

FEMINATIVES IN THE OFFICIAL AND BUSINESS STYLE OF CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN LITERARY LANGUAGE: OFFICIAL AND SEMI-OFFICIAL PRACTICE

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Abstract: The study of feminatives in the official and business style of the contemporary Ukrainian literary language is relevant in light of changing social norms and language practices in the context of gender equality. A range of methods were used in the study to comprehensively analyse this phenomenon, including comparative analysis, qualitative analysis, and content analysis of texts in the official business style of contemporary Ukrainian literary language. The article traces the features of the use of feminatives in official and semi-official linguistic and literary practice. It has been proven that in written official business practice (especially in the administrative-clerical variety, which serves the needs of administrative and managerial communication), male forms of profession, speciality, and position names dominate according to the current stylistic norm. This reflects the current status of feminatives, which are not yet established as a single grammatical norm but are a recommended option. It has been found that semi-official language practice, particularly in online resources, is the most sensitive to social demands for the use of feminatives, demonstrating gender tolerance among officials and civil servants and becoming a kind of tool for spreading feminatives into the official language domain. The stylistic use of feminatives in official business communication is still only partially developed and is in the process of standardisation. Current trends provide grounds for predicting a more consistent standardisation of word-formation models and the communicative popularisation of feminine forms of naming women by positions and professions in this style.

Keywords: Official-business style, Administrative and managerial communication, Semi-official language practice, Norm, Orthography, Feminative

1 Introduction

A significant feature of Ukrainian language practice in the 2010s–2020s was the active inclusion of feminine forms for naming women based on their profession, position, social status, age, and preferences. This heightened societal attention has logically determined the feminine-focused priorities of Ukrainian linguistics. It is essential that, for an objective characterisation and stratification of the already substantial corpus of feminatives, linguists take into full account the key sociocultural factors – primarily the modern trends towards gender equality in society, their reflection in language, the development and popularisation of gender culture, and the adherence to gender tolerance.

The linguistic result of the growing recognition of the social and state-building role of women, their mastering of numerous new professions traditionally considered "male," and the return to the inherent systemic-structural features of the Ukrainian language is the multiple increase in the number of feminatives, their active formation, and integration into language practice. However, the intensity of the adaptation of these units in texts of various genres and styles is uneven, as stylistic norms can block or slow down and regulate these processes. For example, the traditional conservatism characteristic of the official business style regarding naming women's positions, professions, ranks, and statuses with masculine forms can be observed in administrative-clerical written and oral communication and document circulation. Semi-official practice is more receptive to feminine innovations.

The communicative practice of many sectors notes the observance of stylistic norms that do not allow or recommend using feminatives in government documents, legal and sub-legal texts, standards, and instructions. However, the current edition of the Ukrainian Orthography of 2019 indicates that feminatives are

recommended for naming women based on the characteristics above, including in business and official communication. Therefore, there is a visible prospect for resolving the debate on the appropriateness and normative status of using feminine forms in this style.

2 Literature Review

The intensive feminisation of language practice in various styles (both oral and written) is one of the most noticeable and actively discussed changes occurring in the Ukrainian language in the first third of the 21st century, which has already been reflected in numerous linguistic works. The main sociocultural factors and motivators of these changes are the gender transformation of public consciousness, the reassessment of stereotypes regarding the social role of women, and the aspiration for their symmetrical "equalisation" with men on the scale of social significance. It also involves rethinking models of female behaviour in society and the family and methods of self-realisation (Adhikari & Mukherjee, 2020).

The change in linguistic forms, including the intensification of feminatives in official and semi-official practices, should also be regulated within the context of corpus linguistics and the creation of various dictionaries (Riezina, 2019). Rohova and Varaksina (2010) have examined the main issues regarding creating library resources that reflect the use of literary language.

Studies have also been conducted on the impact of generative artificial intelligence on writing and the correctness of forming official and semi-official texts based on its prompts (Pienimäki et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2019). Various models for creating such texts were analysed in control and experimental groups, and the pedagogical consequences of using this technology were discussed (Dotsenko et al., 2023).

The use of information technologies in linguistics also positively affects the quality of translation in official and semi-official practices. Authors (Elaraby et al., 2018) explored the issue of translating from gender-neutral languages to languages with gendered agreement, such as English to Arabic. Machine translation allows for unbiased translations that take gender markers into account, which positively influences the correct application of feminatives in the context of translation (Dai & Chen, 2020; Liu et al., 2024).

