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Facultative Animacy in Polish **A Study in Grammatical Gender Formation**

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INTRODUCTION. 'Grammatical' gender is a largely semantically empty noun trait whose existence is typically revealed through the triggering of agreement rules on the part of items in a sentence with which the noun is in construction. For example, the fact that the Latin word **res** is feminine in gender requires that the modifying adjective **public-** take the feminine ending **-a**. 'Natural' gender refers to perceptual categories with which people tend to view reality - male, female, animate, concrete, abstract, and so on - which may have means of formal expression in a language. Present-day Polish provides an illustration of the process by which a natural gender can become "grammaticized" by the extension of a formal marker of natural gender to nouns outside the range of the natural gender category, making the feature referentially unpredictable. In Polish, the Genitive=Accusative feature of masculine nouns, traditionally a sign of referential animacy, is being applied more and more to concrete nouns of all sorts, gradually turning the category 'animate' from a natural into a purely grammatical gender-designation.

GENDER IN POLISH. Polish distinguishes five main genders - three in the singular (masculine, feminine, neuter - continuants of the Indo-European genders of the same name), and two in the plural (virile and nonvirile - a by-and-large specifically Polish phenomenon).¹ As in other highly inflected Indo-European languages, it is necessary to distinguish in Polish among sex, gender, and declensional type. Problems of sex-gender reference in Polish are notoriously complex and have never been completely satisfactorily described. Rothstein 1976, Saloni 1976 and, especially, Kucala 1978 contain good overviews of the subject and the problems involved. The five main genders in Polish are reflected in personal pronouns (cf. **on** 'he,' **ona** 'she', **ono** 'it,' **oni** 'they'-*vir.*, **one** 'they'-*nonvir.*), in adjective agreement (cf. **dobry**

m., **dobra f.**, **dobre n.**, **dobrzy v.**, **dobre nv.** 'good'), and in past-tense verb forms (cf. **dał m.**, **dała f.**, **dało n.**, **dali v.** **dały nv.** 'gave'). In the sg., masculine gender exhibits the subgender 'animate,' a distinction characteristic of all Slavic languages that have retained declension.² Animacy is expressed by a syncretism in the sg. between the Accusative (Acc.) and Genitive (Gen.) cases; for inanimate nouns, syncretism exists between the Acc. and Nominative (Nom.) cases.

Another way in which animate and inanimate nouns tend to be distinguished in Polish is that the Gen. sg. of animate nouns is uniformly **-a**.³ The Gen. sg. of inanimate nouns is usually **-u**, although many inanimate nouns, particularly names for tools, clothing, body parts, and items of everyday use take **-a** instead of **-u**; see Westfall 1956 for a lengthy description of this phenomenon.

Essential to the understanding of facultative animacy in Polish - i.e., the extension of the feature 'animate' to referentially inanimate nouns - is the imbalance created by the failure of the historically expansive Gen. sg. in **-u** to replace the **-a** ending with all inanimate nouns;⁴ instead, the ending in **-u** has become relatively stabilized as the Gen. of nouns naming abstractions, deverbatives, large objects, materials, and most foreign place names. The contemporary state is illustrated below:

	inanimate in -u Acc.=Nom.	inanimate in -a Acc.=Nom.	animate in -a Acc.=Gen.
N	dom 'house'	ołówek 'pencil'	kot 'cat'
G	domu	ołówka	kota
A	dom	ołówek	kota

As is evident from this scheme, nouns like **ołów** 'pencil' are caught between one pattern and the other. Morphologically similar to animate nouns but morphosyntactically to inanimate nouns, nouns like **ołów** are emblematic of a systemic imbalance in Polish favoring the rise of processes of regularization through leveling.

Assuming - as from Westfal 1956 seems likely - that the inanimate Gen. sg. ending **-u** has reached the limit of its expansion, another logical way in which this systemic asymmetry could be erased is through the extension of the morphosyntactic feature Acc.=Gen. to nouns of the **ołów** type, i.e. nouns with Gen. in **-a**. There is evidence that such a shift is underway in present-day Polish. The present paper examines the specific paths by which the animate feature Acc.=Gen. is being extended to inanimate nouns with Gen. sg. in **-a**. The eventual result of such a realignment would be the change in status of the Polish category 'animate' from a 'natural' to a 'grammatical' gender category - the main determiner being the fact that the feature 'animate' would no longer be predictable, whether on the basis of extralinguistic reality or of the expressivity of the Acc.=Gen. feature when applied to referentially inanimate nouns.

FACULTATIVE ANIMACY. Some examples of Polish facultative animate nouns,⁵ familiar from textbooks, e.g. Schenker 1966: 220, would be **papieros** 'cigarette,' **tenis** 'tennis,' **walc** 'waltz,' **dolar** 'dollar.' Compare a. with b.:

- a. **Masz papierosa?** 'Do you have a cigarette?'
- b. **Masz ołów?** 'Do you have a pencil?'

Both **papieros** 'cigarette' and **ołówek** 'pencil' are masculine nouns referring to small concrete objects of everyday use, but only the first takes the Acc. sg. ending **-a** and is, therefore, classified as facultative(ly) animate; for more on this term, see below.

Whether to use Acc.=Nom. or Acc.=Gen. with a given noun is a matter of considerable practical importance for the student of Polish. However, one would be hard put to find solid information on the range of facultative animacy in the contemporary language. Traditional grammars unrealistically treat the subject as a marginal phenomenon, and dictionaries give such a conservative picture that they are next to useless in trying to assess usage. A few examples will illustrate the point.

Under the heading **cukierek** 'piece of candy,' Doroszewski's *Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny* (dictionary of correct Polish) 1973 condemns the expression **ssać cukierka** 'suck on a candy,' although it would be difficult to locate a speaker in Poland today who would use the **-o** Acc. ending with this noun at any time, cf. the popular writer Stefania Grodzieńska 1961: **Niech sobie skrzypi - powiedział spokojnie mąż i zjadł cukierka** 'Let it squeak, my husband said good-naturedly and gobbled down a piece of candy.' The same dictionary gives the preferred Gen. of **smakołyk** 'tidbit' as **-u**, which would preclude facultative animacy for this noun in principle, since this option is open only to nouns with Gen. sg. in **-a**.⁶ However, a survey among actual speakers will attest that **-a** is the preferred Gen. and that the use of this noun as a facultative animate is commonplace. No Polish dictionary printed in Poland, including the three-volume Szymczak dictionary of 1980, has a consistent way of registering information on facultative animate nouns. The user must rely on illustrative sentences usually taken from classical literature, which are by nature out of date and in any case do not consistently address

the question of the Acc. form. One cannot determine from any Polish dictionary, for example, whether one should say **zjeść gofer** or **zjeść gofra** 'eat a waffle' (**zjeść gofra** is what one commonly hears).

