

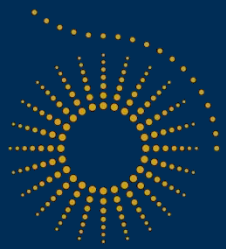


FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA
UNIVERZITY KARLOVY
V PRAZE

FERGUSON'S "DIGLOSSIA" IN THE DISCOURSE OF CZECH LINGUISTICS

JIŘÍ NEKVAPIL, CHARLES UNIVERSITY, PRAGUE

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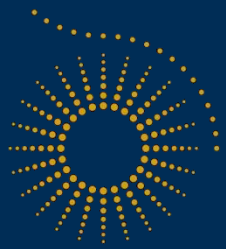
Structure of the presentation

- 1. Preliminaries: the issue of representation of sociolinguistic phenomena and the reflexivity of linguistics descriptions
- 2. The emergence of the concept of diglossia in the Czech linguistics
- 3. Formal features of H and L in Czech, their use and management
- 4. Why doesn't exist a systematic description of L in the Czech Republic?
- 5. The alternative frameworks



Preliminaries: the issue of representation and reflexivity

- The description of a language situation is not a mere innocent product of objective analysts. The way in which linguists describe a language situation has a (sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker) impact on the shape of a language situation itself
- The descriptions of language situations by linguists are an essential part of the very language situations under description



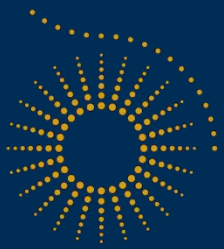
The concept of diglossia as applied in the Czech linguistics

- In the Czech language situation, there are/were/may be/might be two central varieties:
- **Standard Czech** (Cz. spisovná čeština) – H-variety
- **Common Czech** (Cz. obecná čeština) – L-variety



The emergence of the concept of diglossia in the Czech linguistics

- Scholars abroad – with respect to the Czech situation Ferguson's criteria of the concept (discussed and) accepted:
- Micklesen (1978) "Czech Sociolinguistic Problems" in *Folia Slavica*
- Neustupný (1989) "Czech Diglossia and Language Management" in *New Language Planning Newsletter*
- Scholars working in CR- with respect to the Czech situation Ferguson's criteria of the concept discussed and some of them problematized:
- Daneš (1988)
- Sgall et al (1992)



The origin of the Czech diglossia

- Standard Czech – artificially established (or ‘revived’) in the course of the 19th century on the basis of certain varieties of the Renaissance Czech of the 16th and 17th centuries. Between the Renaissance period and the 19th century, the spoken language underwent changes, and the changed language has survived as Common Czech. However, the Standard has basically retained the Renaissance form. (Neustupný & Nekvapil 2006, p. 70)



Main formal features of Standard Czech (SC) and Common Czech (CC)

- The phonological variables (Wilson 2010)
- V-insertion: SC *on* CC *von* (= he)
- É-raising: SC *dobré pivo* CC *dobrý pivo* (= good beer)
- Ý-diphthongization: SC *velký* CC *velkej* (=big)



Main formal features of Standard Czech (SC) and Common Czech (CC)

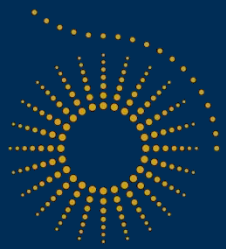
- The grammatical variables (less spread, less investigated)
- Paradigm unification: SC *trpí* CC ***trpěj*** (= they suffer), SC *sázejí* CC ***sázej*** (they bet); SC *prosí* CC ***prosej***; SC *dávají* CC ***dávaj*** (= they give)
- /-truncation: SC *nesl* CC *nes* (= he carried)
- Gender neutralization: SC *s pány* CC *s **pánama*** (with gentlemen), SC *s ženami* CC *s **ženama*** (with ladies), SC *s městy* CC *s **městama*** (with cities)



'Big City' (sg.)

Standard Cz. Common Cz.

- | | | |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| ■ Nom. | velké město | velký město |
| ■ Gen. | velkého města | velkýho města |
| ■ Dat. | velkému městu | velkýmu městu |
| ■ Acc. | velké město | velký město |
| ■ Loc. | velkém městě | velkym městě |
| ■ Instr. | velkým městem | velkym městem |



'Big City' (pl.)

