

Homme(s), personne(s), gens and their Bulgarian equivalents : *lexicographical data and linguistic analysis*

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В настоящей статье французские общие названия лиц *homme(s)*, *personne(s)* и *gens* сопоставляются с их болгарскими эквивалентами *човек*, *лице*, *души* и *хора*. Исследование основано на словарных данных, которые подвергнуты анализу в рамках референциальной семантики. Вводится понятие «общие имена лиц» и рассматриваются формы единственного и множественного числа существительных *homme* и *personne* и их болгарских соответствий. Существительное *gens*, относящееся к типу *pluralia tantum*, сопоставляется с *personnes*, что позволяет уточнить, в каком соотношении находятся эти номинации с болгарскими лексемами *хора* и *души*.

The objective of this article is to compare the French human general nouns *homme(s)*, *personne(s)*, *gens* and their Bulgarian equivalents *човек*, *лице*, *души*, *хора*. We explore data from monolingual and bilingual dictionaries that we analyze in the framework of referential semantics. We show that, despite their underspecified meaning, the lexemes in the two languages often have different semantic and grammatical properties, which explains the complex interrelations they contract.

Keywords: human general nouns, French, Bulgarian, translation, dictionary, synonymy, *plurale tantum*.

I. Introduction^{1, 2}

This research is conducted in the framework of the international project *NHUMA* (Linguistic description of Human Nouns in various languages)

¹ This paper is based on a communication presented at The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society, held at the University of Toronto (Canada), September 23–25, 2016.

² We would like to thank Chris Rauseo for reviewing and proofreading our article. We would like to thank Chris Rauseo for reviewing and proofreading our article. We are also very grateful to the two anonymous reviewers for their appropriate and constructive suggestions.

coordinated by C. Schnedecker (Strasbourg) & W. Mihatsch (Tübingen). We focus here on three very frequent French Human General Nouns (*homme*, *personne*, *gens*) and the corresponding Bulgarian lexemes (*човек*, *лице*, *души*, *хора*)³. We explore data from monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in the light of the referential semantics approach adopted by the members of the project *NHUMA*.

We first define the concept of Human General Noun; then we study separately *homme* and *personne*. As for *gens*, its properties are revealed by the comparison with the plural form of *personne*.

II. The concept of “Human General Noun” (HGN)

Human General Nouns (HGN) are at the top of the hierarchy ‘human being’ which is explained by their (very) poor meaning (cf. Mihatsch 2015a, Venkova 1997). To this category belong French Nouns such as *homme*, *personne*, *humain*, *être humain*, *individu*, *gens*; as for Bulgarian, we find mainly *човек*, *лице*, *човешко същество*, *индивид*, *хора*, *души*. Generally, they denote adult human beings and most of them do not encode sex. They are, on the whole, stylistically neutral, although some of them can have uses attached to a specialized domain (for ex. *individu* in philosophy; *лице* in law/administration).

Their very general meaning has, among others, the three following consequences:

- They are considered as (near) synonyms by dictionaries:

<French>

Gens: *personnes* en nombre indéterminé

Personne: *individu* de l’espèce humaine, sans distinction de sexe

Individu : être, *personne* (TLFi, cited by Cappeau & Schnedecker⁴ 2014)

<Bulgarian>

Хора : *човеци*, люде

Лице : Отделен *човек*, личност

Индивид : Отделен *човек*, личност (Bulg. monolingual dictionary, 2012)

- They can be interchangeable (in certain contexts) :

(1) Je ne connais pas bien *les gens/les personnes* du quartier. (CP/SC 2015)
 ‘I don’t know the local people’

³ For other corresponding lexemes or translations (based on corpus data) cf. Mostrov & Aleksandrova (in press) and for ‘zero’ translations cf. Aleksandrova & Mostrov (in press).

⁴ Henceforth CP/SC.

(2) Колко хора / човека⁵ / души имаше на събранието?
'How many people attended the meeting?'