The Kościuszko Foundation *Polish-English Dictionary* 1961, alone among general-purpose dictionaries, can be of help in identifying the traditional facultative animate nouns like **papieros** 'cigarette.' This dictionary characterizes **papieros** and such-like nouns as 'animate.' For this dictionary, then, the category 'animate' has already the status of a grammatical gender category, i.e., a morphosyntactically distinguished class of nouns whose membership cannot be determined by reference to a natural feature of the referent. This position is as yet exaggerative. For most facultative animate nouns, including even **papieros**, the animate ending is still not obligatory in all instances. The Acc.=Gen. trait is still perceived and interpreted by both speakers and Polish grammarians as a sign of natural animacy, and the appearance of this feature with inanimate nouns is still viewed as a somewhat anomalous phenomenon, accompanied in all but the most common usages by a certain amount of expressive force.⁷

Of the Polish linguists writing on this subject, Zygmunt Saloni 1976 attempts to justify drawing a distinction between nouns of the **papieros** 'cigarette' and **pies** 'dog' types on the basis of commutational properties. Unfortunately Saloni's test is rather weak; he maintains that it is possible to refer to **pies** 'dog' with the pronoun **kto** 'who,' but to **papieros** 'cigarette' only with **co** 'what.' This test is as valid as a comparable test would be in English. One can occasionally encounter humanizing reference to pets using "who", but all this test accomplishes is to distinguish pets from other animates. It is not surprising that nouns like 'dog' and 'cigarette' should have quite different commutational and

permutational properties (in Polish or in any other language), but this does not mean that they belong to different genders - certainly not in the traditional sense of this term. If nothing else, Saloni's treatment of this question is indicative of the need Polish grammarians feel to distinguish grammatically between **papieros** and **pies**, even if they are at a loss to establish clearcut formal grounds for doing so.

As far as I am aware, no writer on this subject has ever proposed a relatively simple cover term or abbreviation for designating nouns of the **papieros** class. In view of the apparently open field, the term 'facultative animate' and the dictionary notation *fac.an.*, are here proposed as official terms for describing Polish masculine inanimate nouns with Acc.=Gen., until such time as such nouns may no longer be felt by speakers of Polish to be distinct from nouns of the **pies** class.

Specialist literature treating *fac.an.* nouns under any heading is scant. H. Grappin's 1953 study is concerned with establishing the origins, rather than the extent, of the phenomenon, and Grappin's work is in any case too old to be considered reflective of contemporary Polish. In the approximately ten-year period between Grappin's study and a master's paper on this subject by Piotr Żydek 1961, this category had apparently undergone considerable expansion. Besides the traditional *fac.an.* categories of brand names of all sorts, cigarettes, monetary units, alcoholic beverages, exotic fruits, mushrooms, games, and dances, Żydek comments on the frequent facultative animacy of names for pastry and other food items, artificial satellites, diseases, and other emerging semantic classes. Żydek's conclusion is that the vitality of this category is exhibited not so much by its coopting new individual members as by its being extended to entirely new semantic classes. The most complete treatment of the subject to

date is the study by Marian Kucała 1976, who lists over 300 *fac.an.* nouns in common use - a number which, while greatly underestimated, gives a realistic idea of the importance of this class of masculine nouns in the modern language.

ASSESSING THE RANGE OF FACULTATIVE ANIMACY.
Although Kucała 1976 gathers an impressive list of *fac.an.* nouns, his methods for assessing the range of facultative animacy in contemporary Polish, if other than native intuition and conversations with friends, are not made explicit. By way of establishing this range more scientifically, as the basis for further analysis and conclusions, I commissioned a member of the faculty of the Bydgoszcz Pedagogical University to scour the Polish *Index a tergo* (backwards dictionary) 1973 to search for masculine inanimate nouns which, according to this speaker's most liberal interpretation, might take **-a** in the Acc. sg.⁸ The aim was to subject the resulting list to verification and further analysis by questionnaire over a uniform group of speakers. By comparing Zydek's and Kucała's lists to that produced by the dictionary search, and by adding constantly to the corpus with nouns gathered from reading and, more often, everyday conversation, a list of around 800 *fac.an.* nouns was established, most of which represented some recognizable formal or semantic class. An example of a formal class would be nouns ending in the suffix **-ak**: **pisak** 'felt-tipped marker,' **siwak** 'gray earthen pot,' **straszak** 'cap pistol.'⁹ A semantic class - as it turns out, rather weak in facultative animacy - would be names for knives: **knyp** 'paring knife,' **kozik** 'pocket knife,' **scyzoryk** 'pen-knife,' **majcher** 'shiv.' Some nouns, for example **judasz** 'peep-hole,' **smoczek** 'baby's pacifier,' **sopel** 'icicle,' were difficult to assign to a more general semantic or formal class.

For purposes of the questionnaire, the initial list of over 800 nouns was reduced to a working list of around 300. An Acc.-taking (transitive) verb was suggested for each of the nouns, and the respondent was asked to rank the possibility of occurrence of the -a ending according to the scale 1) always, 2) often, 3) infrequently, 4) never. Included in the list were various control nouns considered unlikely to take the Acc. -a ending. The survey was distributed to 30 incoming Polish university students, future teachers of Polish, of an average age of 19. The aim was to establish current usage at least for this one age and educational group, a group considered likely to be representative of the literary standard over the next generation or so.¹⁰

Most of the suggested verbs were of the strongly transitive type - verbs of creation, destruction, or alteration. However, a number of weakly transitive verbs - verbs of perception and affection, contact verbs, and verbs taking prepositional complements - were also included to establish whether the relative transitivity of the verb might have an effect on the choice of the ending. The factor of the definiteness vs. indefiniteness of the noun was not controlled on the questionnaire but was the subject of a separate, more limited survey.

An excerpt from the questionnaire relating to the small class "marks on paper," showing the first nine responses within this class, is presented below. The nouns are **kleks** 'blot,' **kulfon** 'misshapen letter,' **zawijas** 'flourish,' and **przecinek** 'comma,' the last word being the control. The suggested verb for all these nouns was **zrobić** 'make or produce.'¹¹

respondent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	a.v.
zrobić kleks/a	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1.9
zrobić kulfon/a	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	3	2	2.1
zrobić zawijas/a	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	3	4	2.6
zrobić przecinek/nka	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.0

It should be noted that the questionnaire was given orally and at random, with students merely recording numbers next to the numbers 1-314, so that it was for all intents impossible for the respondents to refer to previous answers for comparison. On the basis of the above results, one may conclude that the respondents would be likely to use the *fac.an.* form in colloquial speech with all words except **przecinek** 'comma' (the control word). Particularly strong in facultative animacy is **kleks** 'blot.' At the same time, the average respondent does not rule out the inanimate -0 ending in the Accusative with any of the nouns. Doroszewski's 1973 dictionary of correct Polish unequivocally gives the Accusative for both **kleks** 'blot' and **zawijas** 'flourish' as -a; the word **kulfon** is not listed, but nevertheless one may be satisfied with the general accuracy of this dictionary in reference to this one class. It is a different story with footwear (see below).

In regard to *fac.an.* nouns where both -a and -0 are allowed in the Accusative Kucala notes that the form in -a is associated with a less formal style. This observation, combined with discussions on the subject with a variety of speakers before composing the

questionnaire, led me to expect a certain amount of normativistic resistance to the *fac.an.* ending in -a. Many speakers feel that there is something almost amusing about using an animate ending with inanimate nouns; drawing attention to the question in the context of a questionnaire on usage cannot help but make people in general, all the more so entering college students, self-conscious about their language and, therefore, conservative. In order to neutralize possible normativism, respondents were instructed to register not their own usage but that of the "everyday speech of the general population." In addition, the atmosphere surrounding the test (the name for such surveys in Polish) was kept as relaxed and informal as circumstances allowed. One can only guess to what extent such measures are successful; the generally uniform nature of the responses indicates that most respondents understood the questionnaire in a similar way. However, if the results of the survey are skewed in any way, it is probably in the direction of excessive conservatism.