Standard Cz.

Common Cz.

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|
| ■ Nom. | velká města | velký města |
| ■ Gen. | velkých měst | velkejch měst |
| ■ Dat. | velkým městům | velkejm městům |
| ■ Acc. | velká města | velký města |
| ■ Loc. | velkých městech | velkejch městech |
| ■ Instr. | velkými městy | velkejma městama |



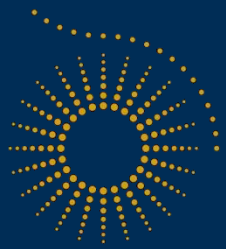
SC and CC in the continuous utterance

SC: S takovými lidmi **bychom** nemluvili **o** tvém bytě.

CC: S takovejma lidma **bysme** nemluvili **vo** tvym bytě.

With such people we-would not-speak of your flat

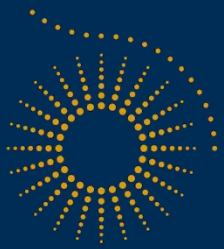
(Sgall et al 1992: 4)



The language situation

(Neustupný & Nekvapil 2003)

- Standard Czech tends to be used in formal situations while Common Czech in informal ones
- However, there are a lot of semi-formal (and some formal) situations in which Standard Czech with a strong admixture of CC is used, or even CC alone (for example, the university setting including seminars and lectures)



Simple management of the phenomena

- Is the mismatch between the use of a variety and the situation managed?
- Does the speaker notice such a deviation at all? Does he/she evaluate it? Does he/she even adjust it? - The questions formulated in the vein of Language Management Theory (Neustupný & Jernudd)
- Whose concepts SC and CC are? (etic vs emic)



The beginning of a TV debate

- M: ... *témata o kterých bude dnes řeč, možná poznáte už podle jmen pánů **který kteří** přijali dnešní pozvání.*
- (... the topics which will be talked about today you may recognize even from the names of the gentlemen **who (CC) who (SC)** have accepted today's invitation.)



Daneš (1988)

- (he considered the concept with respect to the Czech situation already in 1960s)
- Though there are a number of features meeting Ferguson's criteria, he admits only a "certain tendency to diglossia", particularly due to:
- non-existence of a relatively territorially homogenous L-variety; rapprochement of H and L-variety; use of the "mixed code".



Sgall et al. (1992)

- The main problem is with the criterion of functional differentiation of H and L-variety:

The CC-features often occur and are acceptable in specialized spoken discourse; written literature also uses CC as the base code.

Moreover: there is an extensive “code-mixing” even in the course of the production of sentences or even syntactic phrases and individual word-forms (thus the correlation with a particular domain seems to be out of question)

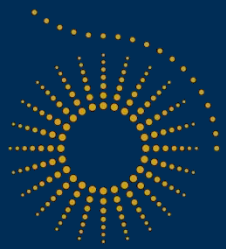
- Another problem is with the acquisition criterion:

SC and CC are not very divergent, which enables children to easily understand SC before the beginning of formal education at school



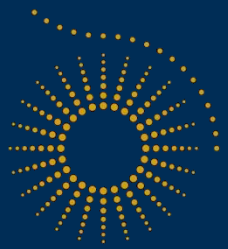
Rapprochement of SC and CC

- The process taking place since 1920s after the rise of Czechoslovakia, when Czech (and Slovak) became the official language of the new state and entered the domains so far occupied by German.
- The spoken language (including CC) started to be more influenced by SC in the wake of the massive spread of literacy in Czech
- The institutional language managers gradually accept some forms of CC in SC (they started to codify them as standard), e.g. in 1957, the infinitive form *-t* instead of *-ti* (original SC *spáti*, original CC *spát* > current SC *spát* 'to sleep') or *-u* (original CC) along with *-i* (original SC) in the verb conjugation of the type *kupovat* 'to buy' (cf. *kupuji/kupuju* 'I buy')
- According to Bermel (2010) this marks the end of the Czech diglossia (which, according to him, lasted from 1830)