– Some of them have grammaticalized meanings of pronouns:

(3) Je n'ai vu *personne*. (corresponds to the negative pronoun *никого* in Bulgarian)
'I didn't see anybody'

(4) *Човек* не може никога да помисли за всичко. (corresponds to the indefinite pronoun *он* in French)
'You/one can't think of everything'

III. *Homme, personne, gens* and their Bulgarian equivalents

1. *Homme(s)*

In French, *homme* is ambiguous: it can refer, in its general meaning, to man as a 'race'⁶ – without male/female differentiation (5), or to a male representative of human beings (6):

(5) L'*homme* des cavernes
'cave man'

(6) Approche si tu es un *homme*!
'Come on if you are man enough!'⁷

In Bulgarian the situation is different, because there is a specific lexeme for the male representative: *мъж*, and one can predict that *човек* would correspond to the 'general meaning' of *homme*. The French examples above are, in fact, translated respectively by *човек* and *мъж* :

(7) Пещерен *човек* (=5)

(8) Ела, ако си *мъж*! (=6)

If we look at the French-Bulgarian dictionary (Sofia, 2002), we have, without surprise, two homonyms *homme* translated respectively by *човек* and *мъж*. Let's have a look at some of the translated collocations in each case:

⁵ An anonymous reviewer points out that this countable plural form of *човек* is absent from the *Official orthographic dictionary of the Bulgarian language* (Sofia, 2012). This is probably due to the existence of *души*, which is supposed to have the same linguistic properties. Nevertheless, *човека* (pl.) is present in the previous edition of the dictionary (Sofia, 2002). It would be interesting to see if there are some differences between these two "true synonyms".

⁶ mainly in generic contexts

⁷ The English translations are from the *Robert & Collins* dictionary, Paris, 2003.

HOMME 1: *човек*

(A) “human being in general”

Homme primitif: първобитен човек ‘early man’

Homme des cavernes: пещерен човек ‘cave man’

(B) “human qualities”

Homme d’action: човек на действието ‘man of action’

Homme de bien: порядъчен/добър човек ‘good man’

Homme d’esprit: духовит човек ‘man of wit’

(C) “social occupations”

Homme d’affaires: бизнесмен ‘businessman’

Homme de loi: юрист ‘man of law, lawyer’

Homme de guerre: военен ‘warrior, soldier’

HOMME 2: *мъж*

Homme viril: мъжествен мъж ‘virile man’

Vêtements d’homme: мъжки дрехи ‘menswear’

Parler d’homme à homme: говоря като мъж с мъж ‘to speak man to man’

Ne pleure pas, sois un homme!: Не плачи, бъди мъж! ‘Don’t cry, be a man!’

If we look now at the article *homme* in *Le Petit Robert* (2009), we have two main meanings, corresponding to “human being” (in general) and “male human being”. What is noticeable is that the expressions in (B) and (C) above (*HOMME 1*) are clearly attached to the meaning “MALE human being” in this dictionary. This suggests that (i) if *човек* in the Bulgarian translations (in B because in C the expressions are translated by specific lexemes) remains a HGN, i.e. without sex differentiation, it does not (fully) correspond to the French lexeme; or (ii) *човек* has the same polysemy as *homme* and can mean ‘a male human being’.

We think that the first hypothesis is perhaps the right one, because, for example, *добър човек* ‘a good man’ (attached to B) can occupy a predicative position when the subject is an NP denoting a female human being. For instance, in Google we found 8370 occurrences for *Тя беше добър човек* ‘She was a good person’ and surprisingly less for *Той беше добър човек* ‘He was a good person’ (4960 occurrences). As for French, we found 313 000 occurrences for *Il était un homme de bien* (il=he) and 0 for **Elle était un homme de bien* (elle=she). This means that the Bulgarian translations in (B) correspond lexically rather to the French HGN *personne*, non-specified for sex⁸, or to the indefinite pronoun *quelqu’un* ‘someone’ (*Elle était une personne / quelqu’un de bien*).

⁸ We also noticed that in the Bulgarian monolingual dictionary (2012), *добър човек* is attached to the general meaning (- sex) of *човек*.

As for expressions in (C), the situation is rather the same, the difference is that specific nouns are chosen as Bulgarian equivalents (we can predict that *човек* is “incorporated” in these nouns); A man or a woman can be *юрист* ‘lawyer’, *бизнесмен* ‘businessman’. Perhaps *военен* ‘warrior’ is an exception because of the predominance of men in the army. It is interesting to notice that the Bulgarian monolingual dictionary (2012) gives similar expressions of ‘social position’ with *човек* (*човек на властта* ‘high official’, *човек на изкуството* ‘artist’) that appear in a meaning defined by *лице* ‘person’ (HGN that does not encode sex).