One semantic class exhibiting a noticeable lack of uniformity of response was that of footwear, the sample consisting of **but** 'shoe,' **papuc** 'slipper,' **pantofel** 'light shoe,' **drewniak** 'clog,' **kałoz** 'galosh,' **sandał** 'sandal,' **bucior** 'clod-hopper.'¹² Approximately as many people averred that the ending -a occurred "frequently" with these nouns as maintained that the ending occurred "infrequently" or "never" with them. One reason for the wide dispersal of response here is that as far as footwear is concerned, the ending in -a and in -0 are fairly rigidly separated not only as to stylistic value but also as to implied social context. The *fac.an.* form in -a appears to be associated with home life. One might naturally say at home **Adasiu, rzuć mi papucia!** 'Adam, toss me my slipper!' but in a store only **Proszę niech pan mi pokaże ten zamszowy papuc** 'please show me that chamois slipper.' Given a context-free choice as on the survey, the response

would depend to a large extent on the way in which the respondent filled in the context in his mind. However, even granted this distinction, there seems to be a fair amount of plain disagreement as to the facultative animacy of footwear. For example, one respondent outside the survey, a professor of Polish literature, maintained that the ending **-a** with **papuć** 'slipper' was practically the only one possible in an informal context; another speaker, a doctoral candidate in French literature, resolutely insisted that the ending **-a** with this noun was wrong under any circumstances. One may conclude that in the case of the footwear class, one is dealing with a relatively new and still unstable *fac.an.* class. It is noteworthy that Żydek's 1961 study does not comment on this group and that Doroszewski 1973 does not list any of the footwear nouns as exceptional; Kucala 1978, on the other hand, lists all these nouns as unequivocally *fac.an.* in informal speech. The present survey, as contrasted with Kucala, revealed the footwear class to be on the whole a rather weak *fac.an.* class, having an index of only 2.88.¹³

Concerning the effect of the transitivity of the verb on the choice of **-o** versus **-a**, the results of the present survey were inconclusive. In almost all cases, the "more transitive" the verb, the higher the chance of eliciting the *fac.an.* ending **-a**. However, in almost all cases, the more strongly transitive verb was also the more frequently used verb with the given noun; consequently, it is not clear whether it is the frequency of the collocation or the transitivity that is the determining factor. For example, one can elicit the *fac.an.* form **wierzowca** 'sky-scraper' more easily after **postawić** 'build, locate' than after **widzieć** 'see'; one can expect **jawora** 'sycamore' after **ściąć** 'cut down' but **jawor** after **rozpoznać** 'identify'; **tenisa** 'tennis' is more usual after **grać w** 'play (at)' than after **lubić** 'like'; and so on. However, **papierosa** 'cigarette,' which is obligatory after **zapalić** 'light up,' is optional

after equally transitive **zadusić** 'snuff out.' **Papierosa** is also obligatory after weakly transitive but statistically common **dać** 'give.' A difference in frequency of use would seem to be the only possible controlling factor (the usual word for 'putting out' a cigarette is not **zadusić** but **zgasić** 'extinguish, put out').

In fact, a close examination of the occurrence of **-o** vs. **-a** with cigarette terms reveals a mechanism based on collocational bonding and unbonding, by means of which the **-a** ending appears to expand from an innovative member of a group to other members of that group. It would appear that the *fac.an.* feature first emerges in reference to a particular noun which, for one reason or another (see discussion further on), is singled out for elevation to *fac.an.* status. However, the feature appears first of all not as a feature of the noun alone but of the complete verb-noun expression, e.g. **zapalić papierosa** 'light up a cigarette.' Such expressions undoubtedly exist for a period of time as bound collocations, similar to the way that many Polish *fac.an.* expressions continue to exist as idioms, cf. **dać drapak** 'take off, bolt, decamp' (literally, 'give a scratcher'). At a second stage, both noun and verb acquire an independent association with the *fac.an.* ending: the noun will begin to take the *fac.an.* ending with other verbs (although, at first, not as frequently), and the verb will exert pressure on other nouns with which it occurs to take the *fac.an.* ending. Thus in contemporary Polish the verb **zapalić**, because of **zapalić papierosa**, is so strongly associated with the object's taking **-a** that **niedopałek** 'butt,' which ordinarily does not take Acc. in **-a**, will tend to take **-a** with this one verb, cf. usual **zapalić niedopałka** 'light up a butt' but still **rzucić niedopałek** 'toss away a butt.' One may expect that in the future **niedopałek** will begin to take **-a** with other verbs, completing the transfer of the *fac.an.* feature from **papieros** to **niedopałek** and, at the same time, consolidating the position of cigarette terms as a *fac an.* class.

On the basis of the transitivity hierarchy of Hopper and Thompson 1980, one would expect that definite nouns would take **-a** more frequently than indefinite nouns, if indeed **-a** is associated with greater transitivity. The fact that this does not appear to be the case is further reason to discount transitivity as a factor in the rise of the Acc. in **-a**. If anything, the opposite appears to hold. Given a noun with relatively strong facultative animacy, the **-a** ending will be strongly preferred in indefinite contexts, cf.

- a. **zerwij mi kwiatka** 'pick me a flower'
- b. **zerwij mi kwiatek** (same meaning as a., but considerably less acceptable).
- c. **zerwij mi tego kwiatka** 'pick me that flower'
- d. **zerwij mi ten kwiatek** (same meaning as c., somewhat less acceptable).

One is tempted to ascribe the association of the **-a** ending with indefiniteness to semantic interference from the Gen., with which the *fac.an.* Acc. is almost always identical.¹⁴ The Gen. is found quite often in combination with indefinite nouns, cf. the partitive Gen. **trochę chleba** 'a little bread,' the Gen. of borrowing **pożycz mi ołówek** 'lend me a pencil,' the Gen. of negation **nie widzę papierosa** 'I don't see a cigarette,' and other uses. Grappin 1951 and Szober 1963 view many *fac an.* usages as Gen. in origin (see further below).

Some other significant correlations noted in the survey included the following:

- a) The presence of the reifying or particularizing suffixes **-ak** or **-ec** is not sufficient by itself to bring about the facultative

animacy of a noun. However, within a given semantic class, nouns ending in these suffixes tend to have stronger facultative animacy, cf. **kalosz** 'galosh' 2.93, **drewniak** 'clog' 2.59; **cyprys** 'cypress' 3.1, **figowiec** 'fig-tree' 2.7.

b) Specific terms tend to have stronger *fac.an.* status than generic terms (suggesting that the *fac.an.* feature tends to originate with specific terms), cf. **kwiatek** 'flower' 2.36, **krokus** 'crocus' 2.06; **grzyb** 'mushroom' 2.03, **rydz** 'agaric' 1.2; **taniec** 'dance' 3.46 (i.e., very weak), **walc** 'waltz' 1.23; **nóż** 'knife' 3.62 (i.e., essentially no *fac.an.* status), **knyp** 'paring knife' 2.52. Sometimes generic terms take Gen. sg. in **-u** and so resist facultative animization on that account, cf. **kwiat kwiatu** 'flower,' **samochód samochodu** 'car,' **sport sportu** 'sport' (specific flowers, cars, sports are all relatively strong *fac.an.* nouns). Exceptions to the general tendency are the generic terms **papieros** 'cigarette' 1.16, highest of the cigarette class, and **but** 'shoe' 2.59, as high as any of the footwear class.