It was determined how accurately gender linguistic nuances are considered in translating positions, statuses, and professions, where gender biases may arise. Therefore, correctly using gender-specific linguistic constructions contributes to more nuanced and sensitive interlingual communication (Davydov & Lozynska, 2016).

In the course of corpus analysis of languages in the study (Gamboa & Estuar, 2024), it was concluded that there is a bias in the use of feminatives in the official business style, as most texts are by default associated with heterosexual men. Therefore, there is a need to use balanced gender-linguistic associations. As lexical units of contemporary Ukrainian literary language, feminatives have only recently become relevant (Moser, 2023; Wu et al., 2021).

To date, linguistic literature has accumulated experience analysing the structure, semantics, and pragmatics of feminine usage in texts of various genres and styles. In particular, the achievements and shortcomings of the current edition of the orthography concerning feminine formation have been examined, and linguistic-social reflections on the stylistic parameters of feminine usage have been proposed (Stezhko, 2020). Lexicographical ordering and systematisation of feminatives have been carried out. Based on the "Feminative Dictionary," nominations of Ukrainian and foreign-origin

women were analysed, and the relative proportion and a functional-pragmatic load of common words, regionalisms, and dialectisms as carriers of feminine semantics were characterised (Brus, 2019). However, given the current political and socio-economic realities, these achievements do not fully meet the cognitive needs in studying the structure, semantics, functions, thematic organisation, and stylistic parameters of feminine usage. The functioning of feminine units and neologisms in the official business style of the contemporary Ukrainian language requires increased attention.

The study aims to trace the structural-semantic and functional-pragmatic parameters of the use of feminines in the official and semi-official segments of Ukrainian business communication.

Research tasks:

1. Analyse the literature and scientific studies on the use of feminines.
2. Analyse the use of feminines in the official business style of contemporary Ukrainian literary language.

Based on the analysis of official business texts, identify the main features of applying feminines.

3 Research methods

Comparative analysis: Study of the practice of using feminines in different languages and legal systems to understand how such constructions function in the official language of other countries, identifying common trends and differences, as well as the impact of international experience on Ukrainian language practice.

Content analysis: Analysis of texts in the official business style (laws, regulatory acts, official documents) to identify feminines and assess the frequency of their use, studying the context in which feminines are used, their combination with other words, and their functional features within the text.

Qualitative analysis: In-depth study of individual texts to identify the application of feminines in the official business style of the contemporary Ukrainian language.

4 Research Results

Under the pressure of fashion, "the latest names for women <...>, which up to now have been normatively used to identify the female gender, at the current stage of the development of language are perceived, loosely speaking, as 'unsuccessful,' and have ceased to satisfy the Ukrainian-speaking society (or certain segments of it)" (Arkhangelska, 2019). This has caused a real boom in the creation of feminines – a forced and uncoordinated production of variant nominations for women based on their profession, speciality, position, social status, and preferences without considering grammatical, lexical, or stylistic norms. One of the most famous such series evolved from the masculine noun "director": *direktorka*, *direktorin*a, *direktoritsia*, *direktore*sa, *direktor*sha, *direktorik*ha, *direktor*ova. Ignoring the internal laws of language development and its systemic organisation, many of these newly created units destabilise the literary standard, undermine the aesthetic quality of the vocabulary, and lower society's sociocultural and linguistic level.

The efforts of linguists to direct this hypertrophied feminine creation into the framework of literary norms, unfortunately, remain ineffective against public opinion: "The interpretation and evaluation of contemporary feminisation of masculines from the normative-systemic and sociolinguistic perspectives reveal significant discrepancies, as the former relies on the structure of the language, while the latter focuses on current issues of communication and public opinion regarding the linguistic phenomenon" (Arkhangelska, 2019).

