looking at them from different geographical and social perspectives: *Queer in Translation* contains chapters focusing on the translations concerning the Arab world (N. A. Assab), Taiwan (A. Bachner) or Japan (J. Angles), as well as the queer components in children’s literature (B. J. Epstein). Similarly, *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer* contains, amongst others, chapters dealing with queer translation in Japanese manga (L. T. Chan), homosexuality in Hungary and Portugal (Z. Gombár) or a chapter dedicated to queer ethnography in queer translation (E. Savci).

It is notable to point out that other countries than the constantly-in-focus America, England, France, and Germany are getting discussed within these anthologies’ discourse. However, as the present thesis originates at a Czech university, the lack of representation of Slavic cultures and languages in these anthologies has to be addressed.

1.2.4 Performing Translation

In her theory of performative translation, Bermann refers to Butler and her writings on feminism and performativity of gender. Butler herself does not address translation in her most well-known piece *Gender Trouble* (1999), but her theories turned out to be influential and sparked the efforts to rethink certain concepts of performability, amongst other fields, in translation studies as well (Bermann 2014, 290) and the topic of translation emerges in her later work.

For Butler, gender itself is an act of performance. She compares gender to a script which has to be learnt, practised and repeated over again – a mere concept which changes with the people who are assigned with its performance at a certain time (Butler 1999, 290). To explain it clearly, Bermann later describes this notion of gender as “not what one is but rather what one does. Neither an essence nor an internal world that one possesses, gender is, rather, created by repeated acts over time” (Bermann 2014, 290). One of the theatrical performances Butler

mentions is drag⁵, which might seem to have nothing in common with translation, but “while translation is hardly drag, it can enact a similar theatrical repetition and questioning of social and historical norms” (Bermann 2014, 292). Butler sees the potential of viewing translation in a similar way as such performative art because the repetition that often occurs in translation practice can bring changes into the real world – it can “exaggerate, highlight, displace, and queer normative expectations across genders and cultures as well as languages”, by which it helps to challenge the norms previously set, whether they be social, historical or translation ones (2014, 292). Here, translation stops being a mere transfer of text and meaning from one language and culture to another, it becomes a stimulus for action in real life – an act of performance in translation, which helps to set a new “ethical and politically effective” behaviour in society (Bermann 2014, 293).

As mentioned above, Butler touches the topic of translation in her later works, often affiliating it with political theory. Translation can in its own way create bridges between different concepts that might not yet exist in the target culture, and thus “through their contact with otherness, translational encounters subvert dominant, universalizing claims, allow new openings for a range of previously foreclosed subjectivities, and forge new languages that belong to no single group” (Butler 2000, 168–69). Such practice calls for foreignization strategies (Bermann 2014, 294), but only through them the dominant discourse will be forced to retreat – foreign vocabulary will sooner or later have to be accepted in a lexicon because foreign, previously unspoken topics will have to be dealt with in the dominant discourse (Butler 2000, 168), and through these actions, we can expect a formation of new politics and a sort of a “language between languages” (2000, 170). This can then be applied to many different cases – from introducing new cultural concepts into the target culture, to introducing never-before-heard-of aspects of queer theory into another society. But for a translation to have such power, Bermann emphasizes the importance of “alterity” and its acknowledgement within translation practice (Bermann 2014, 295). Similarly, Butler says that:

⁵ Art of performance during which a person, usually a man, uses clothing and make-up to exaggerate the female features and gender roles.

[T]ranslation cannot be a simple assimilation of what is foreign into what is familiar; it must be an opening to the unfamiliar, a dispossession from prior ground, and even a willingness to cede ground to what is not immediately knowable within established epistemological fields. (2012, 12)

Lastly, Bermann emphasizes that “in the process of opening to new and deauthorized fields of knowledge, beyond the bounds of given cultural norms, translation will inevitably lead to a critical relation with power as disparate traditions join in contested fields” (2014, 295).

The concept of performativity of translation is tackled by Spurlin as well. Similarly to Bermann, he draws a parallel between the notion of gender performativity, as described by Judith Butler, and meaning in translation. What Butler says about gender being virtually impossible to separate from politics, ideologies and culture in which it arises (Butler 1999, 6), can be applied to translation in the sense of the falsehood that is the assumption that there is such a thing as a perfect (or even just *good*) correspondence between two languages and in the sense of the inability of a translator to summarize culturally influenced concepts into texts (Spurlin 2014, 302). According to Spurlin, this “takes the metaphor of femininity, heterogeneity, and multiplicity further and creates a space in between that is amorphous, ambiguous, different, and quite possibly queer” (2014, 302).

However, unlike Spurlin’s article, which is based on resemblance, Bermann’s “Performing Translation” views translation as “conditioned on pure difference”, thanks to which the concept of translation can be rethought (Kedem 2019, 163). Bermann, according to Kedem, sees translation as “a secondary, if not subjective, limited rendition of a primary original text” (2019, 164). In Kedem’s (2019, 164) criticism we learn that Bermann’s notion of the interpretive nature of translation is similar to ‘perspectivism’, as previously proposed by Deleuze, that is that an interpretation of a text is not done by a person themselves, but it depends on the way of their thinking, which gives the text its value (Deleuze 1983, 90–91). In Kedem’s eyes, Bermann therefore allows us to see translation as a clash of many perspectives based on difference, and translation in her eyes can be understood as “a means to revalue values, to investigate how, why, and by whom they were created, what interests and ends they serve, what type of thought they intimate”

(Kedem 2019, 194). However, Kedem (2019, 165) also notices that once the topic of queer translation appears in Bermann's chapter, the notion of pure difference is quickly replaced by that of equivalence. Unlike Spurlin, for whom the word queer contains anything beyond the normalized, Bermann links the queer to the LGBTI+ community, mainly gender studies, and, once again, she proceeds to "making both queer and translation equivalent or analogous to one another, rather than internally different" (Kedem 2019, 165).

1.2.5 Critical Approach

In his 2019 article for *symploke*, Kedem does not try to create another definition of what queer translation could possibly be. By critically overviewing the previously published essays and articles he claims to "approach the issue of queer translation as an object of immanent critique that challenges pre-established notions of both the concept of queer and that of translation, in order to think the concepts and their relation anew" (Kedem 2019, 159). His approach focuses on the practical use, where the aim is to find whether and how certain previously published concepts of queer translation can be applied to every-day life and how functioning with these concepts in mind influences our lives (*ibid*) – simply put, the question he asks is: What is it good for? The most notable critique is given to previous writings of Bermann and Spurlin, in which case the critique sparks from Kedem's conviction that the relationship between queer and translation should be based on the difference between them, not the resemblance of one another, as demonstrated in his critique of Spurlin.

However, Kedem's main critique of the queer translation and queer studies themselves lays in the misunderstanding of its overall aim. The most important goal is summed up by Foucault's "The Gay Science", where the challenge is clearly laid out: "it is not enough to liberate sexuality; we also have to liberate ourselves...from the very notion of sexuality" (Foucault 2011, 388). Kedem feels that "instead of a political, critical tool aimed at dismantling sexuality, queer theory has become a theory of sexuality, thereby missing Foucault's lesson" (Kedem 2019, 166). All in all, he argues that while, yes, there are theorists and even translation theorists who see the queer as the indeterminate, as something that cannot simply be put in a box, there are, on the other hand, others, for whom this indeterminacy

and ‘otherness’, this difference and deviance from the normal, has already become synonymous with the ‘homosexual’ and, therefore, the concept and notion of queer will have to be subjected to constant rethinking and reformulation for the time being (Kedem 2019, 167). Because the notion of the queer as strictly the homosexual is delimiting to the term, Kedem thus proposes that the aim of queer translation should be the exact opposite – “the de-sexualization of language itself” (Kedem 2019, 168).

On the other hand, the 2016 and 2017 articles of Rose demonstrate that simply getting rid of sexuality and gender in language might, at times, prove as counter-productive, and the approach always depends on the actual case. A more detailed look on Rose’s approaches can be found in chapter 2.4.1.

1.2.6 Translatxrsation

Concilio’s article on what she calls ‘translatxrsation’ published in the *TSQ: Translation Studies Quarterly* journal allows us to see translation from yet another point of view. Concilio sees queer studies as studies capable of “destabilizing cisgender⁶, heteronormative, patriarchal systems” (Concilio 2016, 462) and within the LGBTI+ community, she focuses mainly on the transgender and nonbinary individuals. She also sees an additional link between translation and transgender studies in the fact that both of these fields “[have] historically suffered marginalization within the academy” (2016, 462), but she draws a difference between the reasons for their marginalization – while “literary translation’s violent exclusion and invisibilization have been predominantly symbolic, disciplinary, and methodological, ... transgender’s exclusion has been the result of entrenched social stigma” (2016, 463). Another similarity is observable in the idea of predominant deception that goes hand in hand with the occupation of a translator or an interpreter (who never give their client the 100% of the source text), as well as it is linked to the identity expression of transgender and nonbinary persons (2016, 463).

She puts into juxtaposition the notion of social binaries and language/translation binaries, which both stem from a “supposed biological

⁶ Cisgender in this context means a gender identity of a person who’s gender corresponds with the gender assigned to them at birth, as opposed to a transgender person.

authenticity” (2016, 464) – while we have the woman/man, homo/hetero, trans/cis binaries based on sex and gender within the cisheteronormative social realm, we can observe a similar binaries, mainly those of source/target language or author/translator, within the monolingual discourse of translation studies (2016, 464). She, however, mentions a number of theoreticians (Pym, Toury, Venuti and Guglielmi, Zeller) who have been working on dismantling such binaries to help translators gain a better position in the author/translator binary, with quite a success, although the problem of binaries is still far from being fully solved, since the binaries were only moved, not fully dismantled (2016, 464).

One of the questions Concilio asks is what happens to a male translator, who has to translate a narration in feminine, and vice versa, what happens to a female translator who has to translate a narration in masculine. According to her, what happens is not the translator simply switching from their gender to the opposite one for the time of translating, but rather a “nonbinary, genderqueer process and reembodiment” take place (2016, 466). She thus promotes the use of a term ‘translatxrsation’, which embodies the “nonbinary, genderqueer understanding of translation”, and the subsequent term ‘translatxr’ (Concilio 2016, 466).

1.3 Social Responsibility and Literary Texts

When dealing with different identities in texts falling under journalism or interviews, the translator could reach out to the person in question, explain the options, and, in the ideal case, they would together come up with the solution best suitable for the person and for the target language. However, when dealing with a literary text, such options can be out of question, as the texts tend to be long, riddled with different meanings that need to be contained in the translation, but also with identities that need to be contained as well. Most probably, a time will arise when a number of methods will have to be used simultaneously and it is on the translator to pick wisely (as seen for example in works of Rose (2016, 2017), who changes strategies depending on the place in the text/story – more on this in chapter 2.4.1).

Choosing certain methods to maintain the clarity of a character’s identity might, however, lead to compromises in other layers of the text. For example, if a translator decides to use de-gendering of the language, that is, using indirect language and paraphrasing in order to bypass the gendered expressions,

the translation might not only become quite tedious and certainly more time consuming, the resulting translated text might lose other nuances and meanings in the process, while simultaneously becoming significantly harder to read.

The issue of faithfulness comes into question as well at the moments of a character's self-explanation. As the visibility of non-binary characters (and likewise out-of-binary characters) is still quite new, they might need to explain themselves in the text. How does a translator go around that? When a character explains what sort of language they would like to be addressed with, is there a way to maintain this in the target language? Does the translator adhere to the norms of the source culture as much as possible, or does the translator adhere to the norms of the target culture for such identities, even though it might mean significant changes in the text? Does the translator come up with a whole new language for said character, if there is no existing option available, or does the translator simply brush the identity over and continues using language suitable for binary identities in the target culture?

Here we are touching the issue of translator's ethics. Drugan and Tipton group the translation and interpreting professions with the so called 'caring' professions, such as social work, teaching or medical work, which all "focus on social responsibility during training [and] the emphasis is on (mitigating) risks" (2017, 120). Although the special issue of *The Translator* from which the Drugan and Tipton's article is taken focuses mainly on fields where the responsibility and the need for social sensitiveness is significantly higher than in literature, aka. police interpreting or interpreting in social work, the main idea of the issue stands even for literature:

For Translation Studies, approaches informed by social responsibility make it possible to move beyond questions about what motivates translators and interpreters to supply their labour (whether waged and/or unwaged) based on individual notions of what is good for society or self interest, to questions about how translation can support better living together as an ethical goal.

(Drugan and Tipton 2017, 121)

Thus, even if the focus is "only" on a literary text, which, technically speaking, can be botched without any devastating repercussions, as opposed to, for example, making changes in a legal document, what Drugan and Tipton (2017)

call a translator's "social responsibility" still plays a big role in the work done. According to the latest discourse and trends, translators and interpreters no longer want to take a passive role in the social development of the world and are willing to take more steps towards doing what is right and what is good for the world. However, this is where ideology plays a role – while a certain solution might seem the best for one translator, it might seem absolutely unacceptable to another one, for which Drugan and Tipton (2017, 122) say that "'responsibility' can never be ideologically neutral and its invocation always confers an obligation to determine whose responsibility, to whom and for what". This social responsibility is thus seen as "action-oriented and dynamic, encompassing value judgements and decisions that may lead as much to resistance as to acceptance and commitment to sustain a form of social consensus" (Drugan and Tipton 2017, 122). Thus, when trying to answer the questions posed three paragraphs above, the only acceptable answer is: It depends. While one translator might feel the responsibility to push the language into an unknown territory at any cost, either to help represent the non-binary community, or to simply help the language move forward, for other it might feel absolutely unacceptable to cross any boundaries and thus the option of using binary language at the cost of losing the non-binary identity might seem like the only viable one. And, of course, there is always a middle ground – a translator who will try to maintain as much as possible without getting any language extremes in the translation. And the factors are not only translator-centred, as, especially when it comes to literary texts, the translator often has to adhere to the publisher's policies, which might easily praise or undermine any of the translator's efforts.

Either way, both the act of resistance and acceptance can be seen as forms of social activism in translation. This concept of differentiating between resistance and acceptance is looked into more thoroughly in chapter 4.2 and subsequently transformed by the author of present thesis into a continuum, which serves as an aid for sorting out the possible translation strategies.

As said before, for a queer translator/translator of the queer, there might be as many objectives as there are definitions of the word queer itself. There are many questions surrounding this field of translation, one of the most important ones being the one asked by Kedem: "What difference does it make and for who?" (2019, 161).

Looking at this topic from a rather theoretical perspective, queer translation not only allows us to look at brand new concepts, it also allows us to “make [them] applicable more widely not just to other fields, but also to ways of thinking about art and activism” (Epstein and Gillett 2017, 1). To put queer translation into a more practical perspective, Epstein and Gillet go as far as to compare the concepts queer translation deals with (sexuality, gender, sexual acts,...) to Coca-cola – it may be a beverage consumed all around the world, but that does not mean it tastes the same everywhere, “so studies of how it may be assimilated, rejected, or imposed have a great deal to tell us about the neocolonial enterprise of late capitalism” (2017, 2). Language and the social constructs queer translation deals with go hand in hand – we can clearly observe that (and how) gender and sexuality are constructed differently in different cultures when we try to translate these constructs from one language to another (2017, 1–2). While we see translation as something seamless, something that has to stay faithful to the source text and its concepts, but at the same time as something that has to conform to the norms and concepts of the target culture, it is this notion of translation and insisting on the usage of set translation norms which contributes to the excessive homogenization, erasure of differences and assimilation of terms, instead of finding new ones for new concepts (2017, 2). According to Kedem:

The sexualization, racialization, or humanization of language confine and delimit sense, but also provide the key to reinvent it so as to make experience meaningful in infinitely new ways — it enables us to see and hear and imagine a whole range of ways of being; being in between the ones we live now, complete with the joy and suffering, the potentials and dangers, that such new ways of being entail. (Kedem 2019, 180)

Queer translation thus can help give new names to concepts previously unknown in the target culture, it can also help give voices to minorities previously ignored or unintroduced to the target culture. For example, in case of this thesis, queer translation is applied to the aim of discussing possible ways of giving a voice to the non-binary community, which simply cannot comfortably exist in the Czech environment since there is no suitable language for it. Thus, there might be one of the possible answers to Kedem’s question about whom and how might queer translation help. Similarly, the sheer act of publishing translations that contain

mentions of concepts not often (or not at all) discussed in the target culture (such as aromanticism, asexuality, gender-queer identities etc. in the Czech environment) might bring a sense of gratification to individuals identifying as such, as they finally see their identities spelled out on paper in their native language.

2 NON-BINARY IDENTITIES AND GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

As previously noted, these days, the most notable and most frequently mentioned group falling under the focus of queer studies is the LGBTI+ community. Similarly, when general public speaks of queer translation or queer literature, it usually refers to books about individuals from the LGBTI+ community or written by such individuals. From this group, the most attention is usually given to the lesbian and gay individuals, as they are the most often spelled identities in mass media. Issues of the trans communities are, however, getting into the general public spotlight more and more often as of the past few years, although, unfortunately, often in a negative way (see the controversial US Bathroom Bill ⁷ for example). This chapter explains the differences between numerous trans gender identities with a focus on the non-binary community, it addresses the issues of non-binary specific language and its significance in Queer Translation Studies. Subsequently, it provides some of the practical solutions proposed by the Czech trans-friendly and non-binary-friendly activist groups.

2.1 Transgender as an Umbrella Term

The term ‘transgender’, again, can have numerous meanings depending on the approach. Its meaning ranges from a specific term for people whose sex assigned at birth does not correspond with the gender they identify with later in life – for example, a person, who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a male in adulthood, or vice versa (Richards et al. 2016, 95) – to much broader definitions, as demonstrated by Catalano, McCarthy and Shlasko (2007, 219), who “use *transgender* to refer to individuals who transgress the gender norms of the dominant culture and/or their specific culture, in ways that significantly impact their everyday life and/or are central to their understanding of themselves“. For the purposes of this thesis, the focus will be given mainly to the former approach and the expression of gender identities.

⁷ The so-called Bathroom Bill pushed through in 2015-2016 (and mostly revoked in 2017) required the US citizens to use a bathroom according to their sex, not their gender, thus forcing transgender individuals to use bathrooms that do not correspond to their appearance and passing efforts in an attempt to protect the cisgender individuals. An overview of the bill’s passing and revoking can be found on the NCSL website (Kralik 2019).

Going back to Richards' explanation of transgender identities, it is observable, that even in this case, the notion of gender is overruled by the binary. Adhering to such binary, transgender identities can thus be only transgender female or transgender male, as opposed to a cisgender female and cisgender male. Nevertheless, this view of gender and sex is deeply flawed, if we take into consideration the intersex people, "who, due to chromosomal, hormonal and anatomical anomalies have sexual features that do not conform to 'male' or 'female' norms" (Roen 2004, 127) and thus defy such binary because in these cases the sex – gender – gender performance – sexuality continuity is disrupted, even if the individuals identify as a female or a male (Richards et al. 2016, 95).

On the contrary, there are cases of individuals with no such physical conditions, who mentally do not adhere to the binary and identify differently. Susan Stryker summarizes this notion, saying that "[o]ne's gender identity could perhaps best be described as how one feels about being referred to by a particular pronoun" (2017, 13), which applies to both the binary and non-binary notion of gender. The term 'transgender' ('trans' for short) can thus be used as an umbrella term for individuals on the binary or outside of it, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.2 Non-binary Identities

Considering the individuals who fall under the umbrella term 'transgender' but are situated outside of the female-male binary, there are numerous different documented identities. Richards et al. give a great one-paragraph overview of the different identities falling under this category:

In the current Western context, however, some people may identify as predominantly male, but with aspects of the 'other' gender and use the identity term 'male' generally; or may identify as predominantly female, but with aspects of the 'other' gender and use the identity term 'female' generally – but both groups of people may define additionally as **'genderqueer'** when necessary – for example in accepting environments or when neither a male nor female identity suits. Those people who incorporate aspects of both male and female, but who have a fixed identity, may identify as **'androgynous'**, **'mixed gender'**

or sometimes **'pangender'** as the latter is a flexible term. In contrast, people who move between genders in a fluid way may identify as **'bigender'**, **'gender fluid'** or sometimes 'pangender' again. Some people move between more than two genders and so identify as **'trigender'**, and sometimes 'pangender' as it is a flexible term. Some people identify as a specific additional gender (either between female and male or otherwise additional to those genders) and identify as **'third gender'**, **'other gender'**, and sometimes again as 'pangender'. Then there are those people who disrupt the gender dichotomy though challenging its very ontology and/or veracity and so identify as **'genderqueer'** or **'genderfuck'**. And there are also people who have no gender and so identify as **'agender'**, **'gender neutral'**, **'non-gendered'**, **'genderless'**, **'neuter'**, or **'neutrois'**.

(Richards et al. 2016, 95–96, my emphases)

All these (and many more, as the individuals themselves often come up with new labels for their identities and such labels vary throughout different cultures) then fall under the umbrella terms 'non-binary' or 'genderqueer' (Richards et al. 2016, 96), the former of which is used as default in this thesis. Giving a little simpler definition, a non-binary identity can be described as “(a) an individual whose gender identity falls between or outside male and female identities, (b) an individual who can experience being a man or woman at separate times, or (c) an individual who does not experience having a gender identity or rejects having a gender identity” (Budge 2017).

2.3 Gender in Language

Hord specifies grammatical gender as “a noun class system by which nouns are divided into two or more categories, two of which usually correspond with “male” and “female” human genders, respectively”, pinpointing that even nouns which have no affiliation to gender in real life (trees, cars,...) are usually assigned one of the genders of the binary (2016, 2). He then proceeds to divide languages into two categories: 'natural gender' languages and 'grammatical gender' languages.

In the 'natural gender' languages “the referential gender will agree with the 'natural' gender of the referent” (Hekanaho 2015, 14) and the semantic gender of nouns can be observed only through pronouns (he, she) or through specifically

gendered nouns (sister, brother) (2015, 12). Such languages are for example English or Swedish.

On the other hand, ‘grammatical gender’ languages “have both semantic and formal (grammatical) gender, which is reflected not only in nouns, but in the adjectives, adverbs, and articles that accompany them” (Hord 2016, 2). Such languages are for example French, German, or in our case Czech.