c) Slang terms within a semantic group can be counted on to have a higher *fac.an.* ranking than neutral terms, cf. **nos** 'nose,' 3.76, **ryj** 'snout' 1.83; **syfilis** 'syphilis' 3.7, **syf** 'syph' 2.53; **vermut** 'vermouth' 2.66, **bełt** 'rotgut wine' 1.46 (the highest of the wine and beer class).

d) A word and its diminutive are usually differentiated in *fac.an.* strength, but not necessarily predictably, cf. **pał** 'bud' 3.42, **pałczek** 2.73; **zab** 'tooth' 3.03, **zabek** 2.93; **włos** 'a hair' 3.16, **włosek** 2.82; but **baton** 'candy bar' 1.86, **batonik** 2.46; **rogal** 'croissant' 1.53, **rogalik** 2.0; **zraz** 'meat chop' 2.7, **zrazik** 2.7.¹⁵

e) Not surprisingly, nouns whose regular literary Gen. is **-u**

strongly resist facultative animization, even when the noun belongs semantically to a strong *fac.an.* class. What is surprising is that, according to the present survey, they do not resist it entirely. Thus **kwiat** scored 3.2; **mecz** 3.76; **bilard** 'billiards, pinball' 2.06 (indicating that many or most respondents consider the regular Gen. to be **bilarda**, not the dictionary's **bilardu**). Such data may merely indicate questionnaire fatigue; however, it may, and probably does, indicate the possibility of future realignment in the Gen. sg. **-u/-a** repartition with certain nouns.

f) Brand names based on nouns whose Gen. sg. is regularly **-u** easily undergo facultative animization, involving replacing both the Gen. sg. in **-u** and the Acc. sg. in **-o** with **-a**. As a result, masculine brand names in Polish comprise a virtually distinct morphological class, cf.

- i. **kupiłem rubin** 'I bought a ruby (stone)'
- ii. **kupiłem rubina** 'I bought a Ruby (TV)'
- iii. **nie mam rubinu** 'I don't have a ruby'
- iv. **nie mam rubina** 'I don't have a Ruby (TV).'

(iii. and iv. illustrate the Gen. of negation). Cf. also

- v. **rzuć ten sport** 'give up that sport!'
- vi. **rzuć tego sporta** 'throw away that Sport (cigarette).'

All classes of *fac.an.* nouns investigated, and a characterization of the relative strength of their facultative animacy are contained in the Appendix. It remains to discuss the origin of facultative animacy in Polish and to assess the place of *fac.an.* nouns within the system of Polish nominal declension as a whole.

THE ORIGIN OF FACULTATIVE ANIMACY. On the question of the origin of facultative animacy in Polish, various theories have been advanced, none of them particularly convincing as an overall explanation. It would be most accurate to say that a confluence of factors is at work against the background of a masculine declensional system which encourages expressivity in the choice of grammatical endings. Grappin 1953 stressed the importance of the long-defunct Gen. of manner in giving rise to such idiomatic expressions as **stać dęba** 'rear up, stand on end' (literally, stand (like) an oak'). According to Grappin, with the loss of the Gen. of manner, such uses became reinterpreted as pseudoanimate Accusatives, providing a model for the extension of -a as an Acc. ending to other nouns, especially names for dances, musical pieces, games, and physical movements, cf. standard Polish **tańczyć walca** 'dance a waltz,' **grać marsza** 'play a march,' **grać w wista** 'play whist,' **dać susa** 'give a hop.' While Grappin's observations concerning these classes and a few other frozen expressions may be correct, he points at most to a formal precedent, not to a particularly compelling motivation, for the extension of the Acc. -a to other semantic classes of nouns.

Szober 1963: 167-170 accords importance to the supposedly misinterpreted partitive Gen. with money terms as a factor in spreading the -a ending. According to Szober's account, **mam dukata** 'I have a ducat' originally meant 'I have a ducat in amount' and not 'I have a ducat piece.' Later, says Szober, the distinction was lost and -a was reinterpreted as an Acc. ending and generalized to include all money terms, cigarettes, and other classes considered by Szober as typically countable. Szober provides no historical evidence to support his hypothesis which, like Grappin's, relates only to some *fac.an.* nouns. Nonetheless, one cannot help but notice that many *fac.an.* classes consist of serial items: candies,

cookies, dumplings, etc. Also, as noted, specific terms tend to take the *fac.an.* ending more often than generics. Hence a previously unnoted Gen. of "exemplification or singularization," whose function was subsequently confused with the animizing Acc., should not be ruled out as a possible and still active source of *fac.an.* nouns, although more investigation into such usages is needed.

Also not noted by Szober, but of likely relevance to the subject of the inanimate Gen.=Acc., is the fact that, beginning from at least the 18th century, many formerly Genitive-requiring verbs have begun to acquire Accusative syntax - resulting, in the cases of some set expressions, in the appearance of synchronically unmotivated Genitives after Accusative-requiring verbs. For example, **dostać** 'get' was an originally Genitive-taking verb, as can be observed in the frozen expression **dostać kosza** 'get the basket,' i.e. get turned down by a woman. With time, this verb has acquired an almost exclusively Accusative syntax, so that today **dostać kosza** is apt to be interpreted as an example of facultative animacy and to serve as a model for the extension of Accusatives in -a to other nouns following this verb. This figurative phrase still stands in opposition to the literal **dostać kosz** 'get a basket.'

Somewhat persuasive is the notion, implicit in Szober's argumentation, that masculine inanimate nouns are under a certain amount of syntactic pressure toward the development of an overt Acc. case marker, distinct from the Nom. For example, Polish most often expresses the shift of topic and comment not by passivization, but by simple reversal of subject and object: SVO becomes OVS, cf. **Jan kocha Marię** 'John loves Mary' vs. **Marię kocha Jan** (same meaning, with topic and comment reversed). The possibility of this transformation depends largely on the existence of overt Acc. vs. Nom. marking. There is no doubt that

the need to distinguish the Acc. from the Nom. of personal and animate nouns (i.e., natural agents and patients) was important, alongside other factors (see below), in the historical rise of the Acc.=Gen. feature. Analogous syntactic pressure would be substantially weaker in the case of inanimate nouns (i.e., natural instruments and objects), but nonetheless present to some degree. In Polish the sentence 'The car is passing the motorcycle' (**Samochód wyprzedza motocykl**) is potentially ambiguous. The question 'What is passing what?' can be resolved only in light of a context. The development of an overt inanimate Acc. marker, such as **-a**, would rid Polish of the possibility of such ambiguity.

