CZECH LANGUAGE CORNER

Speaker familiarity with nějaký is not presupposed, but neither is it ruled out (as in the "friend in Prague" example above). Like English some with animates and inherent definites ("some [sort of] contraption; 'some guy over there; 'some Jack Williams is here"), nějaký may carry a subjective speaker assessment about either the discrete boundaries of the NP in space or time or about his own relationship to the NP: nějaký Novák 'some Novák (I don't know [possibly: don't like?] him," korá se nějaký setkáši 'some kind of meeting [I don't know what it's all about] is going on.' Systematic presentation of the facts of usage of this very important quantifier is long overdue.

Back matter for a Czech reader

Laura A. Janda
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

The "back matter" (i.e., grammatical reference materials) for the proposed Czech reader are to be derived from a Czech grammar that Charles Townsend and I have been commissioned to write for LINCOM EUROPA. When I first dove into this task, I thought it should be fairly straightforward, after all, Czech is an extremely well-documented language, so I thought (naively) that this would be more a job of compiling and editing than of actual researching and writing. However, on close analysis the explanations cited in standard grammars of Czech for many common phenomena are frequently non-existent, incomplete, contradictory, or even just plain wrong. Presenting a truthful, concise grammar that is reasonably comprehensive yet fits within the desired format of 100 pages or less turns out to be no mean task. There isn't even general agreement on what patterns are recognized as the main ones and where the exceptions begin.

In just about any and every text on Czech you find the following list of diphthongs: native ou, foreign au, eu. Charlie countered: what about diphthongs ending in j? Of course they are there too, and of course their status is somewhat different (j is a full-fledged phoneme; y is not), but surely they are there — as far as I can make out, there are six diphthongs of this description: aj, ij, ej, aj, nj, and uj. How did we all get away with leaving these diphthongs out of the picture all these years?

Or take stress. That should be a real 'no-brainer,' right? We all tell our students that there is a light non-phonemic stress on the first syllable. But the first syllable of what? Most of us spend considerable time trying to initiate students into the mysteries of Czech enclitics, but once we've done auxiliaries, reflexives, and pronouns, do we go on to warn them that many prepositional phrases, dummy to, and adverbs also behave as stressless enclitics? And, worse yet, how many of us tell them about all those proclitics in the language? Wouldn't that be too embarrassing, after we told them to stress the first syllable, to then have to admit that there are stressless proclitics? Here is a model that I've pieced together showing what I think is the maximal projection of a phonological word and where it gets its stress:

{ a-type stressless word +
  b-type stressless word receiving stress +
  stress-bearing word, stressed on first syllable in absence of b +
  c-type stressless enclitics }

a = most conjunctions, pan, some adverbs, possessives, všechen, ten are stressless proclitics
b = monosyllabic prepositions and the pre-posed negative particle ne- do not bear their own stress, but receive the stress of the phonological word when present
c = stressless enclitics, in this order: auxiliary forms + si or sv + dative short form pronouns + accusative short form pronouns + some prepositional phrases, adverbs, to
an example: a + b + stress-bearing word + c
  a = nedala
  b = jsí mu ho
But I’m still wondering what happens when an enclitic gets stranded after a modifying clause, like in a sentence of the type: *Ten článek o Havlové nově ženě, který jsi mi vystřihli z novin, jsem už přečetla.* I’m assuming *jssem* and *už* are stressless, but are they enclitic to *z novin* or proclitic to *přečetla*? Or try this one: *V prvních letech našeho manželství, jsem se snadí rozumět všemu, co moje žena říkala. Both *jssem* se and co moje sound proclitic to me...* 

And then of course those enclitics are not always where they are supposed to be, are they? The following examples were culled from a ten-page excerpt from Karel Čapek’s *Válka s mloky*:

> *Ale člověk nevydrží jenom se divat*  
> *Nechte to, já už jí přivážu.*  
> *“Se nedívím,” vycelil starý pán.*  
> *Tak já mu pošlú doktoru.*

We can’t just ignore this phenomenon, but it’s hard to find an appropriate way to address it either.

Let’s move on to morphology. How many noun paradigms are there? Sova (1963) lists ten main paradigms in his table of declensions, noting, however, that two neuter types (*kuře* and *náměstí*) have been left out to simplify matters. Heim (1982) lists twelve main paradigms, but they are not the same twelve that Sova identifies; Heim recognizes the *hrdina* type, but omits the *kuře* type. Šašková-Pierce (1995) presents 8 main paradigms. At the opposite extreme, the morphological tables in the back of the 1973 two-volume *česko-ruský slovník* identify no fewer than 263 nominal paradigms. So how many are there, and which are important? We will suggest the following system of 14 paradigms, which is most similar to that given Šmilauer’s traditional *Nauka o českém jazyku* (1972):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Inanimate</th>
<th>Animative</th>
<th>Virile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rozbor</td>
<td>koš</td>
<td>bratr</td>
<td>malíř</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>ending in a V</th>
<th>ending in a C</th>
<th>Neuter</th>
<th>regular</th>
<th>exceptional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
<td>Gsg -e</td>
<td>Gsg -i</td>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moucha</td>
<td>práce</td>
<td>laň</td>
<td>vlast</td>
<td>město</td>
<td>letiště</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This system highlights important generalizations, such as animacy and hard/soft correspondences, and serves as a point of departure for discussion of variations in endings.