To further illustrate the difference, **Figure 1** shows the differences between English, as a ‘natural gender’ language, and Czech, as a ‘grammatical gender’ language (model sentences in English taken from Hord 2016, 2, translations done by the author):

	English	Czech
1	I am a doctor .	Jsem lékař (m. generic) / lékařka (f.).
2	I am happy .	Jsem šťastná (f.) / šťastný (m.) / šťastné (n.).
3	She is my friend .	Je má kamarádka . (f.)
4	He is my friend .	Je můj kamarád . (m.)
5	They (s.) are my partner .	<i>neutrality untranslatable</i> On (m.)/Ona (f.) je můj partner . (m. generic)

Figure 1: Differences between ‘natural’ and ‘grammatical gender’ languages

As nouns in English are not gendered, we can observe that in sentence 1, the gender of the doctor is unknown. On the contrary, Czech, if unsure about the gender of the person, will most likely work with a noun with the generic masculine gender, but the feminine is never fully out of question. Even in literary texts, where the gender of a character is supposed to stay concealed, the translator will have to choose and either bet on the imperfect neutrality of the generic masculine, or fully disclosing the gender of said character. Similarly, in sentence 2, the adjective in English is not gendered, but Czech has to choose between the feminine or masculine. Czech has the possibility of a neuter version of the adjective, however, such neuter would be used only with an inanimate object/place (“*Bylo to velmi šťastné údolí.*” [It was a very **happy** valley.]), with children whose gender we do not know (“*To je ale šťastné dítě!*” [What a **happy** baby!]) or with baby animals (“*To je ale šťastné hříbě!*” [What a **happy** foal!]). The utterance ‘*Jsem šťastné.*’ might thus be uttered in a fairy tale, where baby animals are speaking about themselves, but certainly not

in real life. Example 2 also shows that, unlike English, Czech requires gendering of oneself during utterances. Sentences 3 and 4 illustrate that Czech requires different words for a female and a male friend, as well as the corresponding possessive pronouns (*má* (f.) / *můj* (m.)). Lastly, sentence 5 shows how neutrality can be reached within a natural gender language through the use of a neutral pronoun and a neutral noun. In Czech, however, such neutrality cannot be achieved. A neuter pronoun ‘*ono*’ suffers a similar fate to the neuter adjective and its use for human beings seems strange and even the word ‘*partner*’, which is neutral in English, falls under the generic masculine gender in Czech. Therefore, if we follow all the present rules and handbooks on Czech language, a human being must be gendered within the language. However, this is exactly the notion the present thesis is trying to challenge.

2.4 Gender-neutral Language

Although the call for neutral language was first initiated by the feminists in attempt to “deemphasize gender and promote inclusivity”, today, neutral language is considered a need for the non-binary individuals so that they are able to express themselves within their preferred identities (Hord 2016, 1). For a non-binary individual, who refuses to use pronouns specifically linked to female (she/her) or male (he/him) genders, such neutral language signifies a representation in the real world and gives such individual an opportunity to be acknowledged and understood by their environment (ibid). However, as already implied by the suggestion of pronoun usage, the discussion about neutral language concentrates around English, a language in which it can be easily implemented. The question is, how to implement neutrality into languages with more complex grammatical systems which rely on gendering. Hord argues that such languages, for example German, French, or in our case Czech, simply have “less space, opportunity, ease and susceptibility to its development” when it comes to neutrality, as opposed to languages such as English or Swedish, but, at the same time, no matter the culture and language, use of such neutral language is vital to non-binary individuals to enrich the quality of their lives (ibid).

Further problems with language in relation to identity are pinpointed by Wilchins, who says that language inherently “favours the same” while it plunders the “unique, unrepeatability and private”, and because things that can

be named through language can be considered real, things we do not have appropriate language for, including genders and their expressions, are destined to stay at a theoretic, philosophical realm and thus appear as unreal (Wilchins 2004, 38). Hord (2016, 4) thus concludes that Wilchins' writing gives language an important role in a transgender person's life, as through the language they can not only refer to themselves, but they can also use it to create a space for themselves in the society.

Hord, however, also reminds us of the common attempts to stop or prevent a language change that would benefit non-binary people. He argues that even though the public often refuses to accept neutralization of language referring to it as ungrammatical, they often do not realize that any language change comes from a motivated consensus within the language user community itself, not from any prescriptive authority, this argument of neutral language being ungrammatical or wrong is simply fallacious (2016, 6).

2.4.1 Gender-neutral Language in English

Discussing neutral language in English, Hord (2016, 7) explains that within the media and digital spaces, the view on such language is mostly a positive one. As noted before, English can bring its language system closer towards a neutral language through the use of appropriate pronouns, the most notable of which is the singular *they*, which can be used for and by anyone who does not wish to conform to the language binary, or in cases where the speaker is uncertain of someone's gender. Its successful integration into the English language can be demonstrated by the fact that in 2015, singular *they* has been voted the word of the year by the American Dialect Society, according to which "the use of singular they builds on centuries of usage, appearing in the work of writers such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Jane Austen." (Marquis 2016) Similarly, in 2015 the singular they appeared in the Washington Post style guide, where it was promoted as the "only sensible solution to English's lack of gender-neutral third-person singular personal pronoun" (Marquis 2016).

It is important to note that singular *they* is not the only option available. For example, Wayne proposes neo-pronouns *sie*, *hir*, *hirs*, and *hirsself*, which can be commonly observed in use on the Internet, "which, at this point, represents

the largest collection of public works that has changed pro- nominal forms” (Wayne 2005, 88). Besides *sie/hir* and *they/them*, the other commonly used gender neutral pronouns are *ze/zir* and *xe/xem*, *ne/nem* or *ve/ver* (further explanation of these neo-pronouns can be found in the UNCG Office of Intercultural Engagement, (n.d.) guide), but it is worth noting that the Internet community can be very inventive and non-binary individuals often go beyond themselves to create pronouns which fit their personal identity the most.

Moreover, the Internet is not the only place where new pronouns spawn. For example, a preliminary study conducted by Stotko and Troyer (2007) tries to map the use of *yo* as a new gender-neutral pronoun in Baltimore, Maryland.

As of honorifics, Merriam-Webster dictionary added the gender-neutral honorific *Mx.* in 2017. Similarly, in 2017 the HSBC Bank made it public that their customers would be able to choose from a list of honorifics other than *Ms.*, *Mrs.*, and *Mr.*, so that every customer feels equal. These honorifics were:

Ind (abbreviation of individual)
M
Mx (pronounced “mix” or “mux”)
Misc (for miscellaneous)
Mre (for mystery)
Msr (a mix of miss/sir)
Myr
Pr (pronounced “per”, for person)
Sai (pronounced “sigh”)
Ser (pronounced “sair”)

(Equality Institute 2017)

And, finally, if we are not sure about a one’s pronouns and cannot ask, English fortunately allows us to use the person’s name instead – thus, instead of “She/He is a doctor.”, we can say “Ray is a doctor.” to avoid any misgendering.

Of course, there are also options such as using the pronoun version *she or he*, *s/he* or *she/he*, and *Ms/Mr* as honorific which can be considered neutral. These options, however, fit better to the feminist notion of language equality and adhere to the female-male binary and thus are not suitable to achieve a truly gender-neutral language expression.

Similar solutions are used in other natural gender languages, such as Swedish, which uniquely introduced a brand new gender-neutral pronoun ‘hen’, as opposed to the female ‘hon’ and male ‘han’ in 2012 (Gustafsson, Bäck, and Lindqvist 2015, 1).

The solutions we find in language handbooks and in every-day English speech are not the only options we have on hand. As mentioned in 1.2.5, works of Rose (2016, 2017) are an example of taking a different approach. In her recent work, Rose is faced with a task of gendering language in English, as opposed to creating its genderless version. As much as this might seem counter-productive for the needs of this thesis, her approaches might offer a base for similar approaches applicable on Czech and they highlight the need for using different language strategies for different gender identities.

In her 2016 article for *TSQ*, Rose works with a French memoir written by Charles Geneviève Louis Auguste Timotheé d’Eon de Beaumont, *La grande épître historique de la Chevalière d’Eon en 1785 (The Great Historical Epistle of the Chevalière d’Eon of 1785)*, where D’Eon, “lived the first half of his life as a woman who had dressed as a man in order to succeed in the patriarchal world of politics, diplomacy and warfare” (Kates 1995, 559). D’Eon’s gender expression changes throughout the memoir and Rose thus uses the pronouns *ze/hir/hirself* when referring to d’Eon (2016, 486). Additionally, Rose’s aim is not to “discover why d’Eon [...] crossed the gender divide, but to discover if an examination of their actions and words could influence an activist translation for a twenty-first-century audience interested in LGBTQIA+ questions and lives” (2016, 497).

In the French original, we find *hir* referring to *hirself* in feminine as well as masculine grammatical gender, but, interestingly enough, sometimes d’Eon uses both in one sentence (2016, 493). In the introduction to the 2001 English translation, the translators claim that d’Eon’s language and grammar are the key to what the story is trying to depict and achieve, and they claim that “to give the reader a sense of the ambivalence with which d’Eon ‘marked’ his own gender, we the translators indicate each instance with an *m* or an *f*” (Champagne, Ekstein, and Kates 2001). However, Rose points out that this strategy does something French can do without making any additional comments about it (Rose 2016, 498).

Moving on to 2017, Rose published an article in the *Queer in Translation* anthology concerning another French memoir, this time François-Timoléon

de Choisy' *Mémoires de l'abbé de Choisy habillé en femme* (*Memoirs of the abbot de Choisy dressed as a woman*) from the seventeenth century, and her aim was to carry out an experimental translation that would reflect the stance and experience of yet another genderqueer author (Rose 2017, 37). Choisy's gender expression is not stable, just as it was with d'Eon. This memoir consists of two parts in which Choisy takes two different roles: "as Madame de Sancy he is a man in drag, while, as the Comtesse des Barres, he is a man disguised as a woman" (2017, 37). Rose thus again uses the pronouns *ze*, *hir* and *hirsself* for Choisy (2017, 38). Choisy constantly breaks the rules of grammar, not only by referring to *hirsself*, but by referring to others as well – for example, *ze* breaks the rules of using generic masculine for groups where both women and men are present by using 'amies', the feminine word for 'friends' (2017, 39). Rose thus sets a selection of strategies that could be applicable for such translation from gendered French into quite neutral English, so that these nuances stay visible for the reader. However, these strategies are not applicable on the whole memoir. Rose explains that the book is divided into two parts – the first part consists of Choisy being a cross-dresser in drag and is quite playful. In the second part, however, Choisy is in a disguise as a woman, not only in drag, and thus the translation had to become more serious as well (2017, 44).

Looking at the first part of the memoir, Rose tackles the font itself. Adjectives, past tense verbs and any gendered words can be modified by font use, in this case by adding the symbols of Venus and Mars to some of the letters. In her opinion, it is a "subtle but suggestive [strategy] because the words look the same yet have a fundamental difference" (2017, 39).

I go into town **dressèd** as I am as little as possible; the world is so cruel, and it is such a rare thing to see a man wishing to be a woman, that one is often **expòsed** to malicious jokes.

(de Choisy 1995, translation by Rose)

The second strategy Rose proposes is more estranging and deals with incorporating gendered words where they should not be – her examples are the words "loneSONe" instead of lonesome and "I LA(d)Y down" instead of "I lay down" (2017, 40). It is important to note, however, that Rose herself admits that as much as these proposed strategies "allow for an expression of gender fluidity

and self-reflection, [...] they are also fallible: they point to the gender binary” (2017, 40).

Moving to the second part, here Rose’s aim is to abandon the gender binary in her translation and her first strategy is thus using the aforementioned pronouns *ze*, *hir*, *hirsself* not only for Choisy, whose gender is more-or-less already concealed by using the pronoun “I” as the narrator, but also for everyone around Choisy (2017, 44). She thus claims that “removing gender from [her] translation queers the text and gives it the potential to re-imagine gender norms and standard values. The epicene pronouns challenge the reader’s view of the world as always divided between two opposing gendered poles” (2017, 44).

Directly linked to this, the second strategy Rose applied was erasure of the “I” for Choisy, as the pronoun could still be seen as one only truly applicable for those of male gender. Rose thus uses the pronoun “one” instead of “I” for Choisy, further highlighting *hir* nonconformity with the gender binary (2017, 45). Applying both these strategies, the text thus looks something like this:

The next day one returned to Crespon and dined with the curate and d’Hanecourt.
One treated the latter better than normal and showed *hir* signs of friendship.
(de Choisy 1995, 60-61, translation by Rose)

Rose admits that a text implementing her experimental approaches might be hard to digest for the reader, but she bases her counter-argument on Giffney, who explains that “queer theory is often difficult to read (and write)” (2009, 9). According to Giffney, there is a value in this difficulty because the reader has to overcome the same difficulties the writer (or translator) had to overcome during the writing itself – the text is more than just a text, it is used as a tool that provokes a different way of thinking in the reader and raises questions in their mind (Giffney 2009, 9).

2.4.2 Gender-neutral Language in Czech

As mentioned in chapter 2.3, Czech language falls under the ‘grammatical gender’ languages and thus works with three grammatical genders – feminine, masculine, and neuter. At first glance the question of gender-neutral language has an easy solution – using the neuter for non-binary identities. However, as the same chapter

explains, the use of neuter for a human being might sound strange, even derogatory, as the use of neuter suggests the person in question is on the same par as a child, an animal or an inanimate object. Similarly, as will be demonstrated in the following paragraphs, there are instances of suitable gender-neutral parts of speech, but their neutrality fades away with use as soon as they are put into grammatical agreement in a sentence.

Čmejrková (2003, 32) explains that Czech nouns operate within the lexical gender in a way that assigns them a place on the gender binary, which can be seen best on personal nouns and kinship names, which are often put into gendered pairs that can be derived from each other (*vdova/vdovec* [widow/widower]) or not (*sestra/bratr* [sister/brother]). There are, however, nouns that can help us express the kinship in a more gender-neutral or indefinite ways, such as the words *rodič* [parent], *partner* [partner], *sourozenec* [sibling], or *člen rodiny/rodinný příslušník* [family member] (2003, 33). Unfortunately, even though these nouns do not allow the listener to determine the physical gender of the person in question, all these examples are still lexically gendered and fall under the masculine generic.

Čmejrková points out that other examples of using gender indefinite nouns is the use of various epicene nouns, which can be used in a generic feminine gender as well. In this way, a human being can be described either as a *člověk* [person] in masculine, or *osoba* [person] in feminine, even though both of these words include both men and women (as well as non-binary or genderqueer identities) in its meanings (2003, 33–35).

She also mentions the group of double gender nouns, such as *mluvčí* [spokeswoman/spokesman], *průvodčí* [female/male conductor] or *choť* [wife/spouse], which fall under “two gender paradigms and accordingly take two types of agreement” depending on which of the gender we decide to use for them (2003, 38). Similarly, Czech can produce some gender-indefinite nominalised adjectives, such as ‘*dospívající (žena)*’/‘*dospívající (muž)*’ [adolescent (woman)/adolescent (man)].

Again, all these options are based on the female/male gender binarity of the Czech language, and, while the gender-indefinite nouns and adjectives are a great stepping stone on the way towards non-binary identities in language, the speaker is still forced to use them in a masculine or feminine agreement

and their neutrality is soon forced to be broken down and assigned to one of the genders.

To give yet another example, Kolek and Valdřová (2020) aptly note that the issue of gendering in the Czech language can be traced as far as to one's given name itself. Putting aside the problem of female surname formation, which often bugs not only translators, they point out that during the process of naming one's child, the "Czech register offices observe the current law on such offices and also the instructions and information given by the Ministry of the Interior, which follow from the statements of the *Ústav pro jazyk český*, 'Czech Language Institute' [...] and its long-term associate – [...] M. Knappová" (Kolek and Valdřová 2020, 48). As extensive as the set of rules present to the parents when naming a child might seem, the rules are narrowing the options for a transgender/non-binary person seeking a name change even more. To this day, Knappová's manual is the only publication regulating gender-neutral names in Czech and she "deals with them in a short chapter with an unfortunate title *Osobní jména transsexuálů*, 'Personal names of transsexuals'" (Kolek and Valdřová 2020, 49). At the same time, she states that "the chapter is not intended for parents who are about to name their expected child" (2017, 88), by which she automatically excludes any non-binary identities or parents who want to give their child a gender-neutral name.

In recent years, Czech has been mainly occupied with coming up with ways of making the language equal for both the female and male gender. In this context, it is important to note that, even though this thesis uses Čmejřková's explanations in the previous paragraphs, it also takes into consideration that her approach to gender-fairness in the Czech language and sociocultural context has not been exactly a positive one. In her 1995 article *Žena v jazyce*, she states the irrelevance of gender linguistics in the Czech context and goes as far as mocking it, and similar stance is still present in her recently published articles. As noted by Kolek and Valdřová (2020), such opinions on this problematics coming from a respected linguist might have been what formed the following course of the gender linguistic studies in the Czech context.

As mentioned above, the female identity in Czech suffers from a frequent use of masculine generic. Interestingly enough, European Union assigned its member states to work out individual systems of recommendations for gender-equal and non-sexist languages in 1990, yet the first methodology handbook for such

language in Czech did not come out until 2010 (Valdrová, Knotková-Čapková, and Paclíková 2010, 25). This eighty-page handbook on gender-equal use of Czech language, which was published under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MŠMT) and was free to download, contained deliberate explanations and descriptions of the current state of the Czech language and therefore also the Czech society, as well as many handy ways of avoiding the prominence of masculine gender in the Czech language, which often leads to women being put behind men in real life (Valdrová, Knotková-Čapková, and Paclíková 2010). Although the authors repeatedly state that this handbook is only a set of recommendations that can be used in very specific situations, and not an attempt to force language changes on the language user, it was met with a massive backlash, unsurprisingly mainly from male readers. See for example Leo Pavlát's (2010) article for *Český rozhlas*, where he, in quite a sarcastic manner, makes fun of the idea of gender equality in language by bringing up strangely-sounding nouns created from the male base words for women, such as *zabiják (m.) – zabijačka (f.)* [a killer (m.) – a killer (f.) OR a pig slaughter (f.)] and continues to undermine the efforts made by Valdrová and her team by stating that they did not deal with the past tense verbs anyways, again, not taking into consideration Valdrová's claim that these approaches should be taken mainly in public places, offices, forms, etc., not in day-to-day communication. The handbook was later taken down from the MŠMT website. Therefore, a question arises, whether a nation so behind with its equality between binary genders can be progressive enough to work with the genders outside of it.

Just as the numbers of academic writings on the topic of equal language are rising (see for example the works of Kolek and Valdrová (2020) or Valdrová (2018)), the topic of implementing a fully gender-neutral language is slowly but steadily gaining popularity within the communities concerned. In recent years, there have been attempts to both document the use of language in Czech non-binary/genderqueer communities.

In 2018, Kateřina Filipová attempted to map the situation of non-binary people on the microblogging site Tumblr in her MA thesis. Through interviews she mapped the gender struggles of a number of individuals, three of which were Czech. It is helpful in depicting some of the stances of Czech non-binary individuals towards the language available to them – for example, one of the Czech

interviewees specifically asked for the interview to be held in English, saying that Czech does not provide suitable means to comfortably talk about this topic (Filipová 2018, 62). Similarly, the other two Czech respondents admitted that Czech language does not allow them to express themselves in a suitable way, which can best be observed through their use of different pronouns in English and Czech – respondent Nicola uses neutral they/them in English, but masculine gender and pronouns in Czech, stating that there is no way to express themselves in a neutral way; Kaydan, who uses neutral they/them in English, is forced to use female pronouns in Czech simply not to confuse everyone; Kai uses all three pronoun sets in English (she/he/they), but uses feminine gender and pronouns in Czech, mainly because they are not out in the Czech environment and are worried people would not understand their identity (2018, 62–63).

One of the most notable trans-friendly and trans-supportive organizations in the Czech Republic is Transparent z.s (also written as only Transparent or Trans*parent, accessible via the www.transparentprague.cz webpage and via the Transparent CZ Facebook page). Although the language is not their primary focus, they do attempt to practise all-gender-inclusive language on their webpage and, more notably, in their Facebook posts.

Nevíte, co s pondělním večerem? Přijďte si poslechnout diskuzi „Trans lidé jako nositelé genderové ideologie” v pražském kampusu Hyberská! Vystoupí zde naši*e členové*ky Jamie Rose, Diana Young a Viktor Heumann a řeknou vám více o tom, jaké to je být trans* a vnímán*a jako rozvraceč*ka světa, který údajně dosud dával smysl.

[Not sure how to spend your Monday evening? Come to the “Trans people as the carriers of gender ideology” discussion in Prague Campus Hyberská! You will see our (m./f.) members (m./f.) Jamie Rose, Diana Young and Viktor Heumann who will tell you more about what it is like to be trans* and seen (m./f.) as the one (m./f.) disrupting the world that seemed to make sense until now.]

(Transparent 2020b, my translation)

Such use of including but dividing masculine and feminine gender is very similar to the suggestions given by Valdová, Knotková-Čapková, and Paclíková (2010, 40), according to which slashes are an appropriate equalizing element in forms and other official documentation to include both feminine and masculine

identities (in such cases noun forms such as členové/členky, členové/ky, člen/ka are created). But it is exactly the asterisk which makes the written language of Transparent that more inclusive for not only women and men, but for everyone out of the binary.

To compare this approach to the previously mentioned authors, Concilio addresses the use of an asterisk in the earlier version of the terms ‘translatxrsation’ and ‘translatxr’⁸ because the “asterisk ... offer[s] a productive means of thinking beyond static conceptions” (Concilio 2016, 481). Rose notes that the asterisk is nowadays more commonly seen added to the word ‘trans’ as it “stems from common computing usage wherein it represents a wildcard — any number of other characters attached to the original prefix” (H. Ryan 2014). Thus, even though in the case of the Transparent Facebook post there are only feminine and masculine genders present, the asterisk invites other gender identities to consider themselves included.

On the contrary, such text is not exactly the easiest to read even in such short post. Bregantová (2020) states on behalf of asterisks that from the translator’s and publisher’s point of view, a “thick novel full of asterisks or neologisms could hardly achieve what a novel containing non-binary characters aims for, that is mediating a certain life experience, widening the reader’s horizon and creating a sense of belonging” (my translation).

Throughout July 2020, Transparent led a campaign for non-binary visibility and non-binary language visibility through a series of Facebook posts. In one of them the organization gives, amongst other tips and tricks, a list of various options Czech non-binary people have for their language self-expression. This list includes:

- a) grammatical gender assigned them at birth – some choose this because they are used to it or do not find it bothersome
- b) the “opposite” grammatical gender from that assigned to them at birth – some identify with it better, they do not like their assigned gender, etc.
- c) neuter gender – some want to avoid using both masculine and feminine grammatical genders and neuter seems like easiest option
- d) new grammatical gender represented by the pronoun “one”

⁸ Concilio decided not to include the asterisk in her writing anymore because they are from a big part written using a screen reader and she wanted her works to be accessible to individuals depending on screen readers, which can have trouble with such symbols (Concilio 2016, 481)

- e) switching between the grammatical genders
- f) using masculine animate plural and feminine plural – works for example with past verbs (in spoken language you do not have to distinguish between the -I and -Y suffix)

(Transparent 2020a, my translation)

Unfortunately, Transparent does not provide any sources for their list, nor do the posts provide extended examples of use for these options. The organisation only states that this, indeed, is not a full list and that new options might emerge in the future as well (Transparent 2020a). Therefore, the most probable source of these options is personal experience of the writers.