Both Grappin 1953 and Szober 1963 speak of the importance of gaming pieces and toys named after persons (**król** 'king'); commercial products named after the manufacturer (**parker** 'Parker pen'); concrete objects named metaphorically after animals (**wąż** 'snake/water hose'); and dances named after inhabitants of particular regions (**krakowiak** 'cracovienne dance') as having provided models for employing the animate Acc. ending with inanimate nouns. According to such reasoning, one will treat a car named **Jaguar** as grammatically animate because of the meaning of the noun and then later forget the principle involved and apply the animate ending to all car names, cf. standard Polish **mam volkswagena** 'I have a VW.' One problem with this explanation is that metaphorically extended animate nouns, e.g., **pająk** 'spider/brachiated ceiling fixture,' **smok** 'dragon/flip-top wastebasket'; **motyl** 'butterfly/bow tie'; **kret** 'mole/ditch-digger'; **żuraw** 'crane'; and so on, were determined by the present study to have markedly lower facultative animacy than do brand names of cars and appliances, whether or not these names contain animates among them (Polish television brands, for example, tend to be named after precious stones). Brand names derived from the names of manufacturers or inventors do not

necessarily have a greater degree of facultative animacy than other terms within a *fac.an.* group. As Kucała 1978: 96 notes, for no particular reason names of firearms named after people display a wide range of facultative animacy, ranging from **mauzer** (almost always) to **brauning** (almost never). Clearly, the tendency to view weapons, cars and appliances as pets or companions cannot be discounted. One is reminded of the analogous feminization of tools, machines, and bulky objects encountered in English, cf. "What's her range?" (of an artillery piece).

The common use of animal and personal nouns to refer to material objects, periodicals, and so on, has actually led to a somewhat countervailing tendency in Polish of *deanimization*, i.e. the use of Acc. in -0 with animate nouns when applied to referential inanimates. Usage is not stable but, for example, while one will hear only **kup mi Sportowca** 'buy me *Sportsman*,' the word **kurier** 'courier' has become to such a degree the name of a newspaper that **kup mi Kurier** 'buy me the *Courier*' is much more frequent than **kup mi Kuriera**. However, surprising ad hoc contaminations can occur, cf. **czy dostanę Przekroja?** 'can I get *Cross-Section?*,' cited by Kucała 1978: 96. The children's magazine **Świerszczyk** 'cricket' appears almost exclusively with Acc. in -0 (with Acc. in -a the name is used jocularly in the sense of "porno mag"). In sum, it is not at all clear that the application of animal names to inanimate objects has played a large role in the rise or spread of facultative animacy.

The extension of facultative animacy to names for plants, particularly after life-affecting verbs like **zerwać** 'pluck,' **ściąć** 'cut down,' etc., a usage shared by Polish with Slovak and Ukrainian, suggests that here one may be dealing with the affective animization of vegetable nature. However, based on this interpretation one would probably expect names for flowers, trees,

and shrubs to be stronger in facultative animacy than they actually are (see Appendix for specifics). Undoubtedly, the same motives are at work here as with brand names; i.e., the **-a** is used to distinguish species from genus and, in addition, to lend a measure of affection to the individual being referred to.

Negative affectivity can be seen as a factor behind the *fac.an.* ending with various semantic classes, e.g., pieces of junk, bruises, skin afflictions, dread diseases, vulgar names for body parts. See Appendix for examples.

Baby-talk is another probable source of facultative animacy, especially of nouns referring to objects around the house, body parts, and items of food and footwear. Informants state that the overextension of the **-a** ending in the masc. Acc. in children's speech is a subject of frequent parental correction. On the other hand, there is a tendency for adults themselves to initiate this animizing manner of talk around children or in quasi-imitation of children's speech in informal and home situations generally, cf. **otwórz dzioba!** 'open your beak', **daj pyska!** 'give me your kisser'. It should not be concluded from the foregoing, however, that there is anything excessively manneristic about using *fac.an.* Accusatives in Polish; nor is there any indication, on the basis of the present study, that facultative animacy is more a trait of women's or mothers' speech than of men's or fathers'.

Polish slang of various sorts is a fertile ground for the spawning of numerous *fac.an.* usages. It seems likely that many or most such nouns first enter the lexicon at the level of slang (see discussion of **dyp** 'cracker dip' below, 7). Most striking is the use of the Acc. sg. in **-a** with slang names for states of mind, e.g., **kac** 'hangover,' **bzik** 'hang-up,' **szmer** 'craze,' **fiół** 'mania,' etc.; dread diseases, e.g., **syf** 'syph,' **teżec** 'lockjaw,' **parch** 'mange';

afflictions of the skin, e.g., **wagier** 'blackhead,' **pryszcz** 'pimple,' **guz** 'bruise'; and vulgar names for body parts. The 1974 *Słownik gwary studenckiej* (dictionary of student slang) is replete with colorful expressions exhibiting facultative animacy, for example,

wystrygnąć na dudka 'make an ass of' (and, in roughly the same meaning, with varying degrees of vulgarity: **zrobić kogo w balona, kalafiora, grzyba, bączka, buca, capa, wała**)

kopsnąć szluga 'pass a fag, smoke' (and, in roughly the same meaning: **dać sznuga, cuga, sztacha, klina, knota, dyma**)

daj piąta (**graboszczaka**) 'give me five (i.e. your hand); let's shake!'

mieć boja 'be afraid' (and, in roughly the same meaning: **mieć huka, bojra, pierdziela, piergla, pietra, stracha**)

dać drapak (**nura, dyla**) 'take a powder'

mieć szmergla (**bigla**) 'be nuts'

napędzić komu stracha 'give a fright to'

zakładać komu haka 'get a hook into someone'

być na singla 'to go stag'

wciepnąć na ruszta 'gobble down' (literally, 'throw something on the grill')

and many more in a similar vein.

Besides its usual pejorative function in slang, the use of the Acc. in **-a** can have augmentative or intensifying force. For example, **on ma nosa** 'he has a nose' can mean 'he has an extraordinary nose,' either extraordinarily large or, usually, figuratively in the sense of being able to "sniff things out". In effect, with nouns like **nos** and **kosz** 'basket' (see earlier discussion), the **-a** ending becomes a virtual overt marker of figurative expression.

FACULTATIVE ANIMACY IN A BROADER STRUCTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE. The question of the origin and meaning of facultative animacy in Polish can be clarified by examining the Polish masculine gender system as a whole. One is struck by the rich subgenderal differentiation among Polish masculine nouns, contrasting with the almost total lack of such differentiation among feminine and neuter nouns. The primary instrument of subgenderal differentiation among masculine nouns is, as noted, the form taken by the Acc. case. For inanimate nouns, the Acc. equals the Nom. in both sg. and pl.; for animate nouns, the Acc. equals the Gen. in the sg. and the Nom. in the pl.; for virile nouns, the Acc., equals the Gen. in both sg. and pl. In other words, fundamental to the Polish system of masculine noun declension is a triadic gender hierarchy expressed syntactically by extending the Acc.=Gen. feature by half to animate nouns and in full to virile nouns.

Masculine noun differentiation does not end here. As is well known, hard-stem virile nouns take a special softening ending in the Nom. pl., cf. **student** 'student' pl. **studenci** vs **prezent** 'present' pl. **prezenty**. Titles and names of relations tend to take the honorific pl. ending **-owie** cf. **pan panowie** 'sir-sirs,' **ojciec ojcowie** 'father-fathers,' which, in addition, can be optionally extended to certain "honorable" professions, cf. **profesor profesorowie** 'professor-professors.' Potentially pejorative virile nouns used pejoratively typically lack the softening feature in the Nom. pl., cf. **Szwab** 'Swabian' or 'Kraut,' pl. **Szwabi** 'Swabians' or **Szwaby** 'Krauts.' In the sg., as noted, the class of inanimate nouns is split into those taking Gen. sg. in **-u** (in general, large and indefinite objects and nouns derived from verbs) and those taking Gen. sg. in **-a** (by and large, implements,

accoutrements, and articles of household use).