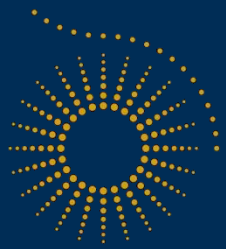
Stylistic differentiation

- The issue of metaphoric code-switching (cf. Gumperz 1982: interpretation of switches between H and L-codes within single conversations)
- In the view of many linguists, the difference between SC and what is called CC can be conceptualized as one of style, esp. as the way how to express various degree of the formality of the situation; moreover, the use of SC or CC may express the emphasis of, ironic attitude to or keeping distance from something (cf. Gumperz 1982: the use of H-code makes an utterance more authoritative, the use of L-code impresses a child with the seriousness of a command)



Diglossia and superdiversity

- The concept of diglossia seems to belong to the age of (relatively) clear boundaries of two and just two entities. If used for the description of the current language situation in the Czech Republic, it would hide a number of phenomena in operation there, particularly, broadly speaking, of stylistic nature.
- The current Czech language situation can be characterized as “post-diglossic” (Bermel 2010)



Standard Czech (SC) at present (Danes 2003)

- SC gets “decentralized”, its boundaries become blurred and its structure less compact
- This is due to three factors:
 - 1. the specific Czech diglossia
 - 2. a continuous process of detailed functional differentiation
 - 3. a massive impact of foreign languages, esp. English

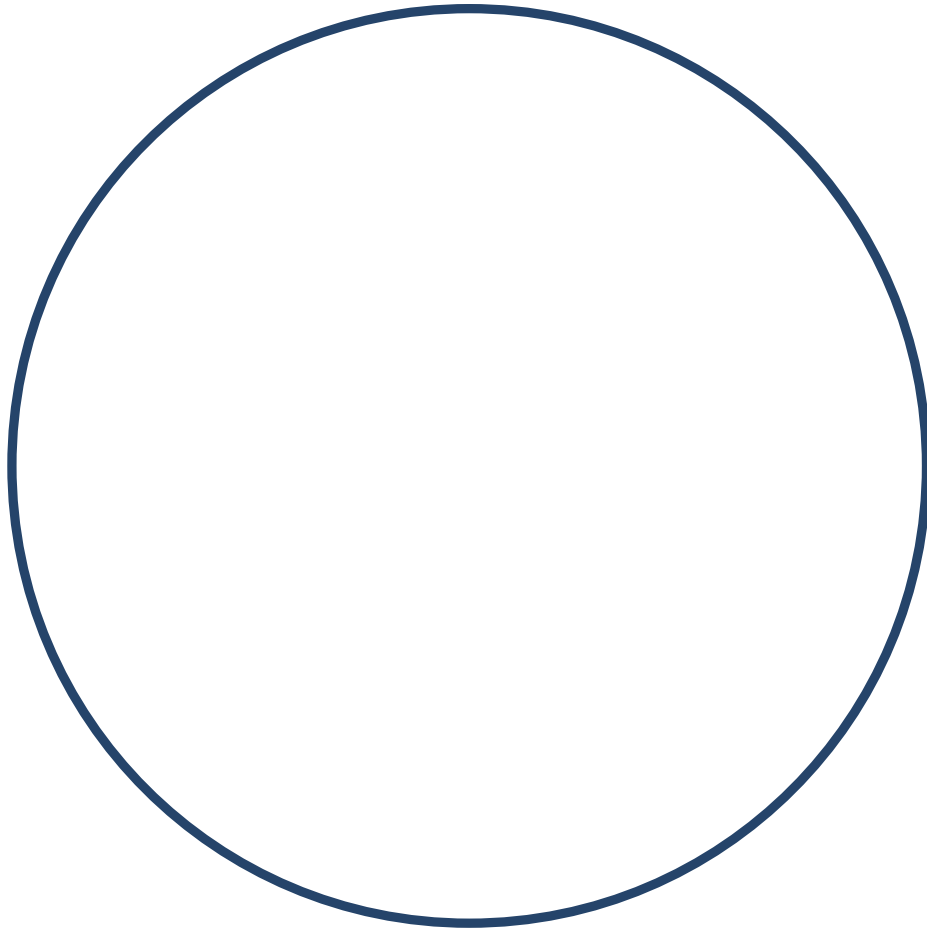


Why doesn't exist a systematic description of CC in the Czech Republic?