At this point, it seems important to note that most of the new ‘rules’ and options proposed by all the aforementioned authors, are only applicable in certain situations. It is possible to use a neutral noun in Czech, when you are not sure about someone’s gender in a formal/semi-formal setting – for example talking about a child’s *rodič* (parent) at school, when you are unsure whether the child has both mother and a father. But how do we address someone we closely know? Surely we cannot refer to our non-binary best friend simply as an *osoba* (person, f. generic) or a *člověk* (person, m. generic) because using the word ‘friend’ would require appropriate gendering in Czech. Similarly, it is easy to use slashes or asterisks when trying for inclusion in writing, but these strategies are unusable in spoken language.

Within the aforementioned posts, Transparent encourages the readers to refer to another group called TakyTrans. It is a newer group (founded in 2020) that focuses on inclusion of transgender people outside the gender binary and it is precisely this group that tries to spark a wide discussion about suitable gender-neutral language these days. Again, their activities can be traced to a public Facebook page.

TakyTrans and its representatives recently organized an open discussion on gender-neutral language during the 2020 Prague Pride, where they shared their experience and new suggestions regarding gender neutral language used and usable in every-day conversation. The goal, according to TakyTrans, is not to find one radical way of using language for non-binary people and start using it right away, quite the opposite is true – they are aware that even the 5 participants find it hard to agree on one or two suggestions suitable for each and every of them. However, they see the importance of gradually finding the means that could be generally used

in cases where the speaker is not sure or cannot ask what language to use, not to misgender the person addressed (Prague Pride 2020, 55:20). While discussing many of the aforementioned suggestions, such as use of the neutral pronoun *one*, there were many new options proposed at the panel.

TakyTrans does not focus only on the language neutrality in written documents or used during official occasions, which is often seen by the Czech public as forced⁹, but they give a notable consideration to spoken language and language used in casual settings. The five participants share their different experiences with using Czech language as a Czech non-binary person. While some of them decide to adhere to one grammatical gender only, some switch between them and there is thus no wrong way to approach them – however, even such non-binary people wish there was a special option just for them (2020, 27:40).

The neuter was addressed in this discussion as well. When not used in an insulting way, it is considered an option by this group, and one of the members does not mind its use, but there is still the issue of being compared to an inanimate object or a child; the group, however points out, that the neuter gender could be reclaimed by the non-binary community in a similar way the word ‘queer’ was reclaimed by the English speaking one (2020, 58:10). One more note to the neuter was that in certain situations it gets too close to the language specifically spoken in Brno – thus, “*Ty jsi takové malé.*” [You are so (n.) small (n.)] uttered towards a non-binary person, could be understood as a masculine due to the Brno dialect, where suffix *-ý* often changes into *-é* (*malý* (m.) – *malé* (n. or m.)) (2020, 58:55).

Another option mentioned in the discussion was avoiding gendered language whatsoever. This is possible through various ways including changing and carefully picking language structures, avoiding past tense verbs, or using passive instead of an active voice. However, the group agrees that such avoiding is extremely energy-consuming in speech, as it requires constant thinking, precise planning, and therefore it is more suitable for written language (2020, 35:10, 1:03:00). One of the examples of such avoidance they give is relying on a group whenever you can: instead of saying “*Měla jsem moc práce.*” (I had (f.) a lot of work to do.), you can rather say “*V práci jsme toho měli hodně.*” (We had a lot to do at work.) (2020, 34:30).

⁹ See for example the reactions of different news portals (and discussions under these news bits) on the new UN recommendations for neutral language.

From their experience, the TakyTrans group has noticed the rising use of plural used as singular, as with the English use of pronouns *they/them*. A special case of this phenomena in Czech is *onikání*, the use of third person plural instead of first person singular (thus “*Ty jsi takový malý/taková malá/takové malé.*” [You are so small (m.)/so small (f.)/so small (n.).] becomes “*Oni jsou takoví malí/Ony jsou takové malé/Ona jsou taková malá*” [They (m.) are so (m.) small (m.)/They (f.) are so (f.) small (f.)/They (n.) are so (n.) small (n.)]. However, the use of plural or third person plural does not fully solve the whole problem in Czech, as the speaker still has to choose between masculine and feminine with plural adjectives (as demonstrated with the third person plural examples), where the only semi-neutral way is choosing generic masculine, and another issue raises with using a singular ‘us’ (2020, 37:00). Other argument might be that while using plural instead of singular is seen as a novelty in English, using third person plural in Czech is on the other hand considered old-fashioned.

The group appeals to the audience that language is not fixed and constantly evolves, and that, despite what schools tell us, we can actually play with language as we like – another suggestion they give is using nouns in a different gender than we are used to: one of the participants, who has a younger brother, encourages him to use the noun *sestra* (sister) in a masculine conjugation (*sester*) and thus breaking both the grammar and gender rules (2020, 47:15, 54:00). As of writing, the group proposes such novelties as using an *Ÿ* (a combination of y and i) as a past tense verb suffix to avoid the generic masculine or feminine suffix (2020, 40:50).

As the discussion is in its beginnings, Czech language could certainly benefit from efforts made in other Slavic countries in this regard. Jakub Séléš seems to be the main driving force behind Slovakia’s attempts to coin new gender neutral Slovak language. Similar to the Czech environment, a notable gender debate that would consider more than the binary genders has not taken place in the academic discourse in Slovakia. However, in 2016 Séléš published a document on options leading to achieving gender neutrality in Slovak (an updated version was made public in 2018) and, subsequently, in 2018, results of a questionnaire on reception of these suggested solutions was published as well. In both these documents Séléš appeals to the public, both general and academic, to take these suggestions into consideration, think about them and make changes to them if needed. At the same time, Séléš points out that such document “is not a specialized work in linguistics

or psychology. It is merely a draft of new grammar construct for those of the general public interested in equality for queer-gender persons in Slovak language” (2018, 2, *my translation*).

Séleš proposes the use of neutral pronouns *en* (personal) and *te* (demonstrative) and the already existing neuter suffix -o for past tense verbs (2018, 5). There is a draft for new adjective inflection, however, unlike the Czech community which is willing to implement unfinished language ideas, Séleš points out that this draft is not derived from any existing rules and therefore invites the academic community to research this part of the language in more detail to come up with a solution that would “fit better into the language continuum” (2018, 5). As of nouns, Séleš states that gender of nouns can be chosen by preference, but gendered names of professions can be altered with the suffix ‘-stvo’ (*učitel’/učitel’ka* [teacher f./ teacher m.] – *učitel’stvo*), already used in neuter and thus sounding natural in every-day Slovak (2018, 6).

Similarly, we can take a look on Russian in an attempt to find some viable solutions for Czech. Russian language falls under the same group as Czech and Slovak, where three grammatical genders rule the language system through not just pronouns, but through nouns, adjectives, and verbs as well. Similarly to Czechia or Slovakia, Russia, which is by the general public seen as rather anti-LGBTI+, does not seem to have produced any academic writing on the gender neutral language usable for the non-binary community. However, we can gather some snippets from news articles and Internet translation forums.

In a thread on the StackExchange forum, user v010dya asks whether there are any gender-neutral Russian pronouns (v010dya 2014). User Alissa answers that “you can use imperative constructions to hide gender, but you can't use them always. Other option is plural forms (most of them are genderless), but again, you will need to explain why these creatures are called in plural form“ (Alissa 2014). They also point out that from their experience with their LGBTI+ friends “there is always big mess with gender-specific forms words and constructions” and that, similarly to Czech or Slovak, neuter is not usually used because it “sounds like no gender at all, not like unknown gender” (Alissa 2014). On the other hand, they give an example of a gender-neutral language from written official documents: “something like “лицо, совершившее...” (neuter) [“a person, who committed...”,

my translation] or things like "человек должен..." (masculine as default gender) ["a person has to..." , my translation]" (Alissa 2014).

User10820 states that while there are no gender-neutral pronouns available for a non-binary person in Russian, there are ways of concealing the gender within the language, which are similar to the attempts in Czech to bypass any gender markers (translations in square brackets done by me):

That includes using passive verbs instead of active ones when it comes to past tense, but this is not always feasible (it can be done to a phrase like "я оплатила счёт" ["I paid (f.) the bill"], turning it into "счёт был оплачен мною" ["the bill was paid by me"], but good luck doing the same for stuff like "я вышел на улицу" ["I walked (m.) into the street"]). If the bulk of a text is written in past tense, you may try using present tense instead ("я вышел на улицу" ["I walked (m.) into the street"] becomes "я выхожу на улицу" ["I walk (n.) into the street"]).

...

Some people use the so-called "gender gaps". The practice is controversial to say the least, as many find them confusing and hard to read. Basically you just put an underline after the gender-neutral part of the word is over, and then write a gender-specific ending, usually feminine, but usage of masculine is not unheard of. That way, the adjective "жёлтый/жёлтая" ["yellow (m.) / yellow (f.)"] becomes "жёлт_ая" or "жёлт_ый". Thread with caution, however, as how acceptable its usage is largely depends on the audience it's meant for. If it's meant for the general population (and has nothing to do with feminism and so on), then I suggest using something else.

There's a different, but more accepted way of gender-neutral speech - putting the alternative ending in parentheses. "Грустный/грустная" ["sad (m.) / sad (f.)"] can either be written as "грустный(ая)", "грустн(ый/ая)" (that's a bit weird though) or left as it is.

(user10820 2014)

This user also notes that instead of using third-person pronouns, one can refer to the person in question by their name, however this option is often omitted to avoid repetition. Similarly to Czech and Slovak, masculine gender can be used as the default for any gender, but some users from the community might find this unsuitable (user10820 2014).

Another look into the Russian non-binary community is provided to us by Emma Friedlander and her 2018 article for the Moscow Times.

She interviews a number of non-binary individuals and maps their language choices. While some decided to alter between the feminine and masculine pronouns, some adopted a new pronoun ‘ono’ and went as far as to decline their names in a neuter, such as Seroye Fioletovoye [Grey (n.) Violet (n.)] or use the all-inclusive asterisks in their names, just like So*ni (Friedlander 2018).

The article mentions the “Language Neutralization Laboratory”, a project similar to the Czech Transparent or TakyTrans, and “organized by Russian LGBTQ+ group Magma, the project held weekly workshops that looked for ways to make the Russian language more inclusive” (Friedlander 2018). This project is situated on the Russian social medial site VK (former VKontakte), the Russian counterpart to the western social media site Facebook, and is, unfortunately, inactive, as the newest posts on the LNL page is from 2016. So*ni was, however, inspired by this group to creating new, more gender-inclusive language, which lead to the use of new suffix -khshi, “a completely different variation that negates any reference to gender” (Friedlander 2018). Friedlander herself finds the language So*ni uses confusing at first, but, as So*ni themselves state, people eventually adjust and understand. (Friedlander 2018).

The general consensus between the interviewees is that the language change will take some time to take place on a national scale and that a change of the language is not enough if the society does not change with it. Inequality will not be solved merely by changing the way people speak, “but [such change] does make it harder and harder to use unequal language” (Friedlander 2018).

We can therefore observe that neither of the three Slavic cultures has ready-to-use language means suitable for non-binary individuals as of the writing of present thesis. However, there are attempts being made to address the situation and improve the situation. It is worth mentioning, however, that the communities mainly deal with casual language for every-day use, while the few academic works might rather focus on equality in official documents and official settings. There is no manual as of how to proceed while translating a literary text. Hopefully, for the Czech environment, this thesis might serve as an aid for setting the change into motion.

3 METHODOLOGY

The following chapters explore the different means of gender-neutral language expression mentioned in chapters 1 and 2 while applied to literary translation. Before the methodology is explained, however, let us once again familiarize ourselves with the overall aim of the thesis presented.

The first aim is to successfully map and explore the possible strategies for translating non-binary identities and their language from English into Czech within literary texts. These strategies are already briefly described in the previous chapters and the practical part utilizes them in a more thorough way. This list of possibilities serves as an overview of possible changes Czech language might undergo in the future in its attempts to achieve gender-neutrality. However, as proposed by Hord (2016, 6), such language change should not succumb to outside prescriptivism, it should stem from the non-binary community itself.¹⁰ For this reason, the second aim is to acquire an overview of the perception of these strategies from inside of the Czech non-binary community itself.

3.1 Used Material

I Wish You All The Best is a young adult debut novel written by Mason Deaver, a non-binary author from Charlotte, North Carolina. It was published in May 2019 and even before the publication date it managed to gain attention within the publishing community overseas, mainly through the topic of a struggling non-binary protagonist, handled in a sensitive, yet realistic way.

Shortly after its publishing, the novel was “nominated for the YALSA Best Fiction For Young Adults Award, the Goodreads Choice Awards for Best Young Adult Fiction, and a NPR Book Concierge Pick”, it was “named One of the Best Books of 2019 by Indigo, Autostraddle, Bitch Media, Book Riot, and BuzzFeed” and it placed as the “2019 Junior Library Guild Selection & IndieBound Bestseller” (masondeaverwrites.com 2019). The critical perception was overwhelmingly positive as well, praising mainly the tenderness of the story and stating the novel is “quietly groundbreaking” and important for the community (masondeaverwrites.com 2019). Alethea Kontis’ review also points out that

¹⁰ Although in case of literary translation, the new standard might stem from a consensus between the non-binary community and for example the publishing houses, which might result in certain compromises on both sides.

the novel is not only important for everyone to read to understand the struggles of the community, but it is also a highly enjoyable reading, even when you, as someone who does not belong to the non-binary community, cannot fully relate to the happenings of the story:

I often bring up a quirky anecdote about how I relate to the main characters of the books I review here, but I can't claim to have experienced anything remotely like what Ben goes through in this book. Ben's story was very much Not About Me. But that doesn't mean this book isn't amazing (it's stellar!) or that a certain audience has no business reading it. Everyone should read it.

(Kontis 2019)

As of its publication in the Czech environment, the original English version can be found at bookshop online stores such as Luxor or Knižní Klub, it was also available at Knihy Dobrovský. It has, however, not been translated into Czech. Similar situation can be seen on Slovak bookshop portals, where, again, the original is available with no signs of the translated novel coming out any time soon.

The novel was selected for the use of this thesis because it is a novel about a non-binary identity written by a non-binary identity, and because its translation into Czech might open a discussion within the wider public, especially throughout the youth generations.

Story-wise, *I Wish You All The Best* focuses on the life of Ben De Backer, an American teenager currently going through the last year of high school. Ben's story starts with a coming-out to Ben's parents, where Ben for the first time fully acknowledges the non-binarity in the real world. Ben is immediately chased out of the family home and is forced to find shelter at another relative – the ever-so-estranged sister Hannah.

Moving to a new house, new family and new school, Ben is forced to push through a life full of fear and anxiety caused by the experience of being rejected. The journey involves seeking treatment and safety with the help of Hannah, who turns out to be the most supportive driving force in the process. With the help of an Internet best friend Mariam, who is also non-binary, Ben sets out on a journey to become as comfortable in real life, as Ben is with Mariam online.

Structure-wise, the novel is divided into twenty four chapters and an epilogue. The story is chronological with only occasional retrospective jumps.

As was already mentioned, the aim is not to translate the whole novel, but rather to select excerpts that would allow me to demonstrate the selected strategies and fully explore their potential, their advantages and setbacks. Despite that, the structure and story of the novel still have to be taken into consideration during these short translations, as the context might directly affect the way the strategies can/cannot be used. As the story takes place before, during, but also after Ben's coming out, the translator is given a range of situations in which the translation strategies might significantly differ, similarly to Rose's (2016, 2017) perception of her source texts in chapter 2.4.1.

3.2 Translation Strategies

Referring back to chapter 1.2.7 on social responsibility of the translator, Drugan and Tipton (2017, 122) state that the view of a translator on their responsibility can lead to different overall strategies in their work – specifically, they speak of the so-called “resistance” as opposed to “acceptance and commitment to sustain a form of social consensus”. For the purpose of this thesis, these two concepts were taken and adapted so that they could be applied in a way suitable for literary translation. Acceptance is thus understood as implementing strategies that are in compliance with the well-established language and social norms of the target culture for the purpose of maintaining the *status quo*, while Resistance is understood as implementing strategies that will challenge the well-established language and social norms of the target culture for the purpose of setting a change into motion.

These two adapted concepts were then taken and used for creating a model, which serves as an aid for a clearer presentation and division of all the possible translation strategies proposed in chapter 4. This model is called the acceptance-resistance continuum and is demonstrated in **Figure 2**:

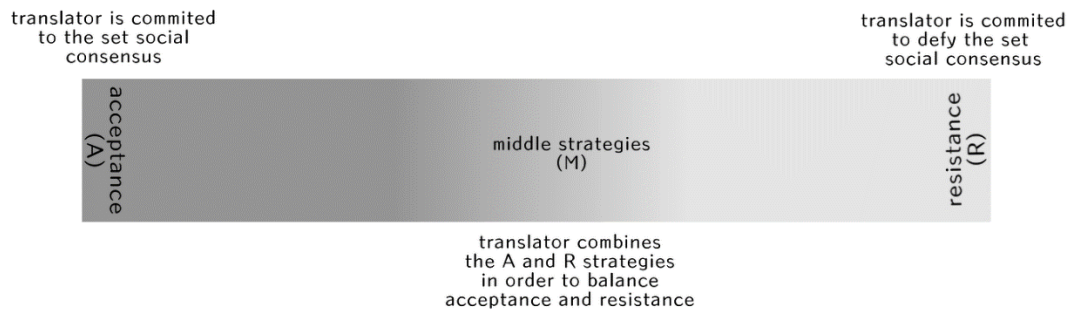


Figure 2: The acceptance-resistance continuum

As seen on the model, the continuum is not purely black and white. Rather, it combines different shades of grey, which mix in the middle to demonstrate that there is a possibility of mixing and matching different strategies during a translation job – not only to fit an identity the best, but also due to the fact that the identity of a character might continually evolve and move freely back and forth between the two extremes.

Overall, nine different translation strategies were selected from the theoretical part:

- I. Using the gender a character was assigned at birth (A)
- II. Bypassing gendered phrases (A)
- III. Using the opposite of the gender a character was assigned at birth (M)
- IV. Using the neuter grammatical gender (M)
- V. Switching between feminine and masculine gender (M)
- VI. Using plural instead of singular + Using third person plural (M)
- VII. Using the opposite grammatical gender for a gendered noun, changing its structure (R)
- VIII. Using new grammatical structures and pronouns (R)
- IX. Use of fonts and other graphic adjustments of gendered expressions (R)

As seen above, they were first divided into three groups according to the acceptance-resistance continuum and then each strategy was tested on a short excerpt of text taken from the novel and translated into Czech. The advantages and disadvantages of each strategy were described and discussed.

After the initial testing and evaluation of the nine strategies, the decision was made to include only three of them in the final questionnaire. There were two reasons for this decision. First, it was unlikely that the respondents would be willing to read through excessive amounts of text and would have the time and capacity to answer questions regarding all nine excerpts/strategies. The second reason is the division of the aforementioned strategies into three groups (however they might be intertwined with each other), from which one overall approach (A, M, R) can be selected.

The decision as of which of the strategies should be picked was based on the following criteria:

- 1) Each strategy has to come from one of the division groups – i.e. one from the Acceptance, one from the Middle and one from the Resistance approaches group.
- 2) If possible, the chosen strategy should be usable in any linguistic context; it should not be a strategy linguistically applicable only under certain circumstances, for example only to adjectives or only to pronouns, etc. (note that this criterion might not be fully fulfillable)
- 3) If possible, the readability of such strategy in longer text bodies should be taken into consideration.

Of course, this thesis acknowledges that such criteria are to an extent subjective to the researcher in charge. However, they seemed to prove to be effective for the scope of this thesis and thus three strategies were chosen, as discussed in further detail in chapter 5. The three strategies chosen were:

- I. Using the gender a character was assigned at birth (A),
- IV. Using the neuter grammatical gender (M) and
- IX. Use of fonts and other graphic adjustments of gendered expressions (R).

3.3 Perception of the Translation Strategies

The Google Forms online platform was used to create a questionnaire. The survey was conducted in Czech, the respondents answered anonymously

and the questionnaire itself was designed so that approximately 10–15 minutes are needed to fill it in, depending on the length of the participant’s open answers. The whole questionnaire is divided into an introduction, where participants also agree that their participation is voluntary and that they understand that some of the questions may induce negative feelings in them, an introduction into the questionnaire and problematics itself, then two sections with the questions, and a finishing screen. The questionnaire itself can be viewed in the Appendixes.

The first two introductory screens give an overview of what the questionnaire aims to find out, as well as an introduction into the gender and translation issues. Special care is given to the language used, so that it is inclusive of all gender identities. The participant is also repeatedly reminded that the questions aim at literary translation, not spoken language or translation of formal documents. The name and author of the novel from which the subsequent excerpts and translations are taken is also disclosed to the participant.

The first main section with questions starts with an explanatory paragraph with instructions. The participant is then presented with a translation strategy, a brief description of said strategy, and, where needed, an explanation as of where and how the strategy was implemented in the presented excerpt and translation. The same excerpts and translations were used in the questionnaire and in the present thesis. The English original excerpts were included in the questionnaire mainly to remind the participants once again that the survey aims for exploring the means of literary translation, not spoken language or language of official documentation.

After reading an excerpt and a translation, the respondent was first presented with an open-answer question, where they were asked to list the advantages and disadvantages of said strategy, what they like and dislike about it, and give a commentary of anything that crosses their mind with this strategy.

Then, the respondent was presented with three statements (the statements were translated by me from Czech for this thesis):

- “I would use [this method/language] in literary text for a non-binary character.”
- “I would like to read a book in which [this method/language] is used for a non-binary character.”
- “The use of [this method/language] in translation of a non-binary character language bothers me.”

It is true that the first statement seems to be inappropriately chosen due to the fact that the respondent group did not consist of translators. It, however, gives the respondent a better sense of deciding about themselves, rather than only being presented with already decided strategy.