From this brief account, it is clear that the Polish masculine gender system is honeycombed with distinctions of intrinsic or acquired "status" of various sorts and abounding in morphological and morphosyntactic resources for displaying it. By "status" can be meant, depending on the specific noun and the extralinguistic context: animization, respect, affection, familiarity, contempt, dread, or some idiomatically determined figurative quality - to name the most common associations. Against such background, the phenomenon of facultative animacy among certain semantic classes of inanimate nouns appears less of an anomaly; indeed it seems to be an integral and consistent part of a general picture of masculine-noun status differentiation.

It is worth noting that historically the Slavic Acc.=Gen. feature, in addition to responding to syntactic pressure favoring the rise of a distinctive animate Acc. ending, was also a status differentiator. At first limited to pronouns and proper names, the feature expanded during historical times to include adult males, children, and then animals. The process in Polish lasted into the 18th century and even beyond; see Kucała 1978: 83-93 for details. In East Slavic, when the feature was extended to the pl., it encompassed first males, then females, and finally animals; see Borkovskij and Kuznecov 1963: 208-211. In this light the Polish tendency toward facultative animization and the use of the -a ending as a marker of status can be seen as the logical extension of a trend begun in Slavic well over a thousand years ago. As noted, Polish is not the only Slavic language to exhibit facultative animacy - the phenomenon occurs widely in Slovak and Ukrainian as well - but it is certainly the Polish language that has given freest reign to its development and exploitation.

MARKEDNESS AND THE -a:-u AND -a:-0 CONTRASTS.

Faced with a contrast between two endings, as in masc. Gen. sg. -u:-a and Acc. sg. -a:-0, one might be inclined to view behind such repartition some kind of simple privative opposition. One of the referees of this paper, for example, suggested that the -u ending appears to be "marked for the absence of animacy," while the -a ending is "unmarked for the absence of animacy," the proof being the slight expansiveness of -a at the expense of -u. Leaving aside the awkwardness of proposing that the content of a privative feature is the absence of a feature, this view is surely incorrect. The expansion of facultative animacy does not involve a major redistribution of the -a:-u Genitive contrast, but rather the extension of -a as an Accusative marker at the expense of -0. Historically, at least, -u has been the unmarked and radically expansive Gen. ending; -a is marked to the extent that it has resisted replacement by -u in certain not very well defined classes of nouns - classes linked not so much by the sharing of a single semantic feature as by the possession of a general "family relationship" in the Wittgensteinian sense (see earlier discussion). In short, it would be difficult to analyze the Gen. -a:-u contrast as privative sensu stricto; at most it is privative sensu laxo.

In the Accusative, one is, to be sure, faced with the expansion of the ending -a at the expense of -0, but this cannot be interpreted as a sign that -a is unmarked. Underlying the motivation of the expanding Acc. in -a is, as noted, precisely a desire to mark the Accusative in some way so that it will be distinct from the Nominative. In the overall case system, the Accusative is marked with respect to the Nominative, as is patient to agent. The conclusion to be drawn from the evidence of this paper is not that an unmarked Acc. ending in -a is expanding at the expense of a marked ending in -0, but that a shift in distribution of endings is

under way aimed at bringing surface marking more into conformity with functional-semantic markedness.

CONCLUSION. While certain types of Polish *fac.an.* nouns may have sprung from derailed Genitives or generalized Accusatives of classes consisting largely of animate names, the expansiveness of the class in modern Polish can only be understood in light of its status-differentiating expressivity. This expressivity may have depreciated with some classes where the -a ending is virtually obligatory, but even here, for example, with nouns like **papieros** 'cigarette,' this expressivity is not entirely extinct to the extent that speakers remain aware that there is something atypical about attaching an animate ending to a referentially inanimate noun.

From the discrepancy between the picture of facultative animacy in Polish dictionaries and the actual situation in the spoken language, one may conclude that this class has witnessed a rapid recent expansion. It is difficult to obtain an impression of the exact chronology due to the fact that facultative animacy is primarily a trait of the spoken language, hence liable to be overlooked by dictionaries, which rely almost entirely on written sources, conservative by nature. It is likewise difficult to say at present whether facultative animacy has reached the approximate limit of its expansion, to be followed by a period of consolidation within its present semantic range, or whether it will continue to be extended in the future to new semantic classes. The category is certainly able to coopt new members when the need arises, cf. the ad hoc American borrowing **dyp** 'cracker dip': **Zrobimy jakiegoś dypa** 'We'll make some kind of dip,' overheard among English teachers at the Bydgoszcz Pedagogical University. Examples like

this seem to pinpoint the entry of new *fac.an.* nouns into the vocabulary at the level of slang and jargon, whence the feature spreads to semantically cognate, more neutral terms, losing much of its affectivity in the process. This example is suggestive of the vitality and expansiveness of the *fac.an.* feature in contemporary Polish. One may reasonably expect this feature to continue to expand in the future, coopting new members and semantic classes and being further consolidated in old ones. Judging from the willingness of some respondents to facultatively animize certain nouns with standard Gen. sg. in **-u** (**kwiat**, **mecz**, **bilard**, etc.), the process of *fac.an.* expansion may be accompanied by a slight shifting in the distribution of the **-u** vs. **-a** Gen. ending. Should the ending **-a** ever become stabilized as the Acc. marker of most masculine nouns with Gen. sg. in **-a**, this development would be tantamount to the demise of animacy as a natural subgender in Polish, marking its definitive transition from a natural gender category, with membership based on a transparent extralinguistic feature, to a grammatical gender, where the natural criteria for membership are obliterated. It appears that processes similar to those which probably led to the Indo-European gender categories through the selective and originally expressive feminization or masculinization of sexless objects (if Brugman 1889 is correct) are still operant in present-day Polish.

APPENDIX: THE MOST IMPORTANT CLASSES OF FACULTATIVE ANIMATE NOUNS

Classes are illustrated with representative nouns, followed by the respective index of facultative animacy (the lower the index, the higher the facultative animacy). Classes and individual items are ranked from higher to lower, as determined by the survey. Only the 300 some nouns specifically examined on the survey are listed; many more examples, untested as to actual degree of facultative animacy, can be found in the works of Kucała and Dyduchowa, listed in the bibliography. Outside the survey were such classes of traditionally animate nouns as:

1. Names figuratively applied to people: **geniusz** 'genius,' **ideał** 'ideal,' **oryginał** 'an original,' **typ** 'type, character,' **szkielet** 'skeleton,' **sopran** 'soprano,' **skarb** 'treasure,' **grzyb** 'so-and so' (literally, 'mushroom') and so on.

2. Names for the dead: **umrzyk** 'dead man,' **nieboszczyk** 'the late, the deceased,' **umarły** 'deceased,' **wisielec** 'hanged man,' **trup** 'corpse,' **topielec** 'drowned person'.

3. Idols and objects of human shape: **bałwan** 'snowman,' **robot** 'robot,' **strach** 'scarecrow' (literally, 'fright'), **manekin** 'mannequin,' **chochoł** 'straw man,' and so on (but not: **posąg** 'statue').

4. Ghosts, monsters, mythical beings: **demon** 'demon,' **potwór** 'monster,' **amor** 'cupid,' **smok** 'dragon,' **upiór** 'phantom,' **krasnaludek** 'fairy,' etc.

5. Planets, stars, constellations, and geological features

named after animals, people, or mythical beings: **Saturn** 'Saturn,' **Syriusz** 'Sirius,' **Wodnik** 'Aquarius,' **Mnich** 'Monk' (a mountain peak), etc.