Does all this mean that *човек* in Bulgarian is always non-specified for sex? The answer is negative, if we look at the Bulgarian monolingual dictionary (2012) where we find a meaning defined by *възрастен мъж* ‘adult man’, and an example that follows:

(9) *Дохожда един човек и пита за тебе* ‘A man came and asked for you’

It seems that when *човек* is in a referential use (for example in subject position with a specific reading: 10), it denotes a male human being, in contrast to the predicative position (11) where it has the general meaning:

(10) *Един много любезен човек ми помогна да паркирам. Освен това беше и привлекателен мъж / ??Освен това беше и привлекателна дама.*

‘A very polite man helped me to park my car. Moreover, he was an attractive man / ??she was an attractive woman’

(11) *Тази служителка / този служител се оказа много любезен човек.*

‘This employee (f/m) turned out to be a very polite person’

If we look now at the French expressions where *homme* is translated by *мъж* (*НОММЕ* 2), we notice that almost all of them emphasize the masculine facet of a male human being, in other words the stereotype of the “stronger” sex (men don’t cry, they are virile, speak to each other directly...). This leads to the conclusion that even though *човек* and *мъж* can both denote a male human being, the first one remains more general: it can neither replace *мъж* in the expressions in question, nor be coordinated with *жена* ‘woman’:

(12) **Дойдоха един човек и една жена да питат за тебе* ‘A man and a woman came and asked for you’

As for plural, we find the same distinction between the ‘general’ meaning and the ‘male human being’ one. The HGN *hommes*, always with the definite article which has a generic reading (*les hommes*), is (in most cases) translated by the Bulgarian *plurale tantum хора* ‘people’ and enters, among others, in contexts where it is a term of biological taxonomy (*les hommes primitifs: първобитните хора* ‘early men’) or denotes (all) the members of humanity,

sometimes opposed to gods (*les dieux et les hommes*: *божествата и хората* ‘gods and men’). When the ‘masculine’ reading is activated, the Bulgarian equivalent is almost always *мъже* (*être attiré par les hommes*: *привлечен съм от мъже* ‘to be attracted by men’). What is remarkable however is that the two morphological plural forms of *човек* (*човеци*: uncountable and *човека*: countable) denote human beings without ‘sex’ distinction⁹, which means that the polysemy of *човек*, contrary to *homme*, is only pertinent in the singular.

To summarize, the polysemy of *homme* is covered by two Bulgarian lexemes: *човек* and *мъж*, but the first one can sometimes enter in the field of ‘homme: male.’ This could be explained simultaneously by the etymology of *човек* (according to some hypotheses, cf. Trubachev 1977¹⁰, *чело* ‘top, superior quality’ and *век* ‘force’) and by the privileged social status of the male human being in the history of mankind.

2. *Personne(s)*

The French noun *personne* ‘person’ is very frequent: as a HGN, it has a large spectrum of uses (both in the singular and the plural) and has the advantage, contrary to *homme*, not to encode sex at all (even though morphologically it is +fem). Because the uses of *homme* HGN are very limited (only generic contexts), *personne* fills this gap, mainly in predicative position (13) or in a specific reading (14):

- (13) *Ma mère est une personne/*un homme extraordinaire.*
 ‘My mother is an extraordinary person/*man.’
- (14) *Hier une personne inconnue/*un homme inconnu m’a abordé dans la rue. On m’a dit plus tard que c’était la femme du maire.*
 ‘Yesterday an unknown person/*man came up to me. Later I was told that this was the mayor’s wife.’

Let’s see how *personne* is translated by the French-Bulgarian dictionary (2002)¹¹:

PERSONNE: *лице* ‘person’, *личност* ‘personality, character’, *човек* ‘man’

(A) “person in general”

Une personne: един човек ‘a/one person’

Quelques personnes: няколко души ‘some persons’

⁹ With the specification that if *човека* is preceded by numerals from 2 to 6 which have a special masculine form ending *-(и)ма*, at least one of the referents has to be male: *В стаята влязоха трима човека: един мъж и две жени* ‘In the room entered three persons: one man and two women’ (Stoyanov, 1983: 183 [vol. 2]) (but see note 5).