For each of the statements a five-point-scale was presented, in which the respondent could answer how much the statement applies to them (again, the scale was translated from Czech for this thesis): 1= Definitely agree, 2 = Slightly agree, 3 = I don't know, 4 = Slightly disagree, 5 = Definitely disagree.

After answering these questions to all three of the strategies, the respondent was then asked to arrange the three strategies from the one that is the most suitable for them (1), to the one that is the least suitable for them (3). Additionally, they were asked to give an example of what strategy they would prefer, should none of the three feel fully suitable for them.

The second section of questions collects the respondents' personal data as of age, gender (this option was incorporated mainly to discard the potential binary participant), the highest achieved education level, and questions on whether the respondent is studying/working/unemployed, whether they feel like a part of the non-binary community. Out of curiosity, they were also asked a question whether they have ever read a book translated into Czech where a non-binary character was present and, if they remember, comment on the language that was used for such character in Czech.

The finishing screen contains contact information, should the participant have any comments or should they be interested in the results.

The questionnaire was open to public on October 26 and was closed on October 31. During this time it was shared on the microblogging site tumblr and within the core TakyTrans group online.

A total number of 31 answer sets was collected in the six-day span. The answers were then extracted from the Google Forms platform as an .xlsx sheet and subsequently processed in MS Excel, in which the answers were evaluated and categorized. This excel sheet is available to the reader on demand.

First, the column with "gender" was checked for any binary identities. Answers of cisgender women, cisgender men and binary transgender people were discarded from the answer sheet. The anonymous respondents were then colour-coded by age and divided into age groups.

As of the five-point-scale questions, the instances of agreement, disagreement and indecisiveness were counted for each statement, and the overall agreement, disagreement or indecisiveness was determined based on these numbers for each of the statements and each of the methods. Similarly, the instances of 1 = suits me the best, 2 and 3 = suits me the least were counted for each of the strategies and the overall order of the strategies was determined.

The open answers for each of the strategies were manually read through and sorted out into rather positive ones, rather negative ones and partial¹¹ ones. The additional 'rather' plays a significant role because majority of the answers were not one hundred percent positive or negative and the sorting out process had to be done quite subjectively according to the researcher. The open answers to the question about what other language means would be suitable for the respondent were manually checked and sorted into groups according to similar strategies mentioned.

¹¹ In this case, the 'partial' answers usually stated both advantages and disadvantages, but it was unclear whether the person feels positively or negatively towards the strategy.

4 POSSIBLE TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF THE NON-BINARY IDENTITIES AND THEIR LANGUAGE

To demonstrate the overall abilities of Czech language in relation to the non-binary language in literary translation, the strategies mentioned in the theoretical part were selected and divided into groups according to where they can be placed on the acceptance-resistance continuum. The resistance (R) strategies are those that clearly go against the language and societal norms of the target culture. The acceptance strategies (A) are those that try to adhere to the language and societal norms of the target culture. As shown in Figure 2, the continuum does not consist of just two points on two opposite sides, neither it is all black and white. Thus, if the strategy does not quite adhere to the norms, but it is also not radical enough to be considered a pure resistance strategy, it belongs into the middle (M) category, which means it places anywhere between the two extremes.

Once again, a list of nine selected strategies is presented, where the strategies were arranged from the least to the most experimental and will be discussed accordingly:

- I. Using the gender a character was assigned at birth (A)
- II. Bypassing gendered phrases (A)
- III. Using the opposite of the gender a character was assigned at birth (M)
- IV. Using the neuter grammatical gender (M)
- V. Switching between feminine and masculine gender (M)
- VI. Using plural instead of singular + Using third person plural (M)
- VII. Using the opposite grammatical gender for a gendered noun, changing its structure (R)
- VIII. Using new grammatical structures and pronouns (R)
- IX. Use of fonts and other graphic adjustments of gendered expressions (R)

4.1 Acceptance Strategies

The acceptance strategies are those that adhere the most to the language and social norms of the target culture and aim to maintain the status quo. For the needs of this thesis, two such strategies were selected.

I. Using the Gender a Character Was Assigned at Birth

Using the grammatical gender according to the gender a character was assigned at birth might seem the easiest way out, when a translator does not want to or is not willing to deal with the gender issues of a translation, but it is still riddled with a number of issues. First, the comfort of the translator might occur at the expense of the reader's discomfort: this strategy might have a triggering effect on a non-binary reader whose identity is purposefully erased in the text. The erasure of the gender neutrality is also tied to the question of faithfulness. While the translator might argue that this strategy is the most natural to a target culture reader, considering language, and that there is no "better" option, the fact that the target text is not staying faithful to the source text still stands.

As said before, however, translating a language of a non-binary identity often means combining a number of strategies together. The above stated drawbacks do not mean that such strategy cannot be used in the text at all. It is the translator's job to find the nuances in the text and apply strategies where appropriate. Thus, we can look at the first excerpt of *I Wish You All the Best* and explore the possibilities of this first strategy's use.

Three short excerpts from the novel were selected to demonstrate where using this strategy is appropriate and justifiable. Excerpt 1 is taken from the beginning of the novel:

1 a) "Are you sure you're feeling okay? You know these temperature changes have always gotten to you." Mom walks back over to me and brushes the hair away from my forehead. "You do feel a little **warm**."

"I'm fine." I shake her hand away. "I promise, just **tired**."

1 b) „Opravdu je ti dobře? Víš, co s tebou tyhle změny teploty dělají.“ Máma mi shrnuje vlasy z čela. „Připadáš mi trochu **horký**.“

„Je mi dobře,“ setřásám její ruku. „Přísahám, že jsem jen **unavený**.“

(Deaver 2019, 1, my translation and emphases)

As mentioned in chapter 2.4.2, grammatical gender in Czech is most often noticeable through pronouns, past tense verbs, and adjectives. The novel makes it easier for the translator since it is mostly written in present tense and thus, if the translator chooses to maintain the tense in Czech as well, the problem with past tense verbs can be at least partially eliminated. However, the issue of appropriate pronouns and adjectives is still in question.

In this case, the biggest lead as of which strategy to use is the context itself. Since this dialogue happens right at the start of the novel, where Ben, the non-binary individual, has not come out to their family yet, it is appropriate to use the grammatical gender corresponding to the gender assigned to them at birth – masculine. Ben’s parents keep addressing them with he/him pronouns throughout this part of the book and Ben does the same when addressing themselves in direct speech. The adjectives **warm** and **tired** can thus be translated as **horký** (m.) and **unavený** (m.) in Czech without threatening or erasing Ben’s identity, since this is the language they have chosen for themselves for this situation. This trend continues throughout the novel whenever Ben talks to their classmates/friends, who do not know about their identity, and Ben continues to use the masculine gender for themselves in direct speech, while in the inner monologue they use they/them pronouns.

Excerpt 2 shows another situation, where the use of a grammatical gender corresponding to that assigned to the individual at birth is appropriate:

2 a) “Are you **sure** you aren’t just **confused**?” Dad asks. “Maybe you’re just gay or something and this has just been a difficult time for you?”

...

“**Benjamin De Backer**, don’t you take that tone with us, we’re your parents.”

2 b) “A jsi si **jistý**, že jen nejsi **zmatený**?” ptá se táta. “Možná jsi jen gay nebo tak něco a máš teď takové těžké období.”

...

“**Benjamin De Backere**, neopovažuj se s námi mluvit tímhle tónem. Jsme tvoji rodiče.”

(Deaver 2019, 202, 203, my translation and emphases)

This excerpt comes from the second half of the book, where Ben is already out with his identity and uses they/them pronouns for themselves. In this case, however, their parents are willingly showing that they are not accepting this choice of pronouns. Again, context and the rest of the text serve as the biggest leads here. While the translator cannot actually note the grammatical gender Dad uses for adjectives **sure** and **confused** in the first question in English, due to the fact that he keeps addressing Ben as his “son” and due to the overall vicious tone of the conversation, it is quite safe to assume that in Czech the corresponding reaction would be to use the masculine gender with these adjectives, thus using **jistý** (m.) and **zmatený** (m.) in the first sentence.

Similarly, Czech does not have to pay attention only to pronouns, adjectives, and past tense verbs – a similar problem occurs with personal names, which have a gender-specific declension. In this case, masculine declension was used for the name **Benjamin De Backer**.

In this case, the use of masculine gender does in fact threaten and erase Ben’s identity, but since the utterance is supposed to have exactly this effect, the use of masculine gender – the gender assigned to Ben at birth – is appropriate.

Excerpt 3 is a part of Ben’s inner monologue:

3 a) It’s an uphill climb to Friday, but I **get** there. Between homework and trying to catch up on all my classes, it’s nice to just have a night **to myself**. Hannah and Thomas both decide they want to go out to dinner; I **decline** the invitation, figuring they probably want some time to themselves after everything I’ve put them through.

3 b) Pátek se zdál být neskutečně daleko, ale nakonec jsem se ho **dočkal**. Je hezké mít mezi vším tím psaním úkolů a doháněním školy chvílku taky **sám pro sebe**. Hannah a Thomas se rozhodli, že půjdou na večeři. Já jsem jejich pozvání **odmítl**. Určitě si chtějí užít nějaký čas spolu sami dva, po tom všem, čím si se mnou prošli.

(Deaver 2019, 58, my translation and emphases)

This excerpt is taken from the first half of the novel where Ben still is not out to all his surroundings, but their gender identity is already fully realized within themselves. As this is a part of the narration and Ben’s inner monologue, the use of masculine gender for past tense verbs, adjectives and pronouns is, as opposed

to the previous two cases, inappropriate, given the aim of the translation is to contain Ben's gender identity.

This excerpt was translated in past tense, as opposed to the present tense used in the source text, as within such narration, the past tense seems more natural and flows better in the target language. However, with this choice one must also make a choice when gendering the past tense verbs. In this case, the verb **get** in a phrase "I **get** there", was translated as **dočkal** (m.) and the verb **decline** as **odmítl** (m.). Similarly, the neutral pronoun in the phrase **to myself** was translated as a masculine **sám** (m.) **pro sebe**. While all of these solutions are grammatically correct, they are used in an inappropriate passage of the text and are thus inappropriate for a translation which aims to maintain the gender identity of the individual.

Perhaps a better solution for this excerpt might be found within the options listed below.

II. Bypassing Gendered Phrases

Bypassing gendered expressions and phrases was in this case put within the acceptance strategies, since, while it uses the sources available to de-gender the language, it, on the other hand, does not use any means of making the non-binarity of a character visible. The identity is supposed to blend into the language seamlessly in a way a female or male character could be talked about as well and the gender of the character would depend on one's imagination, instead of representing a specific, even non-gendered, identity.

Although it is true that Czech language allows (in most cases) the translator to find a way of bypassing the gendered expressions and phrases in the text, an issue of readability might become apparent very quickly. According to Lucie Bregantová, a translator and publishing editor, it is important to choose strategies that would allow the text to flow naturally and would thus be easy to read (2020) and that is exactly where this strategy falls short.

4 a) “Oh, that. My **friend** Mariam, **the vlogger**? **They’re speaking here** tonight, and **I wanted to come see them.**”

4 b) „Mariam – Mariam **z těch vlogů**, pamatuješ? Dneska je tu setkání, na kterém **má projev** a **já si ho chci poslechnout.**“

(Deaver 2019, 267, my translation and emphases)

When translating Excerpt 4, the word **friend** had to be fully omitted, since Czech does not know any neutral expression for such human. The only possible neutral ways of expressing a **friend** would be something along the lines of a *spřátelné stvoření* [a friendly (n.) creature (n.)], however, such expression would feel out of place in the text. Similarly, a **vlogger** is a grammatically gendered professions, where the translator has to choose between a *vlogger* (m.) or a *vloggerka* (f.). Thus, the translation uses an expression (Mariam) **z těch vlogů** [(Mariam) from those vlogs], which maintains Mariam’s neutrality. A natural singular was maintained in the second sentence with the verb **speaking** – **má projev** [has (n.) a speech], only the last clause had to be significantly changed. Instead of **I wanted to see them**, the translation chose an expression **já si ho chci poslechnout** [I want to hear him], where the verb was put into present tense to avoid any gendering and the masculine pronoun **ho** [him] refers not to Mariam, but to the speech mentioned in the previous clause. Thus, both Ben, who is uttering the sentence, and Mariam can maintain their gender-neutrality.

As mentioned before, it is possible to use this strategy for a full de-gendering of a text. However, it is important to note that, putting aside the issue of whether such text is natural sounding or not, trying to de-gender a whole novel would be extremely time consuming and straining both for the translators and their correctors/editors.

4.2 Middle Strategies

These strategies place somewhere between the two extremes of the acceptance-resistance continuum. Out of the overall nine strategies, five can be placed into this category because they to some extent combine approaches of both of the extremes.

III. Using the Opposite of the Gender a Character Was Assigned at Birth

This strategy was classified as a middle one because, while it attempts to break the societal rules, it still adheres to the binary – both in language and in the societal understanding of gender.

It might seem a tempting solution – if one of the grammatical genders is not correct, the other one must be the correct one then. However, we still have to keep the context in mind. Let us look at the Excerpt 3 again, this time with a different translation:

3 a) It's an uphill climb to Friday, but I **get** there. Between homework and trying to catch up on all my classes, it's nice to just have a night **to myself**. Hannah and Thomas both decide they want to go out to dinner; I **decline** the invitation, figuring they probably want some time to themselves after everything I've put them through.

3 c) Pátek se zdál být neskutečně daleko, ale nakonec jsem se ho **dočkala**. Je hezké mít mezi vším tím psaním úkolů a doháněním školy chvílku taky **sama pro sebe**. Hannah a Thomas se rozhodli, že půjdou na večeři. Já jsem jejich pozvání **odmítla**. Určitě si chtějí užít nějaký čas spolu sami dva, po tom všem, čím si se mnou prošli.

(Deaver 2019, 58, my translation and emphases)

In this case, the past tense verbs are translated in feminine – **dočkala** and **odmítla**, and similarly the phrase **to myself** was translated in feminine as well – **sama pro sebe**. However, if we decide to use feminine grammatical gender for Ben in this novel, it will on one hand maintain Ben's identity as a transgender individual, but on the other hand, it still erases Ben's identity as a non-binary individual (hence being placed in the middle of the continuum). Because Ben clearly states their pronouns are they/them and they do not wish to use any gendered expressions, the use of either masculine or feminine grammatical gender both

equals to misgendering and the use of the opposite gender to what they were assigned at birth is thus an inappropriate strategy.

There is no use in applying the opposite grammatical gender to Excerpts 1 and 2, since it would not make sense contextually. However, it is important to note that the use of either feminine or masculine grammatical gender is not inherently wrong – their uses can be appropriate in a translation, in which the individual themselves states they are willing to use it for themselves or willing to let other speakers use it for them. Again, context plays a pivotal role.

IV. Using the Neuter Grammatical Gender

Again, this strategy is placed in the middle of the continuum because, while it attempts to distinguish between the binary and non-binary identities, it uses a linguistic solution already available and not fully adaptable to the case.

Let us have a look at Excerpt 5:

5 a) Last night I **passed out** around midnight, but **woke up** about two hours later, **unable** to fall back asleep.

5 b) Včera jsem **usnulo** kolem půlnoci, ale o dvě hodiny později už jsem **bylo** **vzhůru**, **neschopné** znovu usnout.

(Deaver 2019, 36, my translation and emphases)

The advantage of using neuter grammatical gender is the fact that it is a part of the target language and the reader is familiar with it. At the same time, the translator is also familiar with it and thus the translation might not be as time consuming as in the cases of the following strategies. However, as discussed in chapter 2.4.2, the neuter gender in Czech language is mainly used for inanimate objects, children, and baby animals, and it can thus lead to a feeling of degradation on the side of non-binary readers, who are put on the same level as inanimate objects and children. This excerpt also demonstrates another problem that could arise from the similarities with marked speech of the Brno region, especially in adjectives. The adjective **unable** is here translated in neuter as **neschopné**, which can remind the reader of a masculine in the regional Brno speech (see chapter 2.4.2).

6 a) But when Mariam **asked** me to help **them** with a new project they're starting, there was no way I was going to turn them down.

6 b) Ale když mne Mariam **požádalo**, abych **mu** pomohlo s novým projektem, se kterým zrovna začíná, nemohlo jsem takovou nabídku odmítnout.

(Deaver 2019, 285, my translation and emphases)

Excerpt 6 demonstrates one more difficulty – the neuter gender can be maintained within nouns, verbs, and adjectives, but virtually lost in pronouns. Here, for example, while the narrator talks about Mariam in neuter gender, using the neuter past tense verb **požádalo**, the neuter pronoun **ono** in dativ changes into **mu**, which is the same as the dativ of masculine pronoun **on**. The pronoun thus loses its neutrality and inclusivity.

Generally speaking, again, there is nothing inherently wrong with using the neuter gender. However, the translator must be aware of the fact that the neuter is often used in a degrading manner and should consider the pros and cons (the easy reading experience and possibly faster work versus the possible degradation of the identity and markedness of the Brno region speech) before applying it. That being said, if the context of the utterance is malicious, neuter gender can be used appropriately.

Interestingly enough, Bregantová (2020) states that it is the neuter gender which has the potential to become the norm for non-binary people in translation praxis.

V. *Switching Between Feminine and Masculine Gender*

Switching between genders can make the reader realize that the stability of one's identity is not quite there. It might serve as one of the middle strategies, since, again, it tries to disrupt the binary status quo, yet it does so through using already available means. A translation of Excerpt 3 will serve as a demonstration once again.

The frequency of switches depends on the overall approach the translator chooses – whether the decision is to switch in every next gendered utterance, to switch in each sentence, or to switch in dependence on more feminine/masculine topics, the choice is on the translator. However, as the reader can get lost in the text and in who says/does what, the switches should not be placed randomly. A strategy should be picked at the beginning and maintained throughout the text, so that

the reader, however confused at the beginning, can get used to the strategy and over time reading should get easier.

3 a) It's an uphill climb to Friday, but I **get** there. Between homework and trying to catch up on all my classes, it's nice to just have a night **to myself**. Hannah and Thomas both decide they want to go out to dinner; I **decline** the invitation, figuring they probably want some time to themselves after everything I've put them through.

3 d) Pátek se zdál být neskutečně daleko, ale nakonec jsem se ho **dočkal**. Je hezké mít mezi vším tím psaním úkolů a doháněním školy chvilku taky **sama pro sebe**. Hannah a Thomas se rozhodli, že půjdou na večeři. Já jsem jejich pozvání **odmítl**. Určitě si chtějí užít nějaký čas spolu sami dva, po tom všem, čím si se mnou prošli.

(Deaver 2019, 58, my translation and emphases)

In Excerpt 3 d), the strategy of switching in every sentence was chosen. However, the choice of where to put feminine and where masculine was not made on random. The used scheme in Excerpt 3 in emphasized phrases is *m-f-m*. If the scheme was to be changed *f-m-f*, the phrase **sám pro sebe** (to myself, m.) might give the illusion of a generic masculine and the reader might get the idea that this whole paragraph is in fact written in feminine gender. Thus, the marked **sama pro sebe** (to myself, f) was chosen in the first place to highlight the switch from masculine to feminine and back.

Placement of switches within one sentence will be demonstrated again on Excerpt 5:

5 a) Last night I **passed out** around midnight, but **woke up** about two hours later, **unable** to fall back asleep.

5 c) Včera jsem **usnul** kolem půlnoci, ale o dvě hodiny později už jsem **byla vzhůru, neschopná** znovu usnout.

(Deaver 2019, 36, my translation and emphases)

In 5 c), the switch occurs in a span of one sentence, but it is not conditioned by switching in every next gendered utterance – rather the switch occurs in a new clause or with a new idea, within which the gender is then maintained. Thus, Ben

passed out in a masculine, but **woke up** and was **unable** to sleep in feminine gender. This way the switches in grammatical gender are a bit more tied together and allow the reader to notice that both of the gendered utterances belong to one individual.

However, this strategy again faces certain issues. While it pinpoints that the individual speaking does not adhere to the typical idea of gender, by using the feminine and masculine genders, it adheres to the gender binary and thus erases the gender-neutrality of Ben's identity.

VI. *Using Plural Instead of Singular*

Going back to Bregantová's remark about choosing strategies that allow easy reading, she proposes that the easiest way to achieve this is using plural instead of singular, as is already the norm in English (Bregantová 2020). In case of *I Wish You All the Best*, this strategy seems the most appropriate as well, since that is exactly how Ben decides to address themselves in the source text and a lot of issues would thus be eliminated especially in passages, where Ben explains how one should address them and what pronouns to use. The issue that arises here is, however, the consistency.

7 a) "No, yeah. Ben **is** fine. Well, kind of. **They're** right here. But last night, there was an incident."

7 b) „Ne, Ben **jsou** v pořádku. Teda, vlastně ne. **Jsou** tady, vedle mě. Ale včera večer jsme měli malý incident.“

(Deaver 2019, 66, my translation and emphases)

In Excerpt 7 Hannah refers to Ben with they/them pronouns, as was previously asked of her. In Czech, she thus refers to Ben, a singular identity, in plural, using a present tense verb in plural form – **jsou** (instead of the singular **je**). However, in this case, we could ask ourselves whether the use of plural in such sentence is necessary. Both the present tense singular (**je**) and plural (**jsou**) of the verb **to be** (**být**) are neutral in Czech. The need of plural thus arises only when the verb is in the past tense, or when it is surrounded by pronouns or a gendered adjective. Since this is not the case, the sentence would stay neutral even with the use of singular.

It is, however, a question, whether using plural even in this case would not be better for endorsing consistency throughout the text. By switching between plural and singular, more confusion might arise on the reader's side.

- 8 a) “I **was** really **mad** at her,” I **say**.
“For leaving **you**?”
I **can't** help but feel like this will somehow all get back to Hannah.
- 8 b) „**Byli** jsme na ni fakt **naštvaní**,” **říkám**.
„Protože **tě** opustila?“
Nemůžu si pomoci, ale přijde mi, že to všechno bude motat kolem Hanny.
(Deaver 2019, 112, my translation and emphases)

Excerpt 8 is a little bit more complex and combines a number of grammatical phenomena that might require a more complex solution. Since the first direct speech contains a past tense verb and an adjective, which would both have to be gendered in Czech, this is an appropriate place to use plural. However, since the reporting verb is in present tense and possesses no gender markedness, singular is used. The issue stated in the previous paragraph still stands, but a counterargument is in place – there might be an issue of confusion caused by the constant switching between plural and singular, but at the same time, the translator might want to omit plural for verbs in first person present tense, since they might evoke *pluralis majestatis*, which sounds rather comical in Czech.