The heightened attention to feminines in society persists, partly because many speakers consider them to be evidence of

adherence to gender culture, a tool for meeting modern demands for gender-sensitive communication, and gender-correct language behaviour. However, advocates and promoters of this position do not always adequately consider the fact that in language, adherence to gender correctness and tolerance is not limited to feminines. In addition to them, as is well known, the Ukrainian language has historically developed an extensive system of normative means for identifying women. In particular, these include disaggregated analytical nominations with masculinity serving a generalising function (*zhinka-akademik* – female academic, *zhinka-heneral* – female general) and constructions with syntactic agreement (*moloda dyrektor* – young director, *advokat vyhrala spravu* – the lawyer won the case). At the same time, it is undeniable that feminines are entirely natural units of the national lexicon at all stages of its development. This is evidenced, for example, by linguistic works of the early 20th century: "Professional and other similar names in the Ukrainian language are mostly distinct for men and women. The Ukrainian language generally avoids using common-gender words to denote positions, professions, and ranks. Moreover, it assigns these words characteristics of grammatical (formal) masculine gender regardless of the person's sex. In Russian, as we know, words like *author*, *composer*, *writer*, *comrade*, and *friend* can equally apply to both men and women. In Ukrainian phrases, it is different: *he* – *avtor*, *she* – *avtor*ka; *he* – *kompozytor*, *she* – *kompozytor*ka; *he* – *pysmennyk*, *she* – *pysmennytsia*; *he* – *likar*, *she* – *likarka*; *he* – *profesor*, *she* – *profesor*ka, and so on <...> In professional and other similar names for women, the Ukrainian language widely uses the corresponding formal feminine endings (grammatical), although this is not always the case" (Sheremet, 2021). Feminine forms remained active in language use, with many recorded in the register of the academic 11-volume Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language. However, until recently, linguists consistently emphasised, and often still insist today, on their stylistic limitations. For example: "They are used in all styles except scientific and, especially, official-business"; "Feminine equivalents are not used in the official-business style. Their main area of function is the colloquial style, from where they penetrate artistic and journalistic texts. <...> With active use, such words gradually lose their colloquial colouring but still remain in the group of stylistically limited vocabulary, and they are unacceptable in business language"; "Restrictions on the use of feminines in official-business communication are still clearly written in all grammars and business language guides" (Siuta, 2024).

To date, the normative models for creating feminines have been codified in the current edition of the "Ukrainian Orthography," which was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine decree No. 437 on May 22, 2019, and confirmed by the Ukrainian National Commission on Orthography. Specifically, in § 32, item 4, these models are described in sufficient detail: "Using the suffixes **-k-**, **-ytsya**, **-ynya**, **-es-** and others, nouns indicating women are formed from masculine nouns. The most common suffix is **-k-**, as it can be combined with various types of bases: *avtor*ka, *dizayner*ka, *dyrektorka*, *redaktorka*, *spivach*ka, *student*ka, *fihuryst*ka, etc. The suffix **-ytsya** is mainly added to bases ending in **-nyk**: *verstalnytsya*, *nabirnytsya*, *poradnytsya*, and **-en**: *uchenytsya*. The suffix **-ynya** is added to bases ending in **-ets**: *kravchyn*ya, *plavchyn*ya, *prodavchyn*ya, and to consonants: *maystry*nya, *filoloh*nya; *boykyn*ya, *lemkyn*ya. The suffix **-es-** is rare: *dyakone*sa, *patrone*sa, *poete*sa" (Ukrainian Spelling, 2019). It is important to note that in this edition of the orthography, feminines are not codified as a single norm but are recommended as optional forms.

Naturally, feminisation occurs differently across various functional styles. The official business style is the least receptive to the outlined innovations, which meets the needs of written and oral communication along the administrative-management vertical (with institutions, organisations, professional communities, and employees) and horizontal (between institutions, organisations, their structural subdivisions, and employees). In practice, this implies regulation within the

management-executive apparatus of the state, in specific institutions, between citizens and institutions, as well as informing subordinate institutions and individuals about certain measures, changes, and organisational factors. In written form, the effectiveness of such communication is ensured by the key genres of document circulation: directive (orders, decrees, resolutions, instructions), organisational (contracts, agreements, job descriptions, statutes, staff schedules), informational-reference (autobiographies, resumes, applications, personnel record sheets, explanatory/memorandum notes, reports, plans, character references, minutes, extracts from minutes, certificates).

It is known that the clarity of official business communication is ensured, among other things, by such differential features as standardisation (formulaic and clichéd expressions) and stylistic neutrality (Manca, 2020). Not least, it is this stylistic norm that

blocks the active implementation of feminatives for the official naming of professional and social status, positions, and honorary titles of women because "in the literary codified language, there remain normative-stylistic restrictions: titles for women according to current rules are presented in masculine form: *doktor nauk* (Doctor of Sciences), *akademik* (Academician), *chlen-korrespondent* (Corresponding Member), *Heroi Ukrainy* (Hero of Ukraine), *diyach nauky ta tekhniky* (figure in science and technology), *pratsivnyk osvity* (education worker) <...> The use of masculine nouns as 'title names' in the official business style is fixed by language tradition and etiquette rules." A convincing visualisation of the minimal inclusion of feminatives in the lexicon of contemporary Ukrainian official business language compared to other functional spheres is presented in Figure 1.