¹⁰ We would like to thank Tatiana Mostrova for providing us with this information.

¹¹ We do not take into account the negative pronoun which corresponds to *no one, nobody*.

Groupe de personnes: група хора ‘group of persons’
Grandes personnes: големите, възрастните ‘adults/grown-ups’
Il est venu avec cette personne: той дойде с това лице ‘he came with this person’
Personne âgée: възрастен човек ‘elderly person’
Par personne: на човек ‘per person’

(B) “personality”, “one’s body”

Être content de sa personne: доволен съм от собствената си особа ‘to be pleased with oneself’

Je m’adresse à la personne: обръщам се към човека (не към служебното лице) ‘I’m speaking to the person (not to the official)’

Soigner sa personne: грижа се за себе си ‘take care of oneself’

Être bien de sa personne изглеждам добре физически ‘to be good-looking’

(expr) *En personne*: лично ‘personally’ (*Il est venu en personne*: Той дойде лично ‘He came in person’)

(C) “legal term”

Personne civile, morale: юридическо лице ‘legal entity’

Personne à la charge: лице имащо право на издръжка ‘dependent’

Erreur sur la personne: заблуда по отношение на субекта ‘mistaken identity’

Identité d’une personne: самоличност ‘person’s identity’

(D) “grammar term”

Parler à la troisième personne: говоря в трето лице ‘talk in the third person’

Without going into details, the Bulgarian translations show roughly that *човек* corresponds to the general meaning of *personne* (examples in A, singular), the more “neutral”, and for the specialized meanings – in the domain of law (C) and grammar (D), *лице* (literally ‘face’) is the corresponding term. As for (B), different translation strategies are adopted because this particular meaning has no clear correspondence in Bulgarian (except *личност*, *особа* ‘personality’ for the ‘spiritual’ facet of the human being, but also *човек*).

The dictionary gives *лице* as a first Bulgarian equivalent. There are two reasons for this: (i) as *personne*, *лице* does not encode sex and (ii) *лице* is (almost) always translated by *personne*. We notice that *човек* comes in the third position, probably because it corresponds strictly speaking to *homme* (I).

In the following we will analyze separately the singular and the plural forms of *personne* and their Bulgarian equivalents. Moreover, *personneS* will be compared to the French plurale tantum *gens*.

2.1. *Personne* (sg)

- Specialized meanings

As the dictionary shows, the specialized meanings of *personne* (law, administration / grammar) correspond to *лице*. Its (=лице) uses in “common language” are very restricted: for example, it can refer to an unknown person (15) or to a person that is not appreciated (16):

- (15) *Търси те едно непознато лице* ‘An unknown person is searching for you’
(16) *Той дойде с това лице* ‘He came with this person’ (Bulg. monolingual dictionary, op. cit.)

Personne and *лице* have another common property (revealed for French by CS/PC 2014, 2015), which is their use as hypernyms in definitions:

Ingénieur: personne qui a reçu une formation scientifique...
Инженер: лице с висше техническо образование...

- Meanings in current language

CS/PC (2014) showed that *personne* occurs very often in common contexts (like novels) where it is modified “freely” by (evaluative) adjectives/relatives describing one’s character/behavior. Furthermore, the NP *person* + *modifier* is in most cases in a predicative position:

- (17) (...) *C’était une personne affable, quoique fantaisiste* (CS/PC 2014)
‘He/she was an affable person, although eccentric’

In this use, the Bulgarian HGN *лице* is excluded and other lexemes, as *човек* or *личност* ‘personality’ have to be chosen. *Човек* is fully appropriate here because, as we have seen, in the predicative position it does not refer to a male human being. *Личност* seems more restricted (?*учтив* *личност*), perhaps because of its philosophical / psychological domains of use (the Bulg. monolingual dictionary gives, among others, the expression *свобода на личността* ‘freedom of the individual’, where *личност* corresponds to *individu*).

For Mihatsch (2015b), *personne* in contexts like (17) functions simply as a “support for a modification” and is not stressed. It can serve, with the modifier, to create *ad hoc* categories¹², and we add that it is very useful when we need to create NPs denoting humans who have a given quality, in the case of adjectives that cannot function as nouns:

¹² But also established ones as *personne âgée*, translated by *възрастен човек*.