In the second direct speech, a choice is on the translator to pick either the T or the V form of the pronoun **you**. Both is possible, although the T form again causes a switch between plural and singular. However, since the dialogue takes place between Ben and their therapist, this problem might be eliminated by stating that the first encounter of these two characters that the therapist will use V form for Ben at any time, which would seem appropriate.

It is important to note that plural does not solve all the grammatical issues of non-binary language in Czech. Especially when it comes to adjectives, plural still has to choose between masculine and feminine and thus, it is often “up to consideration whether [the text] can tolerate generic masculine” (Bregantová 2020). A way of bypassing this issue would be for the translator to state

in the preface of the text that generic masculine would be used as a form on inclusion, not exclusion.

A special case of using plural instead of singular is using the third person plural when addressing an individual (*onikání* in Czech). This is a form of politeness in language, which is nowadays considered archaic, yet it could potentially be a good basis for addressing non-binary individuals if they choose to adopt this language phenomenon as theirs.

9 a) “All right. Well, it might take some getting used to, so I want **you to correct** me when I mess up, okay? **Do you want** me to explain everything to Thomas?”

9 b) „Dobrá. Ale asi mi bude chvíli trvat, než si na to zvyknu, takže chci, aby mě **upozornili**, když se spletu, dobře? **Chtějí**, abych to vysvětlila Thomasovi?“

(Deaver 2019, 18, my translation and emphases)

This excerpt was taken from the beginning of the novel, where Ben explains to their sister Hannah what kind of addressing they use. Considering that in the preceding sentence Ben would inform Hannah that instead of the pronouns they and them, they would like Hannah to address them with third person plural in Czech, the utterance could be translated as demonstrated in 9 b).

The verb **to correct** (sing.) was thus translated as **upozornili** (third p. plur. m. animate) instead of **upozornil/a/o** (third p. sing. m/f/n). The verb **want** was also translated in third person plural as **chtějí**, although in this case the plural was used for the sake of consistency, as the verb is in present tense and thus neutral even in its singular form.

Thus, a similar issue to that mentioned in the previous chapter arises here. Since the endings of verbs can still reveal the gender of the subject or object, the only way of neutralizing it is stating that using generic masculine in verbs or adjectives is not exclusive, but inclusive in this case. While this strategy might not work fully in written language, some of the issues can be eliminated in spoken language – for example the difference between the past tense verb feminine -y suffix (*dělaly* [(they f.) did], masculine animate -i (*dělali* [(they m. a.) did] or masculine inanimate -y (*dělaly* [(they m. ina.) did] suffix is eradicated in spoken language, as the suffixes are pronounced the same.

4.3 Resistance Strategies

The resistance strategies aim for challenging the status quo, they willingly challenge the notion of gender, both in grammatical and social circumstances, and they employ new, more radical means to do so. Three such strategies were chosen for this thesis.

VII. Using the Opposite Grammatical Gender for a Gendered Noun

This strategy is based on the statement done by one of the TakyTrans members during the Prague Pride panel, where they explained how their sibling uses the opposite grammatical gender for certain gendered nouns and fully changes their structure (2020, 47:15, 54:00). It is true that this strategy uses already existing means and still uses the gendered language, it was however placed into the resistance strategies because it would be well noticeable in the text. While this strategy might not be usable throughout the whole text with every gendered noun, there are certainly parts where it could be applied.

10 a) “Don’t worry about it, br—” She stops herself short. “**Ben**. Can I call you **bro**? That’s not okay, right? I should find something else.”

...

“**Sib** is good,” I say. “Instead of bro or whatever.”

“**Sib**. Got it. Well, **sib**, you don’t have to worry about paying me back, it’s fine.”

10 b) “Neměj strach, br—” zarazí se. „**Ben**. Můžu ti říkat **brácho**? To není v pohodě, že ne? Měla bych ti říkat nějak jinak.”

...

“Tak mi říkej **sestře**,” povídám. „Nebo **bratro**, to je fuk.”

„Jasně. No, tak teda – **ty můj sestře**, nic mi splácet nemusíš, je to v pořádku.”

10 c) ...

“Tak mi říkej **sourozenče**,” povídám. „Nebo **sourozenko**, to je fuk.”

„Jasně. No, tak teda – **ty můj sourozenko**, nic mi splácet nemusíš, je to v pořádku.”

(Deaver 2019, 41, my translation and emphases)

In this case, the English source text uses the word **sib**, as a shortening of **sibling**. Czech has a counterpart to this word – **sourozenec**, but this word, as much as it is considered a neutral expression that can mean both a sister or a brother, is in a generic masculine. Another issue is that this part of the novel describes the bonding time between Ben and Hannah. While the short **bro** or **sis** could be seen as expressions of closeness, **sourozenec** gives the impression of a distance between the two characters. One way to break this impression along with other rules to bring Ben's identity up is demonstrated in 10 c) by making a neologism out of the word by using it in feminine – **sourozenka**, which sounds playful and gives an impression of a diminutive, and to further weaken the gendering, a possessive adjective **můj** in masculine can be used, to clash with the feminine gender of the noun.

In 10 b) a similar strategy is used – the words **brother** and **sister** are used in the translation with the opposite grammatical gender, thus creating neologism **bratra** (f.) and **sester** (m.) (as opposed to the correct forms **bratr** (m.) and **sestra** (f.)). Again, the adjective **můj** (m.) is used with the final choice **sester**, to highlight the use of masculine gender for an otherwise feminine noun. Interestingly enough, the word **bro**, about which Hannah asks, is translated as **brácha** (m.), which, due to its -a ending, can be used with in a feminine as well, and would thus be a good candidate to stay in the translation. However, despite the grammar, the word is strongly gendered as masculine in the reader/speaker's mind and the femininity of the form would most likely stay unnoticed.

However, it is important to note that all these solutions are still gendered and do not fully achieve de-gendering of the text. They enhance the duality of the female-male distinction, both in language and in society. However, with a skilful combination of neologisms, this strategy can lead at least to a partial dismantling of the gendered system and blur the harsh line between what is feminine and what is masculine.

The last issue that was dealt with in Excerpt 10 was Ben's name. As names in Czech have to be declined according to the grammatical gender, in this case, the best way to achieve neutrality was to not decline it at all, which could, in itself, be seen as an act of resistance.

VIII. *Using New Grammatical Structures and Pronouns*

Using new grammatical structures and pronouns might definitely be the most visible strategy in the text. On one hand it might help express the non-binary identity the most accurately, on the other hand the reader's experience might be compromised by the constant use of unusual structures.

11 a) The focus of anything and everything. If I **did** something wrong, it was blown way out of proportion. It was almost like they'd seen what'd happened with Hannah and were determined to make sure I **didn't turn out** the same way. Except I don't know how getting more **frustrated** with me over school and chores was supposed to change that.

11 b) Středobod veškerého dění. Když jsem **udělale** něco špatně, okamžitě to nafoukli. Jako kdyby viděli, co se stalo s Hannou, a byli odhodlaní udělat cokoli pro to, abych já **nedopadle** stejně. Až na to, že úplně nechápu, jak mi v tom mělo zabránit to, že jsem **byle** neustále **frustrované** školou a domácími povinnostmi.

(Deaver 2019, 43, my translation and emphases)

Excerpt 11 employs the so called “one byle” scheme proposed by the TakyTrans group at the 2020 Prague Pride panel, according to which the ending -e is given to pronouns and past tense verbs referring to non-binary identities. With this in mind, the translation in 11 b) uses the new form **udělale** instead for *udělal* (m.), *udělala* (f.) or *udělalo* (n.) for the past tense verb **did**. Similarly, the form **nedopadle** is used instead of *nedopadl* (m.), *nedopadla* (f.) or *nedopadlo* (n.) for the past tense verb phrase **didn't turn out**. However, an issue comes up with the use of adjectives. In 11 a) the adjective **frustrated** has to be translated, however, the TakyTrans group does not give any instructions as of how to work with adjectives in their scheme. Thus, using the -e, or rather -é ending was considered in 11 b). Again, the issue of misinterpreting such adjective for a masculine uttered in a Brno regional speech is in place, however, if this strategy is used consistently, it is possible that this notion of the adjective form can be eradicated as soon as the reader gets used to it.

IX. Graphic Adjustments

Within this thesis, the strategies falling under this chapter are considered the most experimental ones and as such they represent the resistance extreme on the acceptance-resistance continuum. These strategies give allow to supply the identities in question with an adequate language representation, but, on the other hand, they might go against the requirements of a literary text that solves well. The graphic adjustments might become quite intrusive in the text and might thus disrupt the overall flow of the story and the sentences, as the reader might be tempted to focus only on these adjustments.

IXa. Asterisks and Gender Gaps

An asterisk can be used in written language in two ways, the first of which is demonstrated again on Excerpt 4:

4 a) “Oh, that. My friend Mariam, **the vlogger**? They’re speaking here tonight, and I wanted to come see them.”

4 c) „Mariam, **ten*ta vlogger*ka**, pamatuješ? Dneska tu má proslov a já si ho chci poslechnout.“

(Deaver 2019, 267, my translation and emphases)

In this case, the asterisk divides the masculine (**vlogger**) and the feminine (**vloggerka**) forms. There is a temptation to group this strategy with the middle ones, since it seemingly uses only the feminine and masculine gender, but, as Concilio (2016) states, it is exactly the asterisk that gives the phrase its inclusivity – it is the asterisk that says that more is included than is said.

In a similar way, the asterisk might be used with just one of the forms:

4 a) “Oh, that. My friend Mariam, **the vlogger**? They’re speaking here tonight, and I wanted to come see them.”

4 d) „Mariam, **ten* vlogger***, pamatuješ? Dneska tu má proslov a já si ho chci poslechnout.“

4 e) „Mariam, **ta* vlogger*ka**, pamatuješ? Dneska tu má proslov a já si ho chci poslechnout.“

(Deaver 2019, 267, my translation and emphases)

The translation in 4 d) only the masculine form of both the pronoun **ten** (that (m.)) and noun **vlogger** (m.). Translation in 4 e) on the other hand uses the feminine pronoun **ta** (that (f.)) combined with the asterisk dividing the masculine and feminine form of the noun, similar to 4 c). Again, while these translations stay on the gender binary, the asterisk is what makes them inclusive.

In this case, however, one must remember the stance of Bregantová (2020) and her note about the text losing its flow and readability with too many visible adjustments. While using the asterisk as in the case of 4 c) in a shorter text might be somewhat acceptable, dealing with such visual disruption in a whole novel might have a negative effect on the reader and their attention, as the visualization of the text might take more attention from the reader than the actual story or aim of the novel. Thus, the most acceptable solution might be found in using the generic masculine with an asterisk, just like in 4 d).

The use of an underscore, or the so called “gender gap” in Czech is inspired by its use by non-binary communities in Russian. As described by user10820 (2014) on the *StackExchange* forum, the use of a gender gap means placing an underscore behind the gender-neutral part of a word and then continuing with a gendered suffix, no matter whether feminine or masculine. The use is thus quite similar to that of an asterisk.

12 a) If it wasn't for **them**, I'm not exactly sure where I'd **be**. Probably still at home, **wasting away** under that roof all by myself, not really **understanding** who I am. Or if I did understand who I am, I probably wouldn't have **figured it out** until much later.

12 b) Kdyby nebylo **j_eho**, nedokážu si představit, kde bych teď **byl_a**. Nejspíš zpátky doma, kde bych **mizel_a** před očima a **nebyl_a schopn_á** porozumět tomu, kdo vlastně jsem. A kdyby se mi to přece jen podařilo, nejspíš bych na to **přiš_la** o hodně později.

(Deaver 2019, 262, my translation and emphases)

In Excerpt 12, Ben is talking about their non-binary friend Mariam. Since user10820 (2014) does not describe the practice with pronouns, the same approach was taken as with adjectives and past tense verbs. The translator then has to decide

whether to go with a male or a female pronoun. In this case, since the choice was either the feminine **jí** or masculine **jeho**, the masculine pronoun was chosen purely on the visual bases, as **j_í** would look quite strange in the text. For Ben, feminine gender with the use of an underscore was used, as it better demonstrates the boundary between the genders in past tense verbs (**nebyl_a** (f.) vs. **nebyl_** (m.)). For the sake of coherence, the feminine gender + underscore combination was maintained throughout the paragraph, but, of course, switching between feminine and masculine to further strengthen the non-adherence to the gender norms might be in place.

Once again, this strategy still adheres to the female-male distinction, but, just as the asterisk, the underscore constantly reminds the reader that there is something more going on behind the past tense verb, pronoun or adjective, that there is more included than it seems. Similarly, it might lead to certain disruption in the reader's experience.

Interestingly enough, slashes are not incorporated in this category. Even though their use is very similar to that of an asterisk, that is, creating a boundary between the masculine and feminine part of a word (**vlogger*ka** vs **vlogger/ka**), the use of a slash is not considered inclusive. It strictly differentiates between the masculine and feminine and its use as such is well known to a Czech reader through official documents and forms.

IXb. New Suffixes for Written Past Tense Verbs

In written form, the TakyTrans group proposes the use of **Ÿ**, a new suffix combining the past tense verb suffixes **-i** (used for masculine animate plural) and **-y** (used for feminine and masculine inanimate plurals). This suffix would thus be suitable as a graphic aid while using the plural instead of singular and it would level the written language with the spoken language, in which the difference between **-i** and **-y** is unnoticeable.

13 a) “**Ready** to go?” Hannah grabs her purse as I push through the doors of the front office.

“Yeah.” I’m not really, but I figure it’ll be better to go ahead and get this over with.

“**Had** a good day so far?”

Hannah’s got her car pulled up in front of the building. It’s unseasonably warm outside today, but it’s the first day I **haven’t needed** three layers, so I don’t plan on complaining. “So far.”

13 b) „**Připravené**?” Zatímco já procházím dveřmi recepce, Hannah bere svou tašku.

„Jo.“ Vlastně **připravené** nejsme, ale v takové situaci je lepší prostě jít a mít to co nejdřív za sebou.

„**Mělý** zatím dobrý první den?“

Hannino auto je zaparkované před budovou. Venku je nesnesitelné vedro, ale na druhou stranu to byl první den, kdy jsme na sobě **nemusely** mít tři vrstvy oblečení, takže si nehodlám stěžovat. „Zatím.“

(Deaver 2019, 47, my translation and emphases)

In Excerpt 13, both plural for singular and basic singular were used, depending on where the singular was neutral on its own and where it needed to be pluralized to maintain the gender neutrality. The use of *Ť* and its derivatives was implemented not only for past tense verb plurals, but also for plural adjectives, where Czech has to differentiate between the gendered forms as well.

In the first direct speech, the adjective **ready** would normally be translated in plural as either **připravení** (m.) or **připravené** (f.). Thus, the best option, following the logic of combining *y* and *i* for past tense verb suffixes, was to combine the suffixes *-í* and *-é*. The suffix **-ě** was created, in which the base is a feminine plural adjective suffix, the title above *-e* represents the letter *i* and the acute accent represents the usual length of the suffix. The reading of this suffix is not intuitive in Czech and could range anywhere from [e:] to a generic masculine [i:], but a reading unusual for Czech phonetics could be created as well, resulting in, for example, [æ]. For the plural past tense verbs, the suffix **-Ť** [i:] was used.

This use of new suffixes allows the translator to break free from the use of generic masculine. In this case, the new suffixes combine the feminine and masculine suffixes into one neutral one, but if there is a need for even deeper neutrality and breaking away from just the female-male binary, suffixes combining

the feminine and masculine with even the neuter suffix can be created. In such case, the adjective **ready** could become **připraveně**, combining the plural suffixes -í (m.), -é (f.) and -á (n.). There is, however, no intuitive way of reading such suffix in Czech and, perhaps, the atypical [æ] might be suitable here again.

IXc. Gender Symbols

The strategy of using gender symbols is based on Rose's (2016) experimental translation of gendered French into non-gendered English (see 2.4.1). Although the direction of translation is opposite in our case, the techniques used by Rose are applicable in this case as well. First, in Excerpt 14, the translation can mimic Rose's work with the female ♀ and male ♂ symbols:

14 a) I've been mentally preparing myself to come out all over again, but I've **been doing** that for a while now. That was one of the things I **realized** early. If you're queer, your life has the potential to become one long coming-out moment. If I ever want to be called the right pronouns, I'll have to correct people and put **myself** out there first and who knows what could happen.

14 b) Psychicky se připravuju na další coming out, ale to je něco, co jsem **dělala** už i předtím. Byla to jedna z věcí, které jsem si **uvědomila** velice brzy. Pokud jste queer, z vašeho života se stává jeden dlouhý coming out. Pokud chci, aby mi lidi říkali tak, jak si přeju, musím je neustále opravovat a musím neustále dávat **sebe sama** všanc a kdo ví, co se může stát.

(Deaver 2019, 47, my translation and emphases)

In Excerpt 14, the translation deals with past tense singular verbs using the gender symbols. The strategy chosen was to keep the verb in feminine gender and to add a part of the male symbol ♂ to the vowels a, o and e (although the option with e was not used in the excerpt). By doing so, while the verb maintains its gender markedness, the addition of the opposite gender symbol creates an immediate clash between the two. However, the clash is not what the translation is looking for, it, on the contrary, seeks either an erasure, or a link between the two. While translation in 14 b) would be acceptable for example for an utterance of a binary transgender person who is fully not out or still in denial, here, with a fully non-binary identity, it does not quite work. The situation could be, however, changed by switching. The bases of the past tense verbs would then switch between feminine

and masculine ones and, subsequently, the symbols would switch from the masculine to feminine one accordingly as well. This switching would then create an illusion of a gender identity continuously moving left and right on the binary spectrum and would give the identity a different outlet than simply switching between feminine and masculine gender.

If we, however, want to really employ this strategy while achieving gender neutrality, the use of a hybrid symbol × is in place. The symbol was coined by the Internet user Johnathan LR in 2012 and soon became widely spread within the non-binary and trans* community. According to Johnathan LR, the

“intention was to create a symbol for those who fall outside the lines of cis and trans* male and female; for the genderqueer and genderfluid; third gender and agender; etc. It obviously relies on the Mars and Venus male and female gender symbols and is a combination of them [...] but the x also denounces them. X has become a symbol of the non-binary, in pronouns and titles; it seemed fitting here. Its position on the circle deviates from the positions of the male, female, and trans* symbols, because it is not them, but is not meant to be above them.”

(Jonathan LR 2012)

Therefore, to achieve the most of gender-neutrality, the strategy for Excerpt 14 could be changed to switching between the gender of the bases of past tense verbs, while using the nonbinary symbol for vowels a, o and e. The outcome would be as follows:

14 a) I've been mentally preparing myself to come out all over again, but I've **been doing** that for a while now. That was one of the things I **realized** early. If you're queer, your life has the potential to become one long coming-out moment. If I ever want to be called the right pronouns, I'll have to correct people and put **myself** out there first and who knows what could happen.

14 c) Psychicky se připravuju na další coming out, ale to je něco, co jsem **dělala** už i předtím. Byla to jedna z věcí, které jsem si **uvědomil** velice brzy. Pokud jste queer, z vašeho života se stává jeden dlouhý coming out. Pokud chci, aby mi lidi říkali tak, jak si přeju, musím je neustále opravovat a musím neustále dávat **sebe sama** všanc a kdo ví, co se může stát.

(Deaver 2019, 47, my translation and emphases)

For Excerpt 14 c), the letters **ǎ** and **ǒ** (and potentially also the letter **ě**) were created. This way, while the base of the past tense verb remains gendered, the use of the specified letters provides the reader with a visual aid leading to the gender-neutrality of the utterance. Writing of such past tense verb then says “do not pay attention to the grammatical gender of the base, since there is way more underneath it”, and the use of the non-binary symbol tells the reader exactly what the information underneath is.

Again, the use of this graphic aid helps the translator to refrain from using the generic masculine and they, perhaps, might not be as hard on the reader’s eyes as the use of asterisks and gender gaps might be. However, the same issue as with strategy **IXb.** arises - for the solution to be efficient, it requires a development of a font where these new letters and symbols are present. Thus, applying this strategy might become a group effort of not only the translator, the non-binary community and the publishing house, but also a typographer.

5 PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES BY THE CZECH NON-BINARY COMMUNITY

As mentioned in chapter 4.3, a total number of 31 answer sets were collected within the questionnaire distribution. As of the participants themselves, the 31 respondents were native Czech speakers who perceive themselves as a part of the non-binary gender spectrum (non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, queer, or simply a gender that is impossible to describe). Out of the 31 participants, 24 stated that they feel like they are a part of the non-binary community, 4 participants were not sure and 3 stated that they do not feel this sense of belonging.

As discussed in chapter 4.2, three strategies were chosen to represent the three points on the continuum for the present questionnaire:

1. Using the gender a character was assigned at birth (as an Acceptance strategy),
2. Using the neuter grammatical gender (as a Middle strategy), and
3. Using a graphic adjustment (as a Resistance strategy), in this case the gender symbols in combination with switching genders, as described in excerpt 14 c).

5.1 Using the Gender Assigned at Birth: Commentaries

The excerpt used for this part in the questionnaire was Excerpt 3:

3 a) It's an uphill climb to Friday, but I **get** there. Between homework and trying to catch up on all my classes, it's nice to just have a night **to myself**. Hannah and Thomas both decide they want to go out to dinner; I **decline** the invitation, figuring they probably want some time to themselves after everything I've put them through.

3 b) Pátek se zdál být neskutečně daleko, ale nakonec jsem se ho **dočkal**. Je hezké mít mezi vším tím psaním úkolů a doháněním školy chvíli taky **sám pro sebe**. Hannah a Thomas se rozhodli, že půjdou na večeři. Já jsem jejich pozvání **odmítl**. Určitě si chtějí užít nějaký čas spolu sami dva, po tom všem, čím si se mnou prošli.

(Deaver 2019, 58, my translation and emphases)

Out of the 31 participants, 23 provided a commentary on the presented strategy. Out of these 23 commentaries, none was positive.

14 of the commentaries were straightforwardly negative. The overall message of these negative commentaries is that a Czech reader without the knowledge of the original text would not be able to register the character's identity whatsoever. According to some, such translation would spark a suspicion as of whether the translator decided to ignore the character's gender identity on purpose (answer set 24). The issue of such translation having a reach into the real world was mentioned as well in answer set 29: "... using this method allows the transphobic people or people who disagree with non-binarity to figure the person's assigned gender and use it against them" (my translation). There were several instances of labelling this translation strategy as transphobic, and, as of the translation itself, some commentaries even stated that such translation would, technically speaking, "not be a correct translation" (answer set 5, my translation).