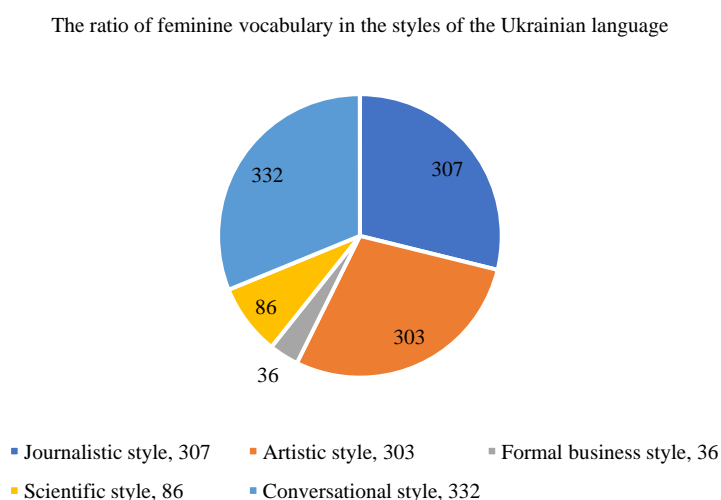


Figure 1. Correlation of feminine vocabulary in the styles of the Ukrainian language
Source: compiled based on (Sheremet, 2024)

At the same time, there is a noted lack of coordination between the current normative-stylistic restrictions on the use of feminatives in the official business style of the Ukrainian language and the actual functioning of feminine vocabulary and the social demand for such vocabulary. This collision is even more pronounced against the backdrop of recommended measures to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men (for example, in the system of Ukraine's diplomatic service, as well as in the circulation of recommendations and instructions on the use of gender-sensitive language intended for use in the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the State Special Transport Service, and intelligence agencies (Siuta, 2024).

Official events organised at the state level play a particularly significant role in implementing feminatives in official business language, especially in the communicative practices of state management bodies. These events are conducted to develop, refine, and implement strategies for gender standardisation of language. A notable example is the roundtable "Standardisation of the Ukrainian Language in the Context of Gender Policy," held on September 9, 2020, at the initiative of the National Commission on State Language Standards and the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy. One of the main working vectors of this event was the alignment of the official business style of contemporary Ukrainian literary language with European practice and the acceleration of the implementation of feminine norms in both oral and written official business communication. Notably, particular attention was given to the discussion of the problem of using feminatives in the official documentation of central executive bodies, as "the implementation of these norms in office work remains problematic, as the legislation currently

only provides for the optional use of feminised professional titles. <...> They can be adapted as needed by the user."

The above thesis about the tightness of the official business language is also confirmed by the information published on April 16, 2024, on the website of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine about the implementation of the 'Instruction on the use of gender-sensitive language', which will be used in the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the State Special Transport Service and the intelligence agency of the Ministry of Defence. At the same time, Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine N. Kalmykova emphasised that feminine titles will not be used for military ranks. This guideline is clearly reflected in the texts posted on official resources: military ranks and positions for women are not feminised: *The audience was interested in the speech of the representative of the Air Force Command, the head of the military social work group of the UMPZ KPS, Lieutenant Colonel Angelina Kushnir. She noted that the Ministry of Defence has begun to actively move towards providing women with career prospects in line with their level of education, experience and performance; 20 girls are already studying at the Ivan Bohun Kyiv Lyceum, with a platoon commander, combat officer Junior Lieutenant Yulia Mykytenko.*

A fully consistent position is maintained regarding the use of feminatives by a structure related to the Ministry of Defence – the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Recognising the validity of recommendations regarding the need to apply the norms of the new edition of the orthography in all spheres of public life, in the official business practice of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, masculine nouns are prioritised for naming positions, professions, and ranks, as "these words are used to denote both

men and women, emphasising not the gender of the person, but their professional and social status. As for their use in the writing of normative-legal documents, according to established official-business etiquette, it is accepted to use words in the masculine gender, which in no way discriminates against women's rights."