(18) *N'essayez pas d'expliquer à une **personne** stupide / *un stupide les règles de conduite.*

*Не се опитвайте да обясните на един глупав *(**човек**) как трябва да се държи.*

'Don't try to explain to a stupid *(person) how to behave'

In cases where we have a nominalized adjective, the HGN can be omitted (see for instance in (A) above the translation of *grandes personnes* 'adults' by *големите, възрастните*).

What is noticeable in French is that in these contexts we can also use the indefinite pronoun *quelqu'un* 'someone' (*quelqu'un de stupide*) which allows us to recognize a kind of pronominal status to *personne*. In Bulgarian, *някой* (=quelqu'un) can also be used instead of *човек*, at least in this context (*някой, който е глупав*).

We saw that concerning the non-specialized meaning of *personne*, the one where this noun denotes a human being in a very general way, the more frequent Bulgarian equivalent is *човек*. In fact, the uses of *човек* cover not only those of *homme 1*, but also a great part of those of *personne*. On the other hand, *personne* has perhaps the most general meaning among all French HGN (with *gens* 'people'), and *човек* seems to share this property in Bulgarian. This is made possible by the fact that *човек* can denote a human being without sex differentiation in more contexts than *homme*, and *personne*, precisely, does not encode sex. However, as we saw, *човек* refers sometimes to the male human being (9) and therefore cannot always be the translation of *personne*. For instance, the translation of *personne* by *човек* in (19) is problematic:

(19) *Hier, une personne très agréable m'a abordé dans la rue. J'ai appris par la suite que c'était la femme du maire.*

'Yesterday a very nice person came up to me. Later I was told that this was the mayor's wife.'

??*Вчера един много приятен **човек** ме заговори. В последствие разбрах, че това беше жената на кмета.*

In this context, *лице* cannot be used because it does not have the neutral character of *personne/човек*. Thus, we have a 'gap' in Bulgarian concerning the translation of *personne* in its 'current' meaning, at least in subject position. Here we have to use the specific noun *жена* 'woman', but this eliminates the ambiguity of *personne* in the French sentence.

2.2. *PersonneS* (pl.)

If we look at the three examples (attached to A "person in general") given in the French-Bulgarian dictionary (2002) where we find *personneS*, we have three different translations:

Quelques personnes: няколко *души* ‘some persons’

Groupe de personnes: група *хора* ‘group of persons’

Grandes personnes: *големите, възрастните* ‘adults/grown-ups’

If we put aside the nominalized adjectives in the last translation where the HGN is omitted, we found two different HGN in Bulgarian: *души* and *хора*.

In the following we will concentrate on the plural uses of *personne* and we will compare them to those of the French plurale tantum *gens* ‘people’, a noun which can sometimes replace *personnes*. The comparison between *personnes* and *gens* is important because there are (many) cases where they are in complementary distribution but can nevertheless be translated by the same noun in Bulgarian, the plurale tantum *хора*. We have also to take into account the Bulgarian “numeral classifier”¹³ *души* (literally ‘souls’), which translates the countable uses of *personnes*.

2.2.3. *Personnes* vs. *gens* and their Bulgarian equivalents

CP/SC (2015) point out that *personnes* and *gens* can sometimes appear in the same context without a noticeable difference:

(20) Je ne connais pas bien *les gens/les personnes* du quartier. (=1)
‘I don’t know the local people’

Bulgarian, only one HGN can be used here, namely *хора*, because, as we saw both for the singular and the plural, there is no a particular equivalent of the non specialized meaning of *personne(s)*.

But as shown by CS/PC (2014), *personnes* and *gens* often differ mainly because of the plurale tantum status of *gens* (it does not have a singular form: **un gens*) which *personnes* does not share: it is an ordinary countable noun.

The properties of a plurale tantum noun are briefly reminded by CS/CP (op. cit.) citing (Wierzbicka 1985 : 282):

“The grammatical property *plurale tantum* (combined with grammatical uncountability) suggests that the referent is limited in quantity, “bounded” in place, and not fully countable because the parts may not be truly separate”

There are some constraints (revealed by CS/PC op. cit.) that follow directly from the plurale tantum status of *gens* contrary to *personnes*:

- At the level of determiners:

- *Personne*, but not *gens* can receive numerals as determiners and the indefinite determiner *plusieurs* (=several) only compatible with countable nouns:

¹³ According to Cinque & Krapova’s (2007) analysis in the framework of the Generative Grammar.