The remaining 9 commentaries were colour-coded as rather indecisive. These respondents usually stated both positives and negatives of such strategy, while also voicing their opinions on whether they themselves would use it/like it or not. Unfortunately, these two points were usually in a juxtaposition and the overall result was often rather negative. While a number of respondents expressed their own willingness to use this strategy in literary texts, they, at the same time, listed reasons why other might find it problematic. On the other hand, some respondents listed a number of reasons why this strategy would not be the right for them, but then stated that they would still prefer it rather than, for example, the neuter gender. The answer set 21 also puts into consideration the fact that this strategy was the most enjoyable for them linguistically as for a reader, but not fulfilling enough for them as a non-binary reader, as the identity maintains concealed. Similarly the answer set 31 states that while they perceive masculine gender as the neutral one in Czech, its use very much depends on the user themselves and such use in literature would be very context-dependant.

5.2 Using the Gender Assigned at Birth: Scale

As much as the commentaries produced an amount of mixed messages, the five-point-scale gave a more definite outlook on the translation strategy.

When presented with the statement “I would use [this method/language] in literary text for a non-binary character”, 24 respondents disagreed (11 of which strongly disagree and 13 of which rather disagree). 4 respondents stated that they were unsure and only 3 respondents answered positively.

As of the question whether the respondents would like to read a book in which this strategy is used for a non-binary character, the outcome was similar, as 22 of the responses were negative (10 strongly disagreed and 12 rather disagreed), 6 were rather positive and 3 respondents were unsure.

Out of the 31 respondents, 20 agreed that this translation strategy bothers them, while 9 disagreed, stating this strategy did not bother them, and 2 were unsure.

You can see the results of the scale part of the questionnaire demonstrated and in **Figures 3, 4 and 5**, and subsequently compared with the rest of the scale data in in **Figures 12, 13 and 14**.

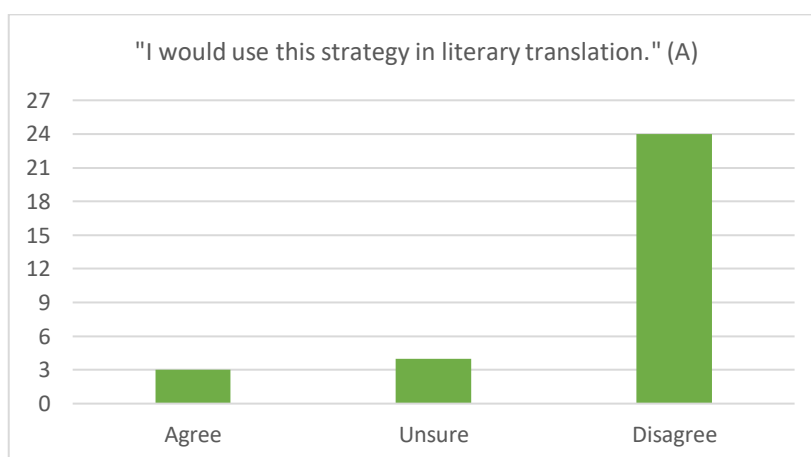


Figure 3: Scale data, Question 1, Acceptance strategy

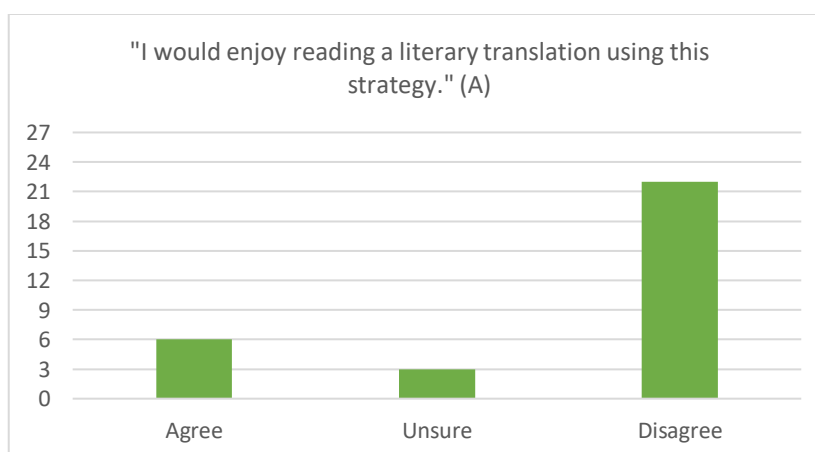


Figure 4: Scale data, Question 2, Acceptance strategy

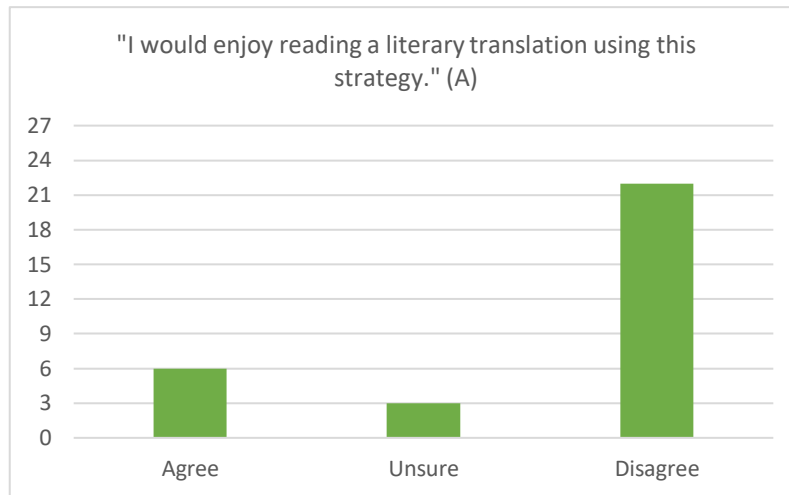


Figure 5: Scale data, Question 3, Acceptance strategy

5.3 Using the Gender Assigned at Birth: Overall Perception

It is worth noting that there were interesting discrepancies found within the two sets of answers – that is, the open commentaries and the agreement/disagreement answers. For example, in the answer set 15 the respondent states that this strategy would be “the softest option” and that, despite its cis-centricity, they would be probably able to get over it and use it. However, from their answers in the five-point-scale part, they stated that they would neither use this strategy, nor enjoy reading a text implementing such strategy, even though this strategy does not automatically bother them.

Nevertheless, the overall perception can be clearly seen as rather negative to negative. The majority of the recipients would not be willing to use such strategy, they would not enjoy reading a literary text where this strategy is used and, overall, this strategy was mostly labelled as offensive.

5.4 Using the Neuter Gender: Commentaries

The excerpts used for this part in the questionnaire were Excerpts 5 and 6:

5 a) Last night I **passed out** around midnight, but **woke up** about two hours later, **unable** to fall back asleep.

5 b) Včera jsem **usnulo** kolem půlnoci, ale o dvě hodiny později už jsem **bylo vzhůru, neschopné** znovu usnout.

(Deaver 2019, 36, my translation and emphases)

6 a) But when Mariam **asked** me to help **them** with a new project they're starting, there was no way I was going to turn them down.

6 b) Ale když mne Mariam **požádalo**, abych **mu** pomohlo s novým projektem, se kterým zrovna začíná, nemohlo jsem takovou nabídku odmítnout.

(Deaver 2019, 285, my translation and emphases)

Out of the 31 participants, 25 provided a commentary to this strategy. Out of the 25 responses, 3 could be considered rather positive. These three respondents state that they use the neuter gender for themselves in every-day speech, therefore it is understandable this strategy feels more natural to them even in literature translation. While the answer set 19 mentions that, according to them, it is the best option Czech language naturally offers, all three of these answer sets provide certain drawbacks that counter their reasoning. Answer set 2 reminds us of the use of the 'it' pronoun for objects, rather than for people, the answer sets 19 and 27 draw attention to the fact that not every non-binary person might be comfortable with this strategy, respondent 27 stating that such language, however they might like and use it, can be dehumanizing.

Within this translation strategy. 11 commentaries were straightforwardly negative, often labelling such strategy as dehumanizing and infantilizing. Answer set 23 goes as far as describing the use of neuter gender as pejorative, even hateful towards minorities.

The remaining 11 commentaries stood in between, and, just as with the use of assigned gender, they often stated both the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy. While a number of respondents see the neuter gender as an elegant and grammatically correct solution. Moreover, four of the respondents would be willing to get used to this strategy and read a text which applies it and other three respondents state context in which such use would be acceptable for them in such text (for example a non-binary person talking about themselves). Answer set 28 also mentions the option of reclamation of the 'it' pronoun by the non-binary community.

5.5 Using the Neuter Gender: Scale

Presented with the first question, 21 respondents did not agree that they would use the neuter gender for a non-binary character in a literary text (14 respondents strongly disagreed, 7 rather disagreed). Eight respondents would use the neuter gender (4 strongly agreed and 4 rather agreed), while only two respondents remained indecisive.

The answers for the second question, that is, whether the respondents would like to read a book in which the neuter gender is used for a non-binary character, were quite balanced. While 15 respondents did not agree with this statement (10 strongly, 5 rather disagreed), 13 respondents agreed (4 strongly, 9 rather) and 3 remained indecisive.

Despite that, the overall stance at the third question about whether the translation of a non-binary character's language using neuter gender bothers the respondents was majorly negative – 16 respondents stated that the use of neuter gender bothers them (11 strongly, 5 rather agreed), as opposed to the 11 respondents who do not mind such neuter gender use (1 strongly, 8 rather disagreed) along with the 4 indecisive respondents.

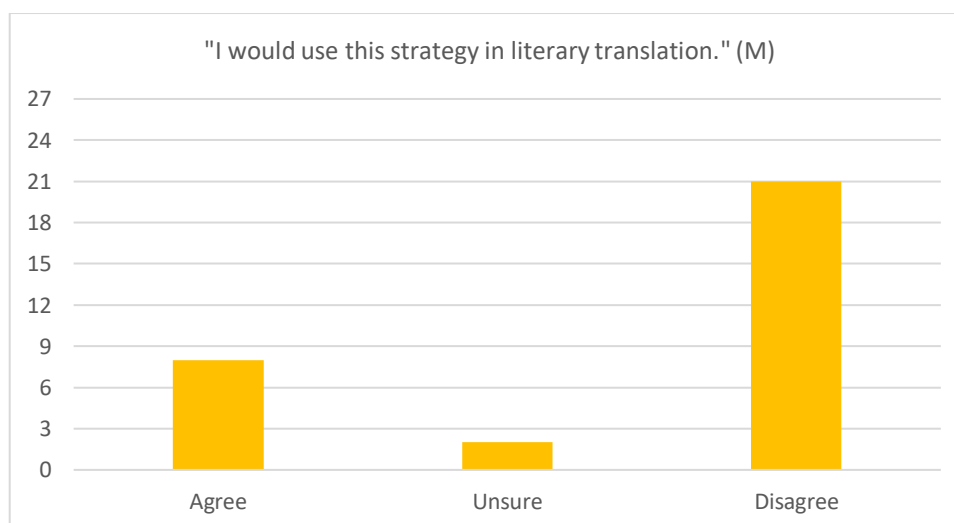


Figure 6: Scale data, Question 1, Middle strategy

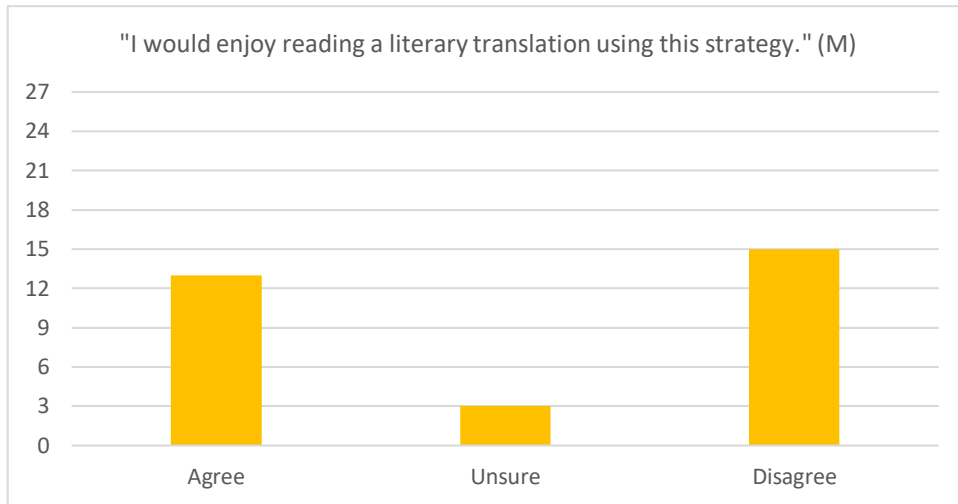


Figure 7: Scale data, Question 2, Middle strategy

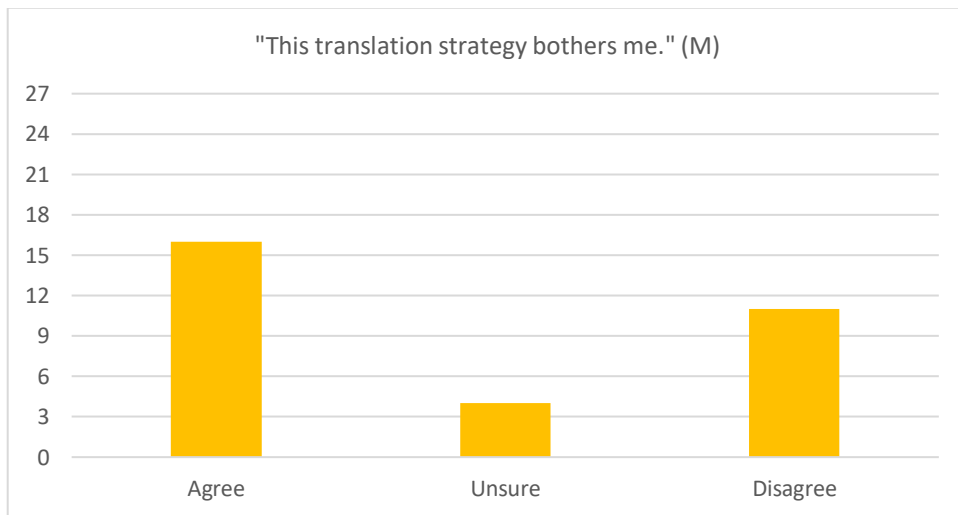


Figure 8: Scale data, Question 3, Middle strategy

5.6 Using the Neuter Gender: Overall Perception

The overall outcome of the written commentaries is that, while the majority of respondents would not choose such language expression for a non-binary person, they would be willing to read about it if they were sure the neuter gender is used in the right context and appropriately to given character. Even the indecisive commentaries were able to state some advantages of using such strategy, be it the easy readability and grammatical correctness, or the fact that some non-binary identities simply prefer to use this language expression for themselves. It is, however, important to note that the negative voices concerning the use of neuter gender were stronger than in the first strategy, often talking about dehumanization, infantilization and disparagement of the character concerned.

On the other hand, the overall outcome of the scale answers was predominantly negative. Therefore, the overall perception of the neuter gender, as described by these two question sets, is rather somewhere in the middle.

5.7 Using a Graphic Adjustment: Commentaries

The excerpt used for this part in the questionnaire was Excerpt 14:

14 a) I've been mentally preparing myself to come out all over again, but I've **been doing** that for a while now. That was one of the things I **realized** early. If you're queer, your life has the potential to become one long coming-out moment. If I ever want to be called the right pronouns, I'll have to correct people and put **myself** out there first and who knows what could happen.

14 c) Psychicky se připravuju na další coming out, ale to je něco, co jsem **dělala** už i předtím. Byla to jedna z věcí, které jsem si **uvědomil** velice brzy. Pokud jste queer, z vašeho života se stává jeden dlouhý coming out. Pokud chci, aby mi lidi říkali tak, jak si přeju, musím je neustále opravovat a musím neustále dávat **sebe sama** všanc a kdo ví, co se může stát.

(Deaver 2019, 47, my translation and emphases)

Out of the 31 respondents, 25 decided to write a commentary on this strategy. Out of these 25 commentaries, 10 were assessed as rather positive to positive. Within the positives, the respondents state that it is an approach that they would be able to get used to, or, similarly, that they view this strategy as a step in the right direction. Main concerns within the positive commentaries were about the perception of such strategy by the cisgender reader community. Answer set 27 notes that, while they are intrigued by the graphic adjustment, they would prefer a systematic language change that would be applicable to spoken language as well. This respondent also touches the more practical approach by reminding that such new symbols would have to be constantly looked for in some sort of an archive depository. Other recommendations were aimed at the missing pronunciation of such symbols.

A total of 9 negative responses was assessed. However, let it be noted that two of the negative responses saw the issue in adapting this strategy to spoken language, as opposed to seeing the issue in the translation strategy itself. Many, again, argued that the mainstream reader would not be willing to become

accustomed to such writing style. Moreover, the answer set 5 states that as they themselves would not want to learn a whole new language for their identity, they would not expect the cisgender people to do so either. Similarly, a concern is expressed by the respondents about being even more outcasted from the mainstream society for using a brand new language expression for the identity concerned. The majority of the negative responses, however, sees the negatives in the difficult readability of the special symbols and the lack of set rules. It is important to note here that, to prevent bias, the respondents were not presented with the pros and cons of the strategies, as they are presented in present thesis. Seeing the results of the testing might give the respondents answers to the questions they ask in their responses. Two of the negative responses also mentioned that, as much as they are not satisfied with the gender symbol use, they appreciate the changing of gender in the text and would view it as sufficient.

The remaining 6 responses were assessed as indecisive, usually stating the pros and cons and/or either not giving a personal stance (such as the answer set 26, which only expresses a concern with the bad readability for “automatic readers”¹²) or maintaining a certain indecisiveness in the stance. A number of respondents prefer this strategy over others, but at the same time they admit it is hard to read for them (for example answer set 24 states that the special symbols evoke an umlaut in their mind). Similarly, the answer set 23 states that to be able to assess whether they like or dislike this strategy, they would need to read a longer text containing the special symbols.

5.8 Using a Graphic Adjustment: Scale

The answers collected using the five-point scale show a certain trend pointing at the practicality of the graphic adjustment strategy. The results suggest that while the respondents are not in particular bothered by this strategy (18 respondents are not bothered, 7 are indecisive and 6 are bothered) and they are willing to read a text implementing this strategy (16 would read it, 7 remain indecisive and 8 would not like to read it), there is not much willingness from their side to use it themselves in a literary text (12 would not use it, 10 would use it and 9 are indecisive) – this goes hand in hand with the many practical/technical concerns expressed by

¹² The response does not make it apparent whether the respondent means e-book readers or text-to-speech software.

the respondents in the commentaries, such as the need for constantly searching for the special symbols.

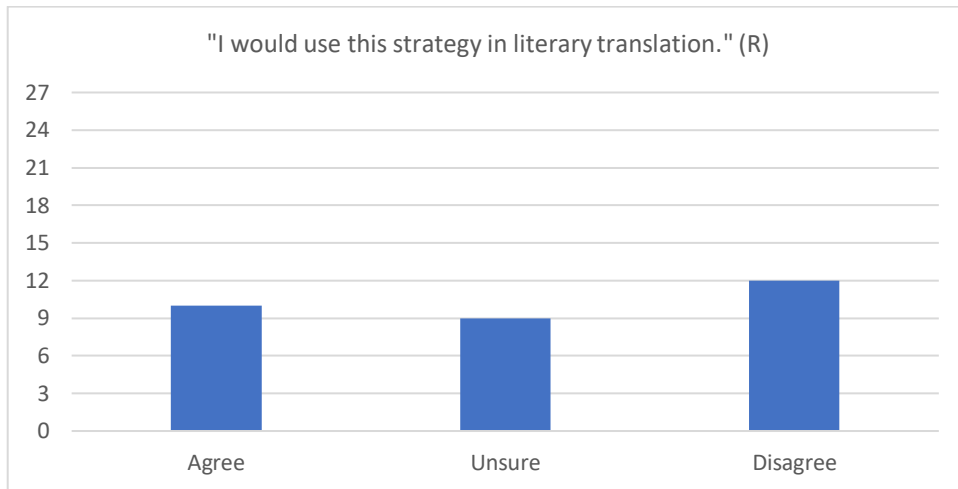


Figure 9: Scale data, Question 1, Resistance strategy

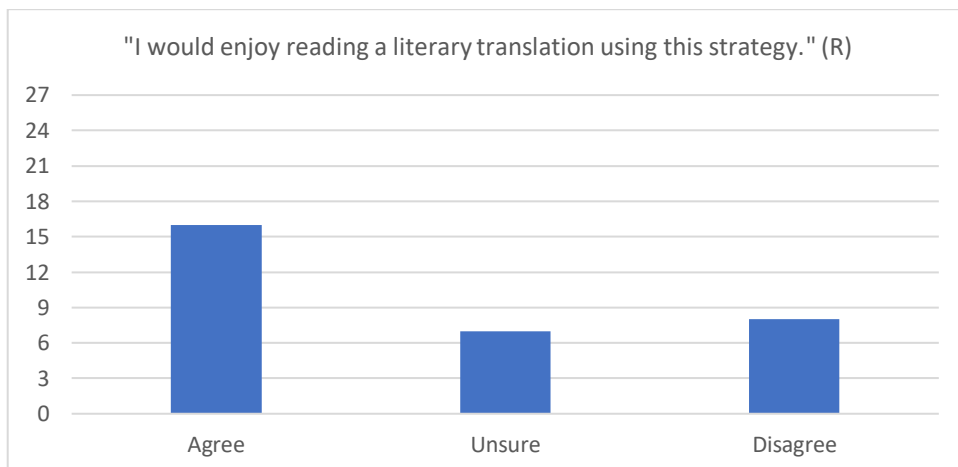


Figure 10: Scale data, Question 2, Resistance strategy

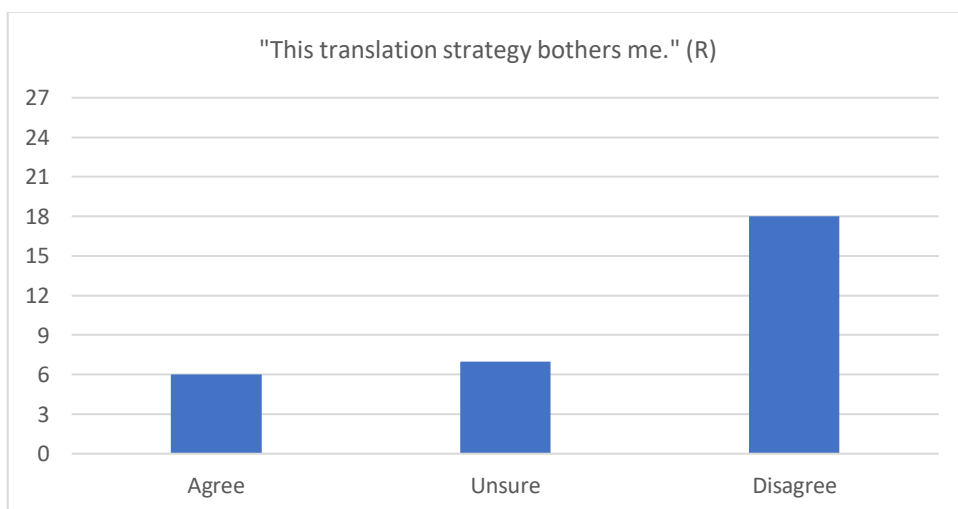


Figure 11: Scale data, Question 3, Resistance strategy

5.9 Using a Graphic Adjustment: Overall Perception

The overall perception of the graphic adjustment using non-binary gender symbol for verbs is rather positive, as even the responses assessed as rather indecisive are often expressing a willingness to give the strategy a chance or they at least view it as interesting. As the answer set 14 mentions, it is about the community getting comfortable, and, as long as the individuals see it as the most fitting one for them, it is acceptable to use it. It is, however, important to count the negative voices as well, and take into consideration numerous observations, for example the preferences for switching between the genders only, or the calling for a structuralized, clear system in using such strategy. This lack of system, however, goes hand in hand with the findings in chapter 5.2, where many of the strategies suggested by the community itself lack any systematic structure as well.