If we move on to verbs, we see a similar problem, though not quite as vast. How many paradigms are there? We will propose a system that parallels the hard/soft pairings in the nominal system, with the superordinate parameter of long vs. short vowel desinences for the 1sg – 2pl forms, yielding four types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>short</th>
<th>long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg</td>
<td>-eš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg</td>
<td>-ě</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>-eme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>-ete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>-ou</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This system has the advantage of grouping together paradigms that truly seem to be associated. In the case of the paradigms with short vowel desinences, the distinction between hard and soft is being effaced in the spoken language. The issue of the 3pl ending for the long-soft paradigm will need to be addressed, but as Charlie has pointed out in other publications, this is indeed just one paradigm, and the parallel to the long-hard -aji ending makes the motive for the proliferation of -eji transparent. Another advantage of this system of conjugations is that it can dovetail nicely with a one-stem treatment of the verbal system which will give structure to all other aspects of conjugation.

Of course I will want to devote considerable space to (hopefully) coherent accounts of case meaning and usage, and I'll devote the rest of this paper to an outline of the semantics and syntax of the genitive as an illustration.

**GENITIVE: A SOURCE** acts as an abstract overall schema for the genitive, variously elaborated by syntactic and lexical contexts. It should be stressed that the presentation of this diagram does not in any way suggest that speakers have this particular internal representation or that they think in pictograms, or the like. Its role is suggestive rather than definitional. It suggests that speakers have an abstract mental representation of the genitive, that the genitive entity (represented as a big circle marked with a G) is somehow cognitively prior to or more salient than (with priority and salience metaphorically implied by relative size) another entity (the little circle), and that this secondary item exists or maneuvers in or is in the immediate proximity of the genitive. Thus the genitive serves as a sort of mental address (locus, source, or destination) for something else. The meaning of this abstract schema is grounded in the universal human experiences of containers (metaphorically mapping onto the genitive entity the role of the body as a container and of other physical containers), movement along a path, and relative position.

All uses of the genitive ultimately derive from and make reference to this abstract schema. Each specific use, however, focuses on only some portions of the overall schema, which receive a more concrete interpretation. Thus we have a network of specific realizations related to each other and to the abstract schema.

**GENITIVE: A SOURCE**

(In this use, something is being removed from the genitive entity. This meaning of the genitive is always mediated by prepositions or genitive-governing verbs.)

prepositions: z, s, od

verbs:

- **bát se**  be afraid of  lekat se  be frightened by
- **obávat se**  be afraid of  děsit se  be terrified of
- **hroziť se**  be horrified at  štímit se  shun, abhor
- **slyžet se**  be ashamed of  ostýchat se  be ashamed/shy of
- **litovat**  regret  nabadat se  get sick & tired of
- **vyvarovat se**  escape  zdržet se  refrain from
- **vzdát se**  give up  zříci se  renounce
- **pustít se**  let go of  zbatí se  get rid of
- **zanechat**  relinquish  pozbyť  lose

**GENITIVE: A WHOLE**

(Think of this as the ’before’ picture for **GENITIVE: A SOURCE**. It has two submeanings: belonging and quantification.)
belonging
possession - dům mého strýce
part-whole - přízemí naší budovy
metaphoric part-whole - tajemství české mluvnice
G as a set - členové naší organizace
G as an abstract quality - člověk nesmírného bohatství

relations based on canonical event structure
agent experience patient

(The canonical event structure sets up 'belonging' relationships between pairs of its components.)
experience belongs to agent - strach dětí, biedniti dívky
patient belongs to agent - omyl našeho prezidenta
agent belongs to experience - člověk akce
patient belongs to experience - výsledek jednání
agent belongs to patient - spisovatel dětských románů
experience belongs to patient - zíráta dokladů
ambiguous examples - návštěva lety, cvičení hasičů, krádež dětí

quantification
with quantifier - počet chyb
large amounts
- tam bylo holek, najist se (na-se verbs + pře-se verbs), na-verbs (napět koláčů), verbs with si involving
drinking alcohol - lízout si, přihnout si
small amounts - chleba, syra
verbs of adding - dodat, přidat

GENITIVE: A REFERENCE

(Think of this as a midpoint in the GENITIVE: A SOURCE trajectory. This meaning is mediated by prepositions.)
prepositions - u, vedle, kolem, okolo, blízko, nedaleko, za, bez, kromě
negation (archaic) - není divu, nemohli dechu popadnout

GENITIVE: A TARGET

(Think of this as the GENITIVE: A SOURCE trajectory run in reverse; this meaning is likewise mediated by prepositions and verbs.)
preposition - do
verbs -- do- (se) (get there by Xing) verbs

dosáhnout
zmocnit se
chytit se
všimnout si
ptát se
zúčastnit se
achieve
seize possession of
grab hold of
notice
ask
participate in

dobýt
chopit se
dotknout se
dbát
zastat se
ujmout se
obtain
seize
touch
pay heed
stand up for
take up (doing X)