6. Works of literary, musical, cinematic etc. creativity named after the author; furs named after the animal: **Rubens** 'a (painting by) Rubens,' **Mozart** '(a piece by) Mozart,' **Polañski** 'a (film by) Polanski,' **lis** 'a fox (fur).'

A. Nouns with relatively strong facultative animacy

1. Dances 1.23¹⁶

walc 'waltz,' **menuet** 'minuet,' **polonez** 'polonaise,'
fokstrot 'foxtrot.'

2. Reified mental states, especially slang names 1.24

kac 'hangover,' **bzik** 'mania,' **pech** 'bad luck,' **strach**
'fear.'

3. Smacks, pinches, kisses 1.26

kopniak 'kick,' **klaps** 'slap,' **szczutek** 'pinch,' **całus** 'kiss.'

4. Automobile brands and models 1.30

fiat 'Fiat,' **trabant** 'Trabant,' **gokart** 'go-cart,' **jeep** 'jeep.'
Not: **samochód** 'automobile' 3.86.

5. Certain dramatic gestures, movements 1.36

sus 'leap,' **nur** 'dive,' **koziół** 'somersault,' **drapak** 'slip.'
Not: **galop** 'gallop,' **kłus** 'trot.'¹⁷ Weak: **piruet** 'pirouette,'
zygzak 'zig-zag.'

6. Cigarettes and cigarette brands 1.37

papieros 'cigarette,' **pet** 'cig, butt,' **skręt** 'roll-your-own,' **giewont** 'Giewont.' Surprisingly weak: **wawel** 'Wawel' 2.79; very weak: **niedopałek** 'butt' 3.41

7. Sports and games 1.47

ping-pong 'ping-pong,' **hokej** 'hockey,' **tenis** 'tennis,' **totalizator** 'lottery.'

8. Gaming terms, and card terms in particular 1.54

brydż 'bridge,' **poker** 'poker,' **rober** 'rubber,' **set** 'set,' **gol** 'goal,' **pik** 'spade,' **as** 'ace.'

9. Mushrooms 1.54

grzyb 'mushroom,' **rydz** 'agaric,' **prawdziwek** 'boletus.'

10. Pastries 1.61

naleśnik 'pancake,' **paćzek** 'doughnut,' **pierog** 'meat pie,' **rogalik** 'croissant,' **gofer** 'waffle.'

11. Pegs 1.65

klin 'wedge,' **ćwiek** 'hobnail,' **czop** 'plug.' Much weaker: **gwóźdź** 'nail' 2.72

12. Monetary units 1.68

dolar 'dollar,' **forint** 'forint.' Weaker: **złoty** 'zloty'¹⁸ 2.23;

surprisingly weak: **grosz** 'grosh' 3.3

13. Abrasions 1.78

siniak 'bruise,' **guz** 'bruise,' **siniec** 'black eye'; Weaker: **strupek** 'scab' 2.9.

14. Wine and beer types and slang terms 1.84

szampan 'champagne,' **burgund** 'burgundy,' **pilzner** 'Pilsener,' **bełt** 'rot-gut wine.' Weaker: **vermut** 'vermouth' 2.66; Not usually beers, e.g., not **żywiec** (beer brand).

15. Pieces of junk 1.85

grat 'junk furniture,' **gruchot** 'rattle-trap,'¹⁹ **klekot** 'rickety object.' Weaker: **rupieć** 'piece of junk' 2.85.

16. Certain, especially exotic, fruits and nuts 1.89

banan 'banana,' **grejpfрут** 'grapefruit,' **ananas** 'pineapple,' **kasztan** 'chestnut,' **melon** 'melon.' Weaker: **rodzynek** 'raisin' 2.33, **kokos** 'coconut' , 3.0, **migdał** 'almond' 3.2.

17. Candies 1.90

cukierek 'candy,' **baton** 'candy-bar,' **miodynek** 'honey-drop,' **lizak** 'sucker,' **miętowy** 'mint.' Not particularly: **toffiego** 'toffee,' despite Kucała 1976.²⁰

18. Brand-name articles and appliances²¹

parker 'Parker pen,' **zenit** 'Zenit camera,' **telefunken** 'Telefunken radio,' **koral** 'Coral TV.'

19. Space ships and artificial satellites

Discoverer, **Łunnik**, **Sputnik**; also: **satelita** 'satellite'; see note 14.

20. Miscellaneous

karniak 'penalty,' **figiel** 'trick,' **bąk** 'goof,' **latawiec** 'kite,' **judasz** 'peep-hole.'

B. Nouns with moderate facultative animacy

1. Measures of alcohol 2.02

kielich 'jigger,' **łyk** 'swallow,' **litr** 'liter (of alcohol), drink' (mixed) drink,' **klin** 'shot,' **strzemienny** 'one for the road.'

2. Non-leafy vegetables 2.11

pomidor 'tomato,' **ogórek** 'cucumber,' **ziemniak** 'potato,' **kalafior** 'cauliflower,' **burak** 'beet.'

3. Flowers 2.12

iryś 'iris,' **tulipan** 'tulip,' **goździk** 'carnation,' **blawatek** 'corn-flower.'

4. Marks on paper (a small class) 2.18

kleks 'blot,' **zawijas** 'flourish,' **kulfon** 'misshapen letter.'

5. Dread diseases, especially slang names 2.27²²

tryper 'clap,' **syf** 'syph,' **teżec** 'lockjaw.' Fairly weak: **parch** 'mange' 2.96, **tyfus** 'typhus' 3.63, **syfiliś** 'syphilis' 3.7. Very strong: **platfus** 'flat-foot' 1.46.

6. Aircraft models and types 2.43

mig 'Mig,' **bombowiec** 'bomber,' **śmigłowiec** 'jet.' Not: **helikopter** 'helicopter' 3.41.

7. Serial food items of various sorts 2.52

krokiet 'croquet,' **zraz** 'chop,' **serdelek** 'link sausage,' **sandwicz** 'sandwich.' Very high: **klops** 'meat ball' 1.46. Low: **kotlet** 'cutlet' 3.23, **sznyceł** 'snitzel' 3.2, **omlet** 'omelet' 3.76.

8. Skin afflictions 2.73

pryszcz 'pimple,' **wągiel** 'blackhead,' **pieg** 'freckle,'

pieprzyk 'mole.'

9. Footwear 2.88

but 'shoe,' **papuć** 'slipper,' **kalosz** 'galosh,' **drewniak** 'clog,' **bucior** 'clod-hopper,' **sandał** 'sandal.'

10. Teeth, hair, nose:

ryj 'snout' 1.83, **mleczał** 'milk tooth' 1.66, **trzonowy** 'molar' 2.4, **wał** 'mustache' 1.86, **pejs** 'side curl' 3.13, **nochal** 'shnoz' 2.8, **włosek** 'hair-dim.' 2.82.

11. Various concrete nouns ending in **-ak**, **-ec**:

składak 'folding bicycle' 2.24, **straszak** 'cap-pistol' 2.14, **siwak** 'gray earthenware pot' 2.86, **korkowiec** 'pop-gun' 2.86, **brukowiec** 'trashy novel' 2.34, **gościniec** 'coming-home present' 3.07.