5.10 Scale Data Comparison

The following **Figures 12, 13** and **14** provide a graphic comparison of the answers collected for the three scale questions for each translation strategy:

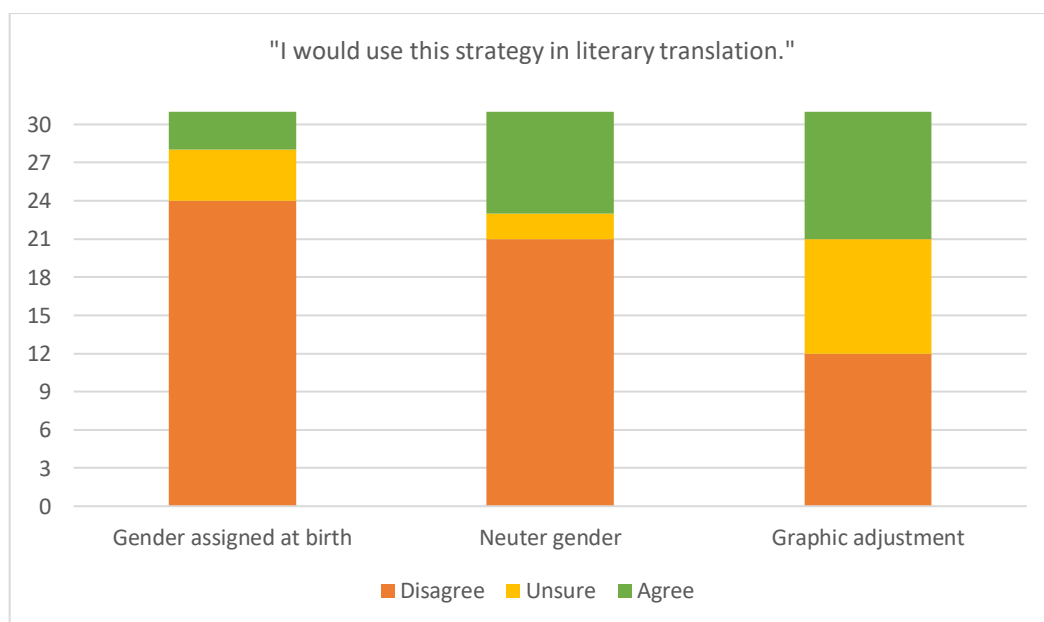


Figure 12: Scale data comparison, Question 1

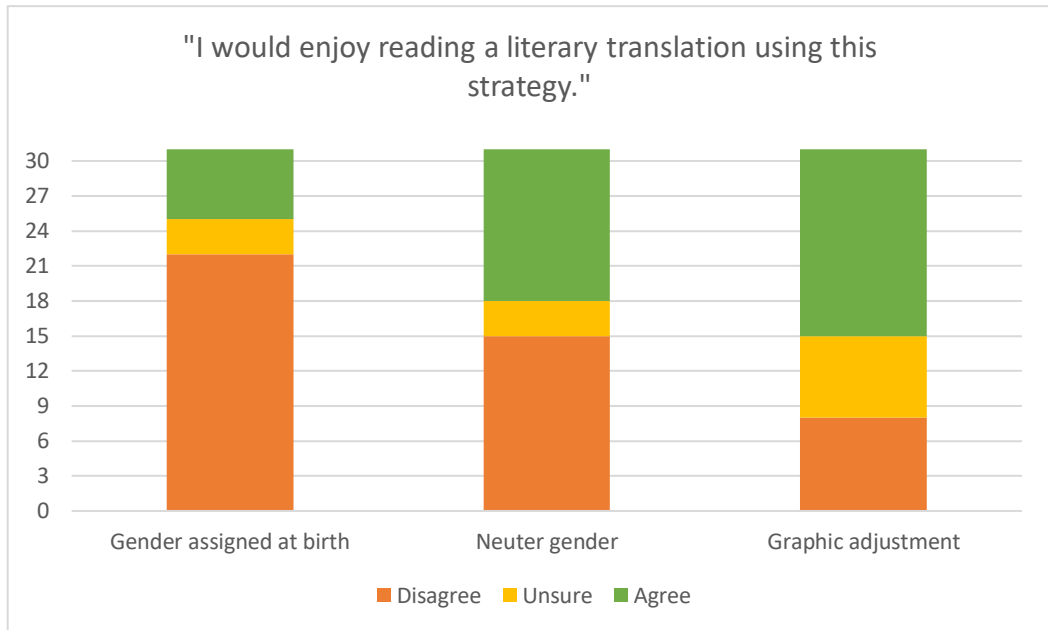


Figure 13: Scale data comparison, Question 2

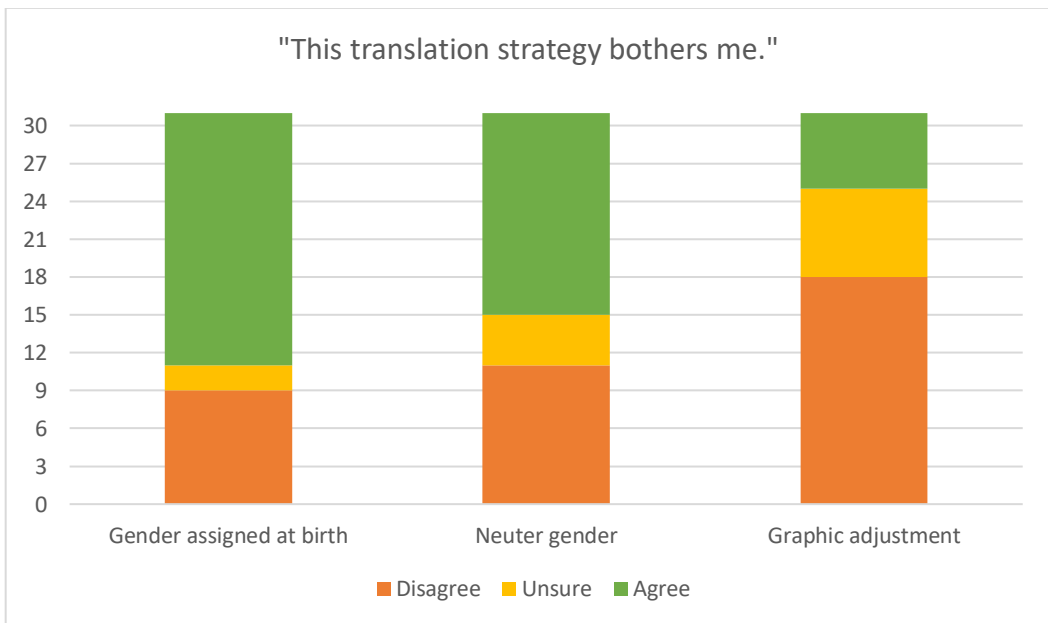


Figure 14: Scale data comparison, Question 3

5.11 Personal Suitability of the Strategies

As described in chapter 4.4, the respondents were then asked to arrange the presented translation strategies from that which personally suits them the most to that which suits them the least.

As demonstrated in **Figure 15**, 14 respondents assessed the graphic strategy as the most personally suitable for them, putting it on the overall first place in the group of three. Out of the remaining 17, 12 respondents viewed the strategy of graphic adjustment as the one in the middle and only 5 put it on the last place.

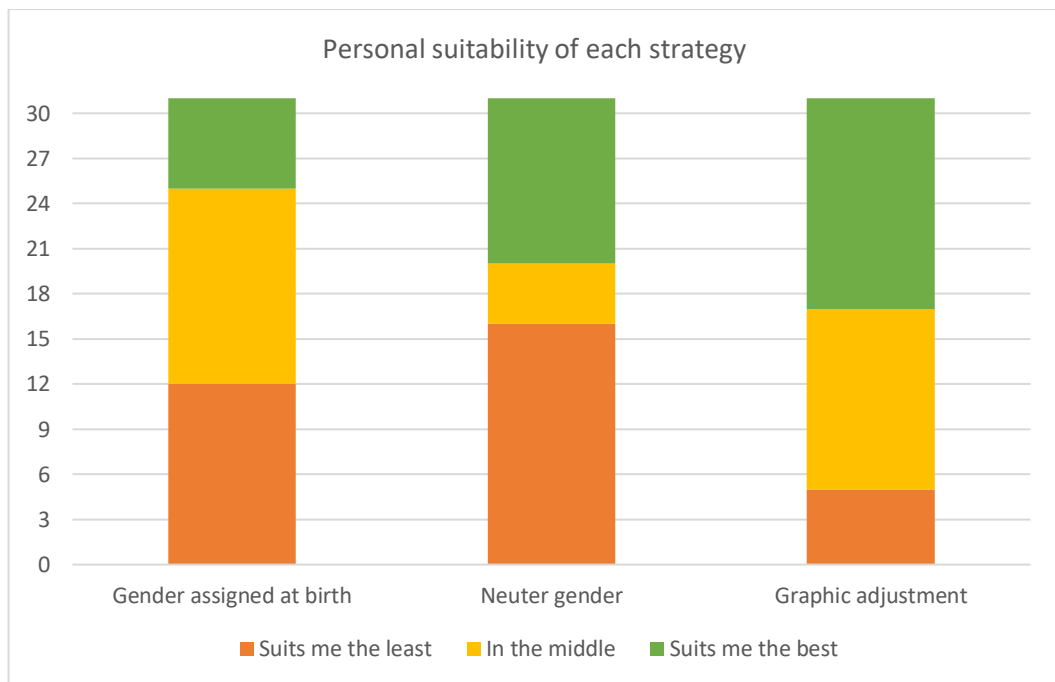


Figure 15: Personal suitability of each strategy

The overall second place – as demonstrated by being placed in the middle of the scale – was assigned to the use of grammatical gender assigned to the character at birth, with 13 respondents marking it as such. Out of the remaining 18, 12 marked this strategy as the least suitable and only 6 respondents viewed it as the most suitable one.

The least personally suitable strategy is therefore the use of neuter gender, with 16 respondents marking it as such. Out of the 15 remaining, 11 respondents viewed the use of neuter gender as the most suitable strategy and only 4 respondents placed it in the middle.

This outcome is more or less in alignment with the commentaries and answers from the five-point-scale questionnaire.

5.12 Other Preferences

After arranging the three strategies in question according to their preferences, the respondents were asked an additional optional question, whether there is another strategy they feel is suitable for them. Out of the 31 respondents, 17 wrote an answer, however, not all of the responses answered the question.

Seven respondents prefer a form of singular ‘they’, *onikáni* (as discussed in chapters 2.4.2 and 4.2 VI), or majestic plural in first person. Five respondents stated they prefer simple switching between feminine and masculine gender (note that answer set 26 states both *onikáni* and switching of genders, therefore the number of responses is 18, while the number of respondents is only 17). One response described the use of a neo-pronoun ‘one’ along with the -e suffix for verbs (as discussed in chapters 2.4.2 and 4.3 VIII), one respondent stated their preference for masculine gender, which they view as generic and thus neutral, along with bypassing of past tense suffixes, and one respondent preferred slashes and asterisks.

As stated above, not all of the responses answered the question asked. Two of the respondents only emphasized their hope for the previously assessed graphic adjustment to be developed in the future along with other options, one response only summarizes the dissatisfaction with the current language alternatives.

5.13 Previous Experience with Translated Literature

In the last part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked whether they had encountered a piece of translated literature which contained a non-binary character, and subsequently, if they remembered what language means were used in the literature in question.

Three respondents stated they had encountered such text. Answer set 2 mentions Rick Riordan’s fantasy trilogy *Magnus Chase* (2015–present) and its genderfluid character Alex Fierro, for which the grammatical gender switches according to their mental state, both in the source text and the translation. Answer set 21 mentions the already mentioned character of Death from Terry Pratchett’s early *Discworld* books. They, however, make a point that such

conceptual character in fantasy literature is easier to write about, since the reader already perceives them as genderless most of the time, even if the male pronouns are used. This kind-hearted answer also states that, unfortunately, “the majority of mortals does not have the privilege to be an eternal, intangible concept of death” (my translation) and thus, they still seek a language alternative. Answer set 24 mentions Radclyffe Hall’s novel *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), however, here the main character Stephen can be rather perceived as a transgender male than a non-binary identity. Interestingly enough, the answer set 25 expresses a certain distrust towards the translator, as they state that while it is possible that they had read a book with a non-binary identity in it, it is also possible standard pronouns were used and thus they would not notice the identity.

6 DISCUSSION

As of the perception of the translation strategies themselves, an interesting outcome was found in the results. As the nine translation strategies were divided into the Acceptance, Middle and Resistance ones, the chosen Acceptance strategy surprisingly seemed to gain more prominent reception than the Middle one, despite the Middle strategy being closer to the notion of non-binarity and language de-gendering. As the written commentaries suggest, this might stem from the idea that while the use of a binary gender erases the character's gender identity, the use of a neuter evokes dehumanization or infantilization of the character at the expense of gender-neutralization. In other words, the respondents have shown a desire to be treated as human beings in literary texts, even if it means that their characters might lose a part or the whole of their gender identity. It is, however, important to note that a number of respondents found the use of masculine grammatical gender neutral, which might be caused by the generic masculine often permeating the Czech language in general. On the other hand, some of the respondents admit that the use of a neuter grammatical gender is the easiest and most practical, ready-to-use solution, and that there is a possibility of neuter grammatical gender being reclaimed in the future by the community and thus losing its negative connotation.

Another cause of this more positive perception of the Acceptance strategy might be the fear of acceptance outside of the community. Many of the commentaries mentioned some sort of a reaction from the mainstream cisgender reader, often stating that the chosen Middle and Resistance strategies might simply be too much for such reader to digest. Moreover, a number of the indecisive commentaries seemed to, at times, put the perception of a mainstream reader before their own, possibly in fear of their identity being perceived negatively by the public, should the public be forced to understand the identity itself within the text.

The reaction to the chosen Resistance strategy, that is, the use of a graphic adjustment using the non-binary gender symbol with combination of switching the gender within the text, gained the most positive perception. However, it is important to note that not even this positive outcome was unanimous. While this strategy was the only one to receive at least one strictly positive commentary, it is important to note that some of the negative commentaries went as far

as to describing it as a “word-soup” (answer set 5), and within the five-point-scale questions, this strategy gained the highest number of ‘unsure’ answers. While it was not perceived by many as exactly the perfect way to go around the translation of non-binary identities, many expressed their interest in the future development of this strategy. At the same time, within these voices, there were individuals who expressed their preference of switching the gender only (without the graphic adjustments), as they do in casual speech.

Tied to the casual speech is the fact that many respondents within the whole questionnaire expressed their displeasure with some of the presented strategies being usable only in written language, not in speech (for example answer set 27). However, such possibilities might be explored in a subsequent research, as spoken language is not what the practical part of this thesis aims for. On the contrary, the present thesis takes into consideration the fact that spoken language might be the source of the future writing norm.

The respondents were not presented with the full list of nine strategies this thesis deals with, mainly because of the time and effort such research would be required on the respondents’ side. However, they were asked for any other translation strategies they could think of that would feel personally appropriate for them. While over a half of the total number of respondents gave answer to this question, none of the answers reached unanimous popularity. In fact, none of the answers gained as positive perception as any of the three proposed strategies. Within the respondents’ suggestions, the use of singular ‘they’ along with *onikání* and *pluralis majestatis*, which were grouped together, were the most popular. However, only two of these respondents took into consideration the issues stated in 4.2 VI, where the gendering still prevails in past tense plural verbs in the form of suffixes -y (f.), -i (m.) and -a (n.). The majority of respondents in this group stated that their decision is based on the parallel with English singular ‘they’ as the pronoun only, not taking the rest of the Czech grammatical system into consideration, therefore it is possible that these respondents use this language expression in spoken language, where the difference between -y and -i suffix is unnoticeable.

As stated previously, despite the graphic adjustment strategy gaining the most positive perception of the three proposed strategies, it is certainly not unanimously perceived as the most suitable one. Similarly, the decision of placing

the use of gender assigned at birth at the second place and the neuter at the third is likely to be met with disagreement from some. As much as it is clear that the Czech non-binary community is seeking a suitable language expression, as of yet, there does not seem to be one single strategy that a translator could use as a unifying one in the translation of literary text without at least a small portion of the community in question being dissatisfied.

On the other hand, the sample of respondents shows that the Czech non-binary community does not have much experience with such translated texts, as demonstrated in chapter 5.12. The community of Czech translators should therefore not be held back by fear and try to implement the proposed strategies, as only by using them on longer bodies of text the Czech society will be able to decide what is and is not acceptable. While the non-binary individuals state their preferences and often refuse to make compromises, or, on the other hand, might be too concerned with finding a compromise suitable for themselves and the mainstream reader, it is the translator, who might bring the community closer into actually making a choice. It is, however, to be explored in a subsequent research, as of how much exactly the non-binary community is willing to experiment with the language and alienate itself from their cisgender peers through language. To eliminate such alienation, perhaps, instead of aiming for a full de-gendering of the language, it might be more suitable for the Czech system to simply make the expressions all-inclusive.

Within the practical part, specifically chapter 4, nine strategies were explored based on the theoretical part. However, none of the nine strategies were flawless and each and each was riddled with certain strengths and weaknesses. It will be now on the non-binary community to find linguistic means suitable for the majority, and, subsequently, it will depend on whether or not the translator-publisher community would be able to find a suitable compromise between this chosen linguistic means and the reader's comfort. While this thesis presents the strategies present at the time of writing, it is possible that the Czech non-binary community finds the compromise in language expression somewhere completely different over time. This possible outcome is welcome as it would be not perceived as something undermining present thesis' results – the present thesis is here to spark a discussion and present options, not to predict the future or prescribe new language.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the present thesis was to present the reader with possibilities within the Queer Translation Studies in relation to translating non-binary identities and their language from English to Czech in non-fantasy and non-sci-fi literary texts.

First, the theoretical part of this thesis dealt with Queer Studies and Queer Translation Studies, giving the reader a better insight into the issues tied with the evolution and current state of the two fields and the different concept entailed by them. Subsequently, the theoretical part described the differences between gendering the language in English and Czech, and the different possibilities in implementing gender-neutral language. In English, the focus was on the use of pronouns and neo-pronouns (as discussed by Wayne 2005, or Stotko and Troyer 2007), while in Czech, the gender-equal language (Valdrová, Knotková-Čapková, and Paclíková (2010), or Kolek and Valdrová (2020)) was discussed first before moving to the more practical suggestions for gender-neutral language, as proposed by the activist groups Transparent and TakyTrans.

In the end, nine translation strategies based on either the Czech language system itself, the suggestions of different Czech non-binary groups (TakyTrans, Transparent), or previously used experimental translation strategies in English (Rose, 2017), were examined. These nine strategies were divided into three groups based on the acceptance-resistance continuum, which was created especially for the present thesis and based on Drugan and Tipton's (2017) view on translation and its ethics. To demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of each strategy, various excerpts from Mason Deaver's novel *I Wish You All the Best* (2019) were translated using said strategies, which could then be described and dissected.

During this process, a number of the discussed strategies has proven to be suitable only in certain contexts (for example, using the grammatical gender corresponding with the gender assigned to the character at birth might be a suitable solution in a passage where the character is not out yet, while in passages after their coming out, this strategy might become inappropriate and unacceptable), or certain mode (for example singular 'they' and use of plural for an individual in Czech still heavily relies on generic masculine, which can remain semi-invisible only in spoken language). Furthermore, the sheer existence of such a high number

of strategies suggests that the non-binary community itself has not yet unified their views on this issue. Nevertheless, the options exist and a Czech translator should in no way make excuses not to use them, be it in various combinations and in regard to the context of the utterances/writings.

Although this means that finding one strategy that would be applicable by the translator at any context and that would therefore make the translation faster and easier is nearly impossible, looking at the perception of the translation strategies by the Czech non-binary community might shine a light on where exactly the language of the non-binary identities might be heading, considering literary translation.

Through a questionnaire, a group of 31 respondents from the Czech non-binary community had the opportunity to share their opinions on this topic. The results showed that, out of the three translation strategies evaluated, the most positive responses were gathered around the selected Resistance strategy, that is, a strategy that battles the normalized binary standards, both social and linguistic. Although not unanimous, the positive perception of a graphic adjustment combined with switching between feminine and masculine gender has proven to spark a discussion about a possible change. However, the second place was given to the selected Acceptance strategy (using the grammatical gender corresponding to the gender assigned to the character at birth), that is, a strategy mostly tied to the existing binary norms and restraints, while the Middle strategy (using neuter gender) placed last. As much as this outcome seemed surprising at first, since the Middle strategy offers a ready-to-use and grammatically correct language use, it has proven that such translation of identities is more than a mere language exchange. The respondents clearly expressed that the desire of being treated as a human being is more important than the desire for a gender-less expression. That being said, this in no way means that the non-binary community is willing to settle down on the binarized and gender-based options available to them to this day, as the desire to find a suitable language expression was present throughout the responses.

Overall, present thesis therefore shows that there is a number of possibilities for dealing with the translation of non-binary identities and their language from English to Czech. It also estimates an approximate preference of the Czech

non-binary community itself, which might help the translator community make the right decisions in the future.