- (21) *Deux/plusieurs personnes me l'ont dit.*
 Двама/няколко дѹши/човека ми го казаха.
 ‘Two/several persons told me this’
- (22) **Deux/plusieurs gens me l'ont dit.*
 *Двама/няколко хора ми го казаха.
 ‘Two/several people told me this’

As we see in the translations, in Bulgarian, *xopa* behaves as *gens* in this respect, which is not surprising: *xopa* shares the plurale tantum feature (it does not have a singular form, at least morphologically, and is uncountable); the Bulgarian equivalent in (21) is дѹши, a “classifier” specialized in counting human beings, or *човека*, the countable plural form of *човек*. And even though both *personnes* and *gens* can be used with the interrogative determiner for quantity *combien de* ‘how many’, only with *personnes* we can have an answer with a numeral determiner, contrary to *gens* which is compatible with *beaucoup* ‘a lot of’, a non-precise quantifier:

- (23) *Combien de personnes as-tu rencontrées? – J’en ai rencontré dix/plusieurs.*
 (=дѹши)
 ‘How many persons did you meet ? I met ten/some’
- (24) *Combien de gens as-tu rencontrés ? – J’en ai rencontré beaucoup.* (=хора)
 ‘How many people did you meet ? I met many’

The same is true concerning the distinction between дѹши and *xopa*, as suggested by the equivalences above.

– Moreover, Schnedecker (2012) showed that indefinite determiners as *certain* ‘certain’, *divers*, *différents* ‘various, several’, denoting some divisibility of the referent or choice are much better accepted with *personnes* :

- (25) *Certaines/différentes/diverses personnes me l'ont dit.*
 ‘Certain/various/several persons told me this’
- (26) ??*Certains/différents/divers gens me l'ont dit.*
 ‘Certain/various/several people told me this’

In Bulgarian, the translation of the well-formed utterance in (25), where *personnes* appears, is with *xopa*, because (i) дѹши is only used with numerals and (ii) there is no another neutral¹⁴ HGN in Bulgarian corresponding to *personnes* in its ‘current’ meaning, which obviously forces *xopa* to escape some of the features of its plurale tantum status, contrary to *gens*:

- (27) Някои / разни / най-различни хора/*дѹши ми го казаха. (≠gens)

¹⁴ In fact *xopa* has two marked synonyms; the one, *човеци*, is the plural form of *човек* and is mainly used in biblical contexts; the other, *люде*, is “old-fashioned”/“poetic”/“dialectal” according to the *Dictionary of the Bulgarian language* (<http://ibl.bas.bg/rbe/>).

- Lack of “individuation” concerning *gens* vs *хора*

Schneedecker (2012) showed also that *gens* is not compatible with pronouns that individualize the ‘parts’ (which are human beings), as *l’un après l’autre* ‘one by one’; *хора*, however, is compatible with such pronouns:

(28) ??*Les gens sont arrivés l’un après l’autre.*

(29) *Хората дойдоха един след друг.*

‘People came one by one’

Once again *хора* behaves as *personnes* which, as an ordinary plural form, can be subject of “individuation”:

(30) *Puisque toutes les personnes sont arrivées l’une après l’autre, il est faux de considérer que cette réunion a connu un succès de foule.* (google) (=хора)

‘Since all people have arrived one by one, it is wrong to consider that this meeting was very successful’

And finally, at a lexical level, there are some expressions with *personnes* and others with *gens* that form ‘set phrases’, mainly denoting different ‘classes’ of people, or, with *gens*, also different qualifications:

– with *personnes*:

Groupe de personnes ‘group of people’

група хора

Personnes handicapées ‘handicapped persons’

инвалиди (хора с увреждания)

Personnes âgées ‘elderly persons’

възрастни хора

– with *gens* :

Gens simples ‘simple people’

обикновени хора

Honnêtes gens ‘honest people’

честни хора

Gens du peuple ‘ordinary people’

хора от народа

As we see, in both cases the Bulgarian corresponding lexeme is *хора*. This confirms once again that the uses of this Bulgarian HGN are larger than those of its French ‘equivalent’ *gens*.