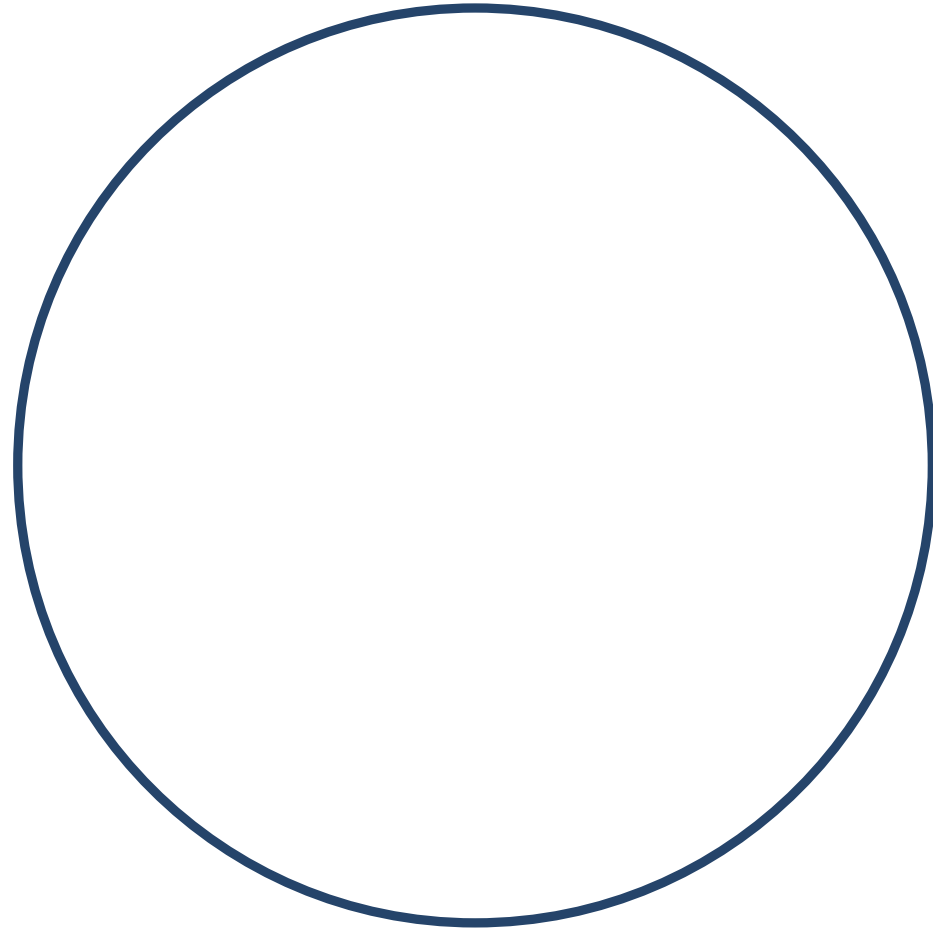
- Such a description (e.g. a grammar of CC) would differ from the grammar of SC only in some phonemic and morphemic features
- Huge overlap of the grammar of SC and that of CC
- Therefore, CC is usually presented only as a several partial (sub)systems of differences (esp. endings)
- The economy of description: differential vs complex description of varieties