It is, however, important to note certain limitations of the research carried out. The respondent group of 31 people is nowhere near to be able to give a sufficient answer to the questions given, and likely it might not reflect the opinions of the whole Czech community (although even this small sample has proven that the opinions vary drastically within individuals). Future research might focus on replicating the questionnaire whilst collecting the answers from a higher number of respondents. At the same time, the questionnaire deals with three of the nine presented strategies only. This choice was made due to the time restraints both on the side of the researcher and respondents. While asking about each of the nine possible translation strategies might easily provide an even more detailed outlook of the Czech non-binary community on the issue in question, for the use of this presented thesis such questionnaire would be extremely time-consuming not only to evaluate, but also to fill in, especially considering there was no reward granted to the respondent for doing so. Similarly, longer excerpts of translated text using the translation strategies in question might be used for such extended research, as some of the respondents noted their opinions might change (or be strengthened), had they had access to them.

As much as the care and attention was given to the Czech non-binary community, who, in the end, should be the main driving force behind the future language change, it is important to not overshadow the translator's part in tackling the issue of such translation of gender identities. Taking into consideration the fact that the Czech non-binary community might not find a unifying language expression for a while, and returning to Spurlin's (2014) view of translation as an act of activism, the translator themselves can be of much more use than just transforming language material from one language to another: Should the Czech translator community decide to implement new translation strategies with the utmost consideration towards the gender identities in question, it might be exactly them who can help the language change emerge and seep through the pages into the practical, mainstream world for cis-gender readers and language users to see, get familiar with and, hopefully, to use. This way, if the two communities manage to get in contact and cooperate, it might lead to finally breaking the forced silence of the non-binary individuals. It might speed

up the process of either reclamation (as in the case of the neuter gender) or development of the presented, or even brand new, translation strategies, which might subsequently get transformed into spoken every-day language. Any sort of future research might lead to strengthening this relationship between the two communities and thus reinforce the non-binary gender not only in Czech language, but also in Czech society.

SUMMARY

Stejně tak, jako se mění jazyky, se kterými překladatelé pracují, mění se i koncepty, které jsou tyto jazyky schopné pojmut. V rámci problematiky týkající se LGBTI+ komunity se čeští překladatelé v posledních letech naučili do jisté míry pracovat s tematikou homosexuální, bisexuální i tou týkající se transgender osob. Pod tuto poslední skupinu však spadá i komunita lidí, kteří, ačkoliv zvládají fungovat v anglicky hovořících zemích, nalézají v českém jazyce zatím nepřekonatelnou překážku. Nebinární identity, tedy identity, které nespádají pod mužský ani ženský gender, notoricky bojují s jazyky, které stojí na gramatickém rodu, který se pro jejich potřebu nedaří přirozeně odbourat. Zatímco v jazyce anglickém stačí použít nový balíček zájmen, ať už nově vytvořených, nebo nejvíce rozšířené singulární *they/them*, čeština takovou možnost ve svém systému nenabízí.

Tato diplomová práce se proto zaměřuje na dva hlavní cíle. Zprv se snaží z teoretické části vyextrahovat možné překladatelské strategie, které by se na nebinární identity a jejich jazyk daly aplikovat v literárním překladu z anglického do českého jazyka. Zadruhé si dává práce za cíl vytyčit alespoň přibližné tendence české nebinární komunity a její vnímání těchto překladatelských strategií.

Vzhledem ke dvěma vytyčeným cílům je i metodologická část rozdělena do příslušných částí. Z hlediska různých překladatelských strategií, bylo z teoretické části vybráno devět možností. Ty vychází jak z překladatelských prací potýkajících se s genderovou problematikou (např. Rose 2016, 2017), tak z praktických zkušeností českých nebinárních identit (aktivistické skupiny Transparent a TakyTrans). Tyto překladatelské strategie jsou rozděleny do tří skupin, podle toho, k jakému celkovému přístupu musí překladatel/ka při jejich využití přistoupit. Překladatel/ka tak může volit strategie smířlivé (Acceptance), kterými se snaží dodržovat zavedené překladatelské, sociokulturní a genderové normy cílové kultury, strategie vzdorné (Resistance), kterými se snaží zavedené překladatelské, sociokulturní a genderové normy cílové kultury nabourat, nebo zvolí strategie, které na tomto spektru leží mezi těmito dvěma extrémy (Middle). Každé vybrané překladatelské strategii je věnovaná vlastní podkapitola, ve které je vysvětlena, popsána a jsou zmíněny její výhody a nevýhody ať už s ohledem na překladatelský proces, tak s ohledem na nebinární identity jako

takové. Pro lepší názornost jsou všechny strategie popsány na překladových úryvcích, ve kterých je strategie přímo aplikována.

Pro tuto příležitost byl vybrán americký román pro mladé dospělé *I wish you all the best* (2019), jehož autor*ka Mason Deaver se identifikuje jako nebinární a v knize popisuje život dospívající nebinární osoby. Příběh se odehrává v době před coming outem, během něj, ale i po něm, a dává tedy mnoho příležitostí k využití různých překladatelských strategií pro danou nebinární identitu.

Druhý cíl, tedy percepce překladatelských strategií českou nebinární komunitou, je zkoumán za pomoci dotazníku. Z celkového počtu devíti překladatelských strategií byly vybrány tři, přičemž každá náleží do jedné ze tří stanovených skupin (Acceptance, Resistance, Middle). V dotazníku je poté respondentům každá překladatelská strategie představena a dostanou k dispozici i samotný překladový úryvek, díky kterému si mohou strategii prohlédnout i z praktického hlediska. Poté mají možnost svými slovy danou překladatelskou variantu okomentovat a zodpovědět několik otázek, které přiblíží jejich celkovou spokojenost/nespokojenost s danou strategií. Zároveň je díky odpovědím možné sestavit pořadí těchto tří strategií podle toho, jak moc jsou pro dané respondenty osobně vhodné či nevhodné. V poslední řadě měli respondenti možnost podělit se o jinou strategii, která by jim vyhovovala více než kterákoliv ze tří prezentovaných.

Výsledky poukázaly na jistou rozpolcenost české nebinární komunity. Ačkoliv i ta se snaží najít jistý prvek sjednocení jazyka, který by mohla celá tato komunita využívat, preference jednotlivců se zdají být značně odlišné a kýženého sjednocení tak zřejmě nebude tak jednoduché dosáhnout. Nicméně, z jednatřiceti balíčků odpovědí, které se za pomoci dotazníku podařilo sesbírat, vyplývá, že nejvíce pozitivně byla hodnocena vzdorná strategie, v tomto případě reprezentována grafickou úpravou textu. I přesto, že pozitivní přijetí nebylo jednohlasné, ukázala se tato strategie jako nejméně problematická. Poněkud pozoruhodným výsledkem se ukázalo umístění smírlivé strategie na pozici druhé – v tomto případě šlo o užívání gramatického rodu, který odpovídá rodu určenému postavě po narození (tj. pokud se postava narodila jako muž, i přes nebinární sebeidentifikaci je o ní hovořeno v mužském rodě). Prostřední strategie, kterou v tomto případě bylo využití středního gramatického rodu, se tak umístila až jako poslední, a to zejména proto, že i přes to, že se tato strategie zdá být z lingvistického

hlediska nejvhodnější, vzbuzuje v respondentech negativní konotace spojené s infantilizací, dehumanizací a celkovým urážlivým podtónem. Za zmínku stojí také fakt, že se v balíčcích odpovědí opakoval trend, kdy respondenti dávali důraz na vnímání jejich identity ze strany mainstreamového, převážně cisgender a LGBTI+ problematiky neznalého čtenáře.

Z tohoto celkového umístění tří vybraných překladatelských strategií vyplývá, že ačkoli je česká nebinární komunita ochotna přistoupit na inovativní řešení, zároveň se raději spokojí s těmi, která jejich identitu vymažou, než aby využila ta, která jejich identitu sice zbaví genderu, ovšem přinesou s sebou další řadu negativních úskalí. Zároveň se ukázala nesourodost názorů v daném vzorku. Nicméně, spolu s ní se ukázala vůle danou problematiku ze strany české nebinární komunity řešit.

Je však důležité podotknout, že dotazníkový výzkum trpí několika nedostatky. Pro potvrzení sesbíraných poznatků by bylo vhodné dotazníkové šetření opakovat nejlépe se všemi devíti (popřípadě dalšími zjištěnými) překladatelskými strategiemi, přičemž by byl respondentům poskytnut delší text, na který je strategie aplikována. Zároveň s tím by bylo vhodné sesbírat větší počet balíčků odpovědí, než bylo nyní 31.

Cílem této práce nebylo vytvořit preskriptivní manuál pro překladatelky a překladatele, kteří stojí před nelehkým úkolem převést nebinární identitu z americké či anglické kultury do české. V této práci jim pouze bylo nastíněno několik možností spolu s jejich možným využitím, a spolu s tím i náhled české nebinární komunity na danou problematiku. Možná diskuze, kterou by tato diplomová práce mohla vyvolat, by snad mohla vést k ukotvení vztahů mezi překladatelskou a nebinární komunitou tak, aby mohly na řešení tohoto problému komunikovat, jelikož stejně tak, jako překladatel/ka nemůže své řešení vnútit nebinární komunitě, nebinární komunita se nezdá být nikde blízko vyřešení tohoto problému pro překladatele. Nicméně, vyřešení tohoto problému by mohlo zasadit české překladatelky a překladatele do kontextu aktivismu, jelikož díky sjednocení nebinárního jazyka by mohlo v budoucnu docházet k častějším překladům literárních textů s touto tematikou, a tím i k prohlubování povědomí o mezinárodní i české nebinární komunitě v řadách českého mainstreamového čtenářstva.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Překlad jazyka nebinárních postav v literárním překladu z AJ do ČJ

*Povinné pole

Vítám Vás a děkuji, že jste se rozhodli pomoci s diplomovou prací zabývající se jazykem nebinárních* postav v literárním překladu z anglického do českého jazyka. Vyplněním následujícího dotazníku pomůžete zmapovat jazykové preference české nebinární komunity.

Zatímco práce samotná se zabývá vícero možnostmi řešení problematiky nebinárního jazyka v literární češtině, následující tři možnosti byly vybrány pro svou praktičnost a nejlepší využitelnost v literárním překladu. Prosím, mějte na paměti, že nejde o práci preskriptivní - jejím účelem v žádném případě NENÍ stanovit nový standard, kterého by se měli všichni překladatelé držet. Práce pouze mapuje možné způsoby vyjadřování, které jsou aplikovatelné na překlad, a snaží se mimo jiné zjistit, které z nich jsou pro českou komunitu přijatelné. Jde o pokus o diskusi, který má donutit českou (nejen) překladatelskou komunitu se tímto problémem začít zabývat, ne o brožuru, která má s okamžitou platností změnit pravidla českého pravopisu.

Dotazník je anonymní a zabere Vám přibližně 10-15 minut v závislosti na Vašich odpovědích. Prosím, abyste v rámci vlastních možností odpovídali co nejpodrobněji, ať už jde o odpověď pozitivní či negativní. Originální části textových úryvků jsou uvedeny v angličtině, avšak znalost angličtiny není pro účast podmínkou - úplně stačí, když se budete věnovat českým překladům! :)

Upozornění: Dotazník může u respondentů spadajících do nebinární komunity vyvolat nepříjemné pocity.

Díky,
Toby Wehle, Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci

* Práce se zabývá postavami, které v anglickém jazyce využívají zájmena they/them, může jít tedy o velkou škálu různých genderových identit, které v této práci nazýváme zastřešovacím termínem "nebinární". Identita jako taková zde nehraje tak významnou roli, jako samotná jazyková řešení, ale samozřejmě je brána během překladu v potaz.

*

- Dotazník vyplňuji dobrovolně a nenárokuji si za odpovědi žádnou finanční odměnu
- Beru na vědomí, že ve mně vyplňování dotazníku může vyvolat negativní pocity, a že v takovém případě mohu dotazník kdykoli opustit a výzkumu se nemusím účastnit

Překlad jazyka nebinárních postav v literárním překladu z AJ do ČJ

Jazyk nebinárních identit do českého jazyka prostupuje nejčastěji z angličtiny. V té je rod nápadný zejména na zájmech a přesně z toho důvodu uživatelé angličtiny začali používat neutrální zájmena THEY/THEM v jednotném čísle. V češtině se však gramatický rod odráží nejen na zájmech, ale také na podstatných jménech, přídavných jménech a slovesech v minulém čase.

Možností se nabízí celá spousta. Některé fungují v jazyce mluveném, některé fungují v jazyce psaném, některé jsou použitelné jen ve zvláštních případech a u určitých slov. V této diplomové práci se budeme zabývat pouze možnostmi aplikovatelnými na psaný jazyk, proto doufám odpustíte, že zde budeme rozebírat pouze drobný výřez všemi možnými strategiemi.

V následující části dotazníku si budete moct přečíst několik krátkých textů. Všechny texty jsou výňatky z českého překladu amerického románu *I Wish You All the Best* (2019, Mason Deaver), ve kterém vypráví svůj životní příběh nebinární postava Ben De Backer. Každý výňatek aplikuje jinou překladatelskou metodu.

Překlad jazyka nebinárních postav v literárním překladu z AJ do ČJ

*Povinné pole

Nyní budete mít možnost přečíst si texty, které využívají tři různé překladatelské metody. Pod každým výňatkem zodpovězte dané otázky.

Berte prosím v potaz, že jde o metody LITERÁRNÍHO PŘEKLADU, tedy psaného jazyka románů, novel, atd. a ne jazyka běžně používaného v konverzaci či v úředních dokumentech.

Anglické originály jsou pro Vás k dispozici, nicméně spíše jen pro zajímavost. Není potřeba se jimi zabírat. Soustřeďte se prosím hlavně na češtinu.

Způsobů převedení jazyka nebinárních postav do ČJ je samozřejmě mnohem více (např. nové koncovky a tvarosloví), nicméně pro účel dotazníku byly vybrány pouze tři z nich.

1. Užití gramatického rodu, který odpovídá rodu, který byl postavě přiřazen při narození

Následující výňatek využívá gramatický rod, který odpovídá rodu, který byl postavě (v našem případě Ben) přiřazen při narození. Ben tak o sobě v následujícím výňatku hovoří v mužském rodě:

It's an uphill climb to Friday, but I **get** there. Between homework and trying to catch up on all my classes, it's nice to just have a night **to myself**. Hannah and Thomas both decide they want to go out to dinner; I **decline** the invitation, figuring they probably want some time to themselves after everything I've put them through.

Pátek se zdál být neskutečně daleko, ale nakonec jsem se ho **dočkal**. Je hezké mít mezi vším tím psaním úkolů a doháněním školy chvílku taky **sám pro sebe**. Hannah a Thomas se rozhodli, že půjdou na večeři. Já jsem jejich pozvání **odmítl**. Určitě si chtějí užít nějaký čas spolu sami dva, po tom všem, čím si se mnou prošli.

(Deaver 2019, 58, my translation and emphases)

Zde je prostor pro Vaše poznámky. Co jsou podle Vás výhody a nevýhody této metody? Co se Vám na ní líbí nebo naopak nelíbí? Napište libovolný komentář, cokoli, co Vás k metodě 1 napadne.

Vaše odpověď

Zodpovězte otázky k metodě 1 *

	Rozhodně souhlasím	Spíše souhlasím	Nevím	Spíše nesouhlasím	Rozhodně nesouhlasím
Číst knihu, kde je pro nebinární postavu využit tento způsob vyjadřování, by se mi líbilo.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gramatický rod, který odpovídá rodu postavy při narození, bych v literárním textu pro nebinární postavu použil*a.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tento způsob překladu jazyka nebinární postavy mi vadí.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Užití středního gramatického rodu

Následují dva krátké výňatky využívající střední rod k vyjádření nebinární postavy. V prvním výňatku hovoří Ben o sobě, ve druhém výňatku Ben zmiňuje spřátelenou postavu Mariam, taktéž nebinární.

Last night I **passed out** around midnight, but **woke up** about two hours later, **unable** to fall back asleep.

Včera jsem **usnulo** kolem půlnoci, ale o dvě hodiny později už jsem **bylo vzhůru, neschopné** znovu usnout.

(Deaver 2019, 36, my translation and emphases)

But when Mariam **asked** me to help **them** with a new project **they're** starting, there was no way I was going to turn them down.

Ale když mě Mariam **požádalo**, abych **mu** pomohlo s novým projektem, se kterým zrovna začíná, nemohlo jsem takovou nabídku odmítnout.

(Deaver 2019, 285, my translation and emphases)

V tomto případě je střední rod využit u sloves v minulém čase, zájmen i přídavných jmen.

Zde je prostor pro Vaše poznámky. Co jsou podle Vás výhody a nevýhody této metody? Co se Vám na ní líbí nebo naopak nelíbí? Napište libovolný komentář, cokoli, co Vás k metodě 2 napadne.

Vaše odpověď

Zodpovězte otázky k metodě 2 *

	Rozhodně souhlasím	Spíše souhlasím	Nevím	Spíše nesouhlasím	Rozhodně nesouhlasím
Střední rod bych v literárním textu pro nebinární postavu použil*a.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Číst knihu, kde je pro nebinární postavu využit střední rod, by se mi líbilo.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Využití středního rodu v překladu jazyka nebinární postavy mi vadí.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Užití graficky experimentálních možností překladu

V následujícím výňatku jsou využity experimentální grafické úpravy.

I've been mentally preparing myself to come out all over again, but I've **been doing** that for a while now. That was one of the things I **realized** early. If you're queer, your life has the potential to become one long coming-out moment. If I ever want to be called the right pronouns, I'll have to correct people and put **myself** out there first and who knows what could happen.

Psychicky se připravuju na další coming out, ale to je něco, co jsem **dělala** už i předtím. Byla to jedna z věcí, které jsem si **uvědomil** velice brzy. Pokud jste queer, z vašeho života se stává jeden dlouhý coming out. Pokud chci, aby mi lidi říkali tak, jak si přeju, musím je neustále opravovat a musím neustále dávat **sebe sama** všanc a kdo ví, co se může stát.

(Deaver 2019, 47, my translation and emphases)

V tomto případě jsou slovesa v minulém čase, zájmena a přídavná jména obohacena speciálními znaky. Samohlásky A a O (případně i E) jsou vybaveny částí nebinárního symbolu (tento symbol vychází ze symbolů pro ženu (Venuše) a muže (Mars) a jde o kolečko s horizontální čarou vedoucí nahoru zakončenou písmenem X). Jednotlivá slova pak mohou v celém textu zůstat v mužském či ženském rodě, nebo pro podtržení nepřislušnosti k daným rodovým skupinám lze rody střídat.

Zde je prostor pro Vaše poznámky. Co jsou podle Vás výhody a nevýhody této metody? Co se Vám na ní líbí nebo naopak nelíbí? Napište libovolný komentář, cokoli, co Vás k metodě 3 napadne.

Vaše odpověď

Zodpovězte otázky k metodě 3 *

	Rozhodně souhlasím	Spíše souhlasím	Nevím	Spíše nesouhlasím	Rozhodně nesouhlasím
Tuto grafickou úpravu bych v literárním textu pro nebinární postavu použil*a.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Číst knihu, kde je pro nebinární postavu využita tato grafická úprava, by se mi líbilo.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Využití této grafické úpravy v překladu jazyka nebinární postavy mi vadí.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nyní se pokuste seřadit tyto tři metody od té, která by Vám osobně vyhovovala nejvíce (1) až po tu, která by Vám osobně vyhovovala nejméně (3). Pokud to bude potřeba, klidně se vraťte k přeloženým výňatkům a ještě jednou si je přečtěte.

*

	1 Vyhovuje mi nejvíce	2	3 Vyhovuje mi nejméně
Metoda 1: Gramatický rod, který byl osobě přiřazen při narození	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Metoda 2: Střední rod	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Metoda 3: Grafická úprava	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pokud nepreferujete ani jednu z těchto metod, i přesto je v přechozí otázce seřad'te. Poté se pokuste níže popsat, jaký způsob by Vám vyhovoval.

Vaše odpověď

Vaše údaje

Díky!
Dotazníkovou část máte za sebou. Nyní se Vás ještě zeptám na několik osobních údajů, které pomohou odpovědi vyhodnotit.

Věk *

Vyberte

Gender (jelikož se vnímání genderu každého z nás může lišit a "nálepek" je velká spousta, pokud se neshodujete ani s jedním binárním genderem, pokuste se v políčku "Jiná..." popsat, jak se vnímáte, ať už jednoslovně nebo víceslovně) *

Žena

Muž

Jiné: _____

Cítíte se být součástí nebinární komunity? *

Ano

Ne

Nevím

Jiné: _____

Nejvyšší dosažené vzdělání *

Základní

Střední škola bez maturity a výučního listu

Střední škola s maturitou

Střední škola s výučním listem

Vyšší odborná škola

Vysokoškolské (Bc.)

Vysokoškolské (Mgr. a vyšší)

Jste v zaměstnání nebo studujete? *

- Jsem v zaměstnání
- Studuji
- Nestuduji ani nejsem v zaměstnání

Četli jste někdy nějakou knihu (román, novelu, atd.), ve které se pojednávalo v českém jazyce o nebinární postavě? *

- Ano
- Ne

Pokud ano, pokuste se uvést název knihy. Zkuste stručně napsat, jakými jazykovými prostředky se daná postava vyjadřovala/jak byla adresována ostatními. Líbila se Vám tato jazyková řešení?

Vaše odpověď

Jste na konci dotazníku!

Děkuji za Váš čas a ochotu. Odpovědi budou zaznamenány a vyhodnoceny v diplomové práci o nebinárním jazyce v překladu. V případě jakýchkoliv dotazů a připomínek, případně pokud budete mít zájem o výsledky, mě můžete kontaktovat na adrese toby.wehle@seznam.cz.

S přáním pěkného dne a pevného zdraví

Toby Wehle, Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci

Zpět

Odeslat

ANNOTATION

Author	Toby Wehle
Department	Department of English and American Studies, FF UP
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ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení autora	Toby Wehle
Název katedry a fakulty	Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky, FF UP
Název bakalářské práce	Prolomení ticha: Překlad nebinárních identit v literárních textech z angličtiny do češtiny
Vedoucí práce	Mgr. Josefína Zubáková, Ph.D.
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Klíčová slova	queer studies, queer translation studies, gender, nebinarita, literární překlad
Jazyk práce	Angličtina
Abstrakt	Cílem této diplomové práce je popsat možné překladatelské strategie aplikovatelné na překlad nebinárních identit a jejich jazyka, a zároveň popsat

vnímání těchto překladatelských strategií českou
nebinární komunitou.