IV. Conclusion

If we put aside the cases where the French HGNs can be translated by pronouns or by specific lexemes, and those where *homme* corresponds to *мъж*, we arrive to the next table where the different equivalences between the three French HGN taken into account in our study and the Bulgarian HGN are summarized:

French HGN	Number	French example	Bulgarian translation
Homme HGN 'man'	SG	<i>Homme des cavernes</i> 'cave man'	Пещерен човек
	PL	<i>Premiers hommes</i> 'early men'	Първобитни хора
Personne 'person'	SG	<i>Une seule personne</i> 'only one person'; <i>Une personne de confiance</i> 'reliable person'; <i>personne âgée</i> 'elderly person'	Само един Доверен Възрастен човек
		<i>Personne morale</i> 'legal entity'; <i>à la troisième personne</i> 'in the third person'	Юридическо В трето лице
	PL	<i>Certaines personnes</i> 'certain persons'; <i>groupe de personnes</i> 'group of people'	Някои Група хора
		<i>Cinquante personnes</i> 'fifty people'	Петдесет дъшци / човека
		<i>Personnes à la charge</i> 'dependents'	Имащи право на издръжка лица
Gens 'people'	Plurale Tantum	<i>honnêtes gens</i> 'honest people'	Честни хора

We see from the data of this table that the three French HGN (*homme(s)*, *personne(s)*, *gens*) are 'covered' by four corresponding Bulgarian HGN (*човек*, *лице*, *дъшци*, *хора*). But these Bulgarian HGN do not 'cover' the French ones in the same manner. We can divide them into two groups according to their 'extension': (i) *лице*, *дъшци* and (ii) *човек*, *хора*. The nouns of the first group correspond respectively to a particular meaning (the legal domain : *лице*) or use (the plural with a numeral determiner: *дъшци*) of a unique French NHG, namely *personne(s)*; the nouns of the second group are in the intersection of more than one French HGN, *човек* corresponding both to *homme* and to *personne* (in its 'current language' meaning) and *хора* corresponding to *gens*, *hommes* and *personnes* (except for the uses with a numeral determiner and the legal meaning). In fact, we can suggest that the lack of a Bulgarian lexeme corresponding to the various uses of *personne(s)* explains that *човек* and *хора* have to assume most of these uses in Bulgarian, which leads to their larger extension than their French equivalents strictly speaking that are *homme* and *gens*.

Finally, if we put aside the Bulgarian HGN *лице* which has a particular meaning, the three Bulgarian HGNS which refer to human beings in the most

general way are *човек*, *хора* and *дъму*. Venkova (1997) treats them as a ‘triad’ referring to the “Contemporary dictionary of the Bulgarian language” (1994) which considers *хора* and *дъму* as the plural forms of *човек*. Even though this is not defensible morphologically, we see that these three ‘forms’ (of only one noun: *човек*) cover the ‘current meanings’ of the three French HGN. This can lead to the conclusion that in Bulgarian there is only one ‘real’ HGN, namely *човек*, but which has nevertheless the inconvenience (when in singular) to refer sometimes, although not quite precisely, to the male human being, an inconvenience that *personne* does not present.

Our study shows also that the available lexemes in the two considered languages, although with different extensions, manage to cover the same concepts attached to the reference to a human being in a general way, which, if necessary, provides further evidence to Chomsky’s principles/parameters distinction.

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Homme(s), personne(s), gens и българските им еквиваленти:
речникови данни и лингвистичен анализ

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В настоящата статия се сравняват френските общи имена за лица *homme(s)*, *personne(s)* и *gens* с българските им еквиваленти *човек*, *лице*, *души* и *хора*. Взимат се предвид речникови данни, които са подложени на анализ в рамките на референциалната семантика. След въвеждане на понятието „обща имена за лица“, се разглеждат формите за единствено и множествено число на *homme* и *personne* и техните български съответствия. След това се сравнява *gens*, съществително от типа на плуралия тантум, с *personnes*, което позволява да се изясни какво е тяхното взаимоотношение с българските лексеми *хора* и *души*.

Анализът показва, че въпреки присъствието на оскъден брой семи, всяко от разглежданите имена в двата езика има специфични свойства и употреби, което води до „кръстосани“ съответствия. Така например *лице* и *души* покриват отделни значения на френската лексема *personne* // *personnes*, докато *хора* може да съответства едновременно на *personnes*, *gens* и *hommes*.

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