12. Miscellaneous

samograj 'sure-fire hit' 2.69, **jasiek** 'throw pillow' 2.53, **smoczek** 'baby's pacifier' 2.69, **sopel** 'icicle' 3.14, **cybuch** 'pipe-stem' 2.75, **zbuk** 'bad egg' 2.07, **śmierdziuch** 'smelly cheese' 2.00.

C. Nouns with relatively weak facultative animacy
(but with an index of 3.5 or lower)

1. Certain types of ships 2.98

żaglowiec 'sailing ship,' **torpedowiec** 'torpedo boat,' **ścigacz** 'pursuit boat.' But: **kajak** 'kayak' 3.93.

2. Types of buildings 3.21

kolos 'giant building' **biurowiec** 'office building,'

klatkowiec 'multi-entrance apartment building.'

3. Plant parts 3.22

liść 'leaf,' **pączek** 'bud,' **badyl** 'stalk,' **kolec** 'thorn.'

4. Trees and shrubs 3.32

cyprys 'cypress,' **figowiec** 'fig tree,' **pigwowiec** 'quince.'

Relatively low: **jawor** 'sycamore' 3.5, **świerk** 'spruce' 3.6.

5. Knives 3.32

kozik 'pocket knife,' **majcher** 'shiv,' **knyp** 'paring knife.'

Very weak: **nóż** 'knife' 3.62.

6. Tools 3.42

gładzik 'smoothing plane,' **wkrętak** 'screw-driver,'
cyrkiel 'compass.'

7. Jewelry, precious stones 3.44

guzik 'button,' **brelok** 'fob,' **kolczyk** 'ear-drop,' **koralek**
'necklace.' Especially high: **klips** 'earring' 2.62.

8. Sticks (a wide range of facultative animacy exhibited)

kij 'stick' 2.68, **patyk** 'little stick' 3.38, **drąg** 'rod' 3.26; not
słup 'column' 3.82.

9. Miscellaneous

klocek 'block' 3.14, **knot** 'wick' 3.24, **wrak** 3.38,
ogryzek 'apple core' 3.14, **dreszczowiec** 'thriller' 3.21.

NOTES

1 Virile nouns refer to male or mixed male and female personal groups. A similar tendency to distinguish personal nouns in the pl. can be found in Sorbian and Ukrainian.

2 By 'subgender' is meant a formally distinguishable subclass of a main gender. The subgender 'animate' qualifies as a subgender in that animate nouns are morphologically distinguished (by the feature Acc.=Gen.) from other masculine nouns in certain syntactic constructions (i.e., constructions requiring the Acc. sg.).

3 Rather striking exceptions to the general rule are the two nouns **wól wołu** 'ox' and **bawół bawołu** 'buffalo.'

4 In late Common Slavic the ending **-u** was limited to fewer than a dozen historical **u**-stems.

5 Besides Polish, facultative animacy is exhibited, to a lesser extent, in Ukrainian, Slovak, and colloquial Czech.

6 The shift in facultative animate status of a noun with Gen. sg. in **-u** is invariably accompanied by the replacement of Gen. **-u** by **-a**. In case facultative animization is accompanied by a shift in meaning, the new *fac. an.* noun with Gen./Acc. in **-a** will coexist with the old word with Acc. in **-o** and Gen. in **-u** cf. **sport -u** 'sport' vs. **sport -a** 'Sport (cigarette).'

7 If there is any "folk wisdom" on the origin of facultative animacy in Polish, this study failed to uncover it. Speakers are invariably at a loss to explain why **-a** is used as an Acc. ending with

a given *fac.an.* noun; they are reluctant even to hazard a guess. Although the *-a* ending is perceived to be a basically animate marker, speakers are typically extremely reluctant to see animizing motives behind Acc., forms like **papierosa** 'cigarette,' **kleksa** 'blot,' **cukierka** 'candy,' and so on. Grammarians are inclined to view such usages as plain mistakes, if no longer synchronically, then at least historically (see discussion to follow).

8 I would like to express my profound gratitude to Maria Sledzińska of the Bydgoszcz Pedagogical University, without whose painstaking assistance in compiling and distributing the questionnaire the present study would have been impossible. I rely on Sledzińska's intuitive assessments in this paper in places too numerous to mention. I would also like to thank Barbara Nykiel-Herbert for reading a version of this paper and suggesting various changes and improvements. Nykiel in particular helped me see the importance of collocational frequency as a factor in the spread of facultative animacy from one noun to another (see below, this section).

9 The two formal classes found to have relevance to facultative animacy are nouns in *-ak* and in *-ec*; see discussion below.

10 Because of social realities in Poland, most of these future elementary and secondary school teachers were female, a factor that was not controlled on the survey. However, nothing I encountered during the course of this study indicated that *fac.an.* use is sex-differentiated.

11 A more usual verb for **kulfon** and **przecinek** would have been **postawić** 'place,' but it is doubtful whether a change in verb would have affected the results substantially in these two instances. The ability of **kulfon** to take *fac.an.* *-a* after the generalized verb

zrobić 'make' is a good indication of its strong *fac.an.* position.

12 A striking tendency within Polish is for certain specific semantic groups to become associated with a particular gender, presumably in dependence on the gender of the generic term. Thus the fact that items of footwear are masculine in gender may depend to a degree on the fact that **but** 'shoe' is masculine.

13 One should not discount the possibility of dialectal divergence here. Kucała's study focussed on speakers from southeastern Poland; the present study surveyed usage among speakers predominantly from the northwest. According to Kucała 1978, facultative animacy is much more widely extended in certain regional dialects than in the literary language.

14 For animate nouns, the Acc. sg. is distinct from the Gen. sg. only for those nouns following the declensional type with Nom. sg. in **-a**, cf. **ten mężczyzna** 'that man,' Acc. **tego mężczyznę**, Gen. **tego mężczyzny**. The only *fac.an.* noun of this type uncovered by this study is **satelita** 'satellite.'

15 The higher *fac.an.* standing is probably associated with the marked member of the pair, which is not always the formally marked member. Sometimes the regular form may serve as augmentative to the stylistically neutral formal diminutive.

16 In order to obtain an index of approximate *fac.an.* strength, all nouns of a group falling within half a point of one another were averaged. So many variables could not be systematically controlled in the survey that these indexes should be viewed as purely provisional and suggestive.

17 Expressions such as **iść gęsiego** 'go single file,' **iść**

galopa 'go at a galop,' **jechać kłusa** 'ride at a trot,' and so on - i.e. the expressions that excited the interest of Grappin - do not properly belong under the heading of facultative animacy. These are frozen expressions, left over from the defunct Genitive of manner.

18 Masculine substantival adjectives in -y may exhibit facultative animacy by taking the Acc.=Gen. sg. ending -ego. Cf. also **strziemienny** under B.1. below.

19 Interestingly, the *fac.an.* nouns **gruchot** and **klekot** are derived from onomatopoeitic nouns with Gen. sg. in -u.

20 The word **toffi** was the only example discovered of an indeclinable facultative animate noun; cf. **Daj mi tego toffi** 'give me that toffee.'

21 Since the placement of brand names among strong *fac.an.* nouns is assured by all sources and respondents, this class was not specifically covered on the questionnaire.

22 The archetypical dread disease, cancer (**rak**), has virtually obligatory facultative animacy, doubtless because of the primary meaning 'crab.' Conceivably this noun could have provided a model for the other *fac.an.* nouns naming diseases.

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