How to describe SC and CC



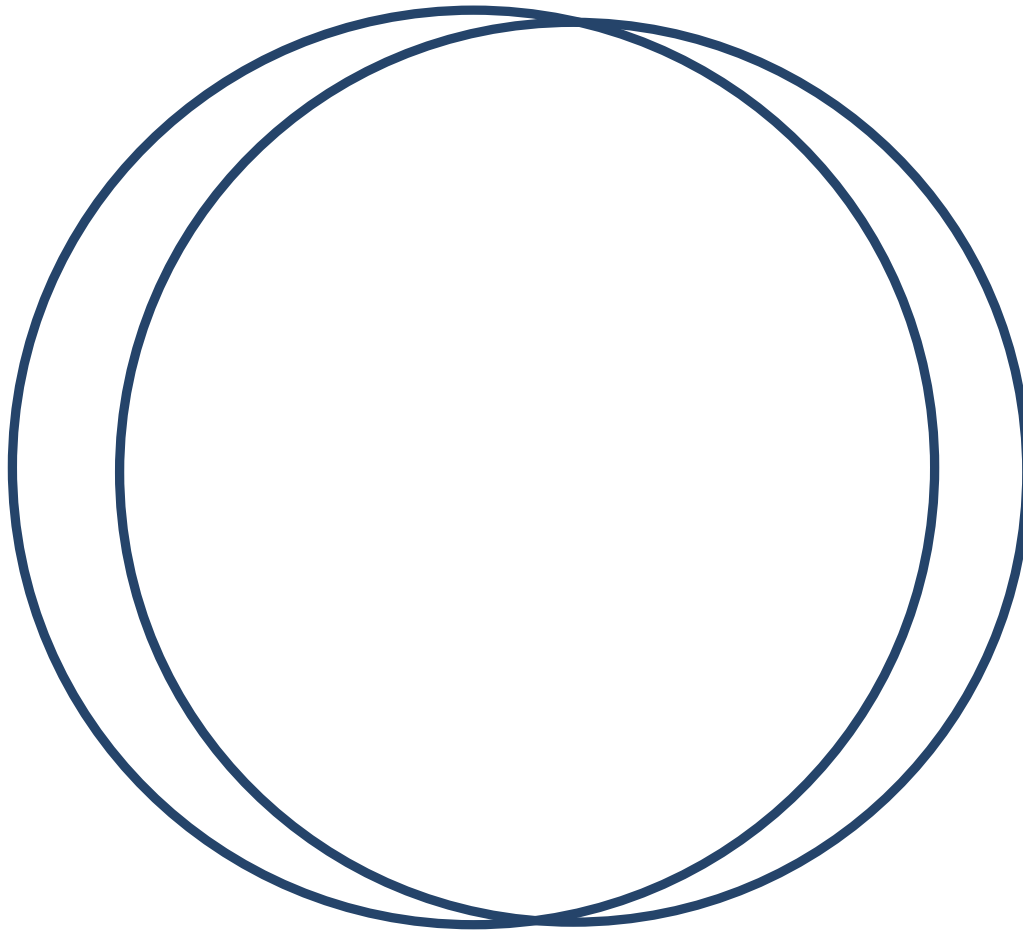
SC



CC



The overlap of SC and CC



SC CC



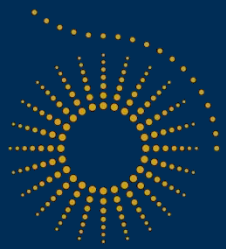
Variation of one code only?

- The presence of two central codes in Czech
- The two codes are not very divergent (the morphological categories are the same, a simplification occurs within these categories)
- Code-switching
- Rapprochement of SC and CC (the role of codification/standardization)
- The issue of a merging of the two codes (Sgall 1994), the issue of code-mixing
- Emergence of the new single code in the future?



Diglossia as a continuum

- Shiffman (1997: 211): “though linguistic cultures think of diglossia as either-or, it is often a gradient cline, with one variant shading into another” (the use of Tamil as an example)
- Diglossia and the linguistic culture (belief systems, language ideologies) that maintains it



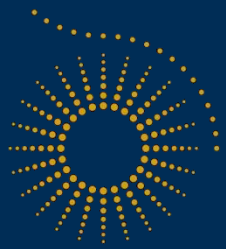
Diglossia in the national and international sociolinguistics discourse

- It may be appropriate to characterize a language situation as diglossic at the beginning of a specialized international discussion, but such characterization must be qualified afterward
- In contrast – the language situation in the territory/country can be characterized as “very complex” and specified by the following features: x1, x2, x3, x4, x5, x6, x7.....



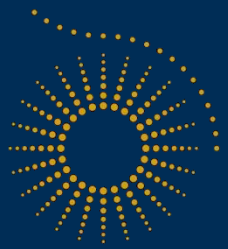
Conclusions: Dimensions of the problem

- What is the most appropriate framework for the description of the Czech language situation (diglossia or something else?)
- How to describe and present the Czech language situation and under what circumstances (in a complex way? in a differential way?)
- How to discuss it in the national and international context



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Thank you

Děkuji (SC) 'I-thank-you'

Děkuju (CC>SC) 'I-thank-you'