The closed nature of official business language to feminine innovations is also demonstrated in the written practices of other state administration bodies. Relevant information on this has been published on the previously mentioned online platform Chytomo. Based on the corresponding monitoring results, it can be concluded that recommendations for the use of feminatives are being followed by the State Service for Education Quality and the State Migration Service.

Several government bodies (for example, the State Service for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre, the State Export Control Service) in written practices and document circulation adhere to the traditional norm of naming official positions of women with masculine nouns. However, if needed, upon the request of individual employees when preparing personnel documents, feminatives can be used. This position has normative-legal support, as it is aligned with Order No. 1574 of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade, and Agriculture of Ukraine (dated August 18 2020), which approved amendments to the National Classifier of Professions. Henceforth, while professional job titles in the classifier will continue to be presented in masculine form, except for titles that are exclusively used for women (e.g., *housekeeper*, *nanny*, *maid*, *sister-housekeeper*, *seamstress*), if required by an individual employee, when recording the job title in personnel documents, the professional job title can be adapted to reflect the gender of the person performing the corresponding work. During the analysis of the State Classifier of Professions of Ukraine, it was determined that "the SCPU contains approximately 7,000 job titles, only 38 of which are presented in the feminine form."

In the language practices of the State Tax Service and the State Archival Service, feminatives are not used due to their status as a recommended option rather than a codified unified norm.

An informative aspect regarding the processes of feminisation in the official business language is the analysis of texts posted on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the website of the Center for Innovative Education "Pro.Svit," and the official and semi-official segments of educational platforms such as "Vseosvita," "Na Urok," and "Ed.Era." The texts on the Ministry of Education and Science website, particularly departmental documents as examples of the administrative-clerical substyle, do not contain feminatives (except specific genres such as announcements and notifications), even though on this same website, as of June 3, 2019, it was "recommended to apply the norms and rules of the new edition of the orthography in all spheres of public life, including the official-business style of language." In contrast, the language of educational platforms and educational information resources (as a semi-official sphere of communication) is more flexible and noticeably receptive to these units. A notable example is the lexical correlation between *minister* (male) and *ministerka* (female). The consistent position of the Ministry of Education and Science regarding adherence to stylistic norms and, at the same time, gender neutrality in the administrative-management sphere (Siuta, 2024) is demonstrated by the official signatures of women who held the positions of Minister and Deputy Minister of Education at various times from 2019 to the present. Letters, directives, and other normative-legal documents are signed by the Minister of Education and Science, Hanna Novosad; Deputy Minister, Vira Rohova; Deputy Minister, Svitlana Danylenko; and Deputy Minister, Liubomyra Mandzi.

The absence of the feminine *zastupnytsia* (female deputy) in this segment of official business written language is considered entirely justified and normative, as "to call a woman holding the position of deputy director *zastupnytsia* is incorrect, because this word has become established in the Ukrainian language with the meaning 'a woman who protects someone, a protector' <...> The

position of deputy for any head does not imply such protection. Therefore, *zastupnyk* (male deputy) is the correct official title for a woman who deputises for a leader in any position."

As it has already been noted, the language of educational platforms and educational information resources is more loyal to feminine innovations, so wording such as *The newly minted Minister of Education Hanna Novosad made 9 mistakes in a short message on Facebook; Hanna Novosad is the Minister of Education of Ukraine*.

Traditional masculine forms for naming women's positions, statuses, and specialities dominate the texts of *letters* and *orders*, the most frequent genres of administrative and managerial communication of education and science authorities carried out vertically. For example: *Control over the order implementation shall be entrusted to Deputy Minister Mandzi L.*

Dobrovol'ska Oksana Mykolaivna - Director of the Kyiv Palace of Children and Youth To Fidanian Olena, Director of the Department of Education and Science of the executive body of the Kyiv City Council (Kyiv City Military Administration) 'On the Jury of the All-Ukrainian Teacher of the Year 2023 Contest'. I would like to express my gratitude for the effective work of the jury, and high professionalism <...> to Aleksieichuk Yevheniia Yuriiivna, teacher of the subject 'Defence of Ukraine' at the secondary school of I - III levels 'Gymnasium No. 34 "Lybid" named after Viktor Maksymenko' (nomination 'Defence of Ukraine'), and Gurenko Yuliia Mykolaivna, primary school teacher at Gymnasium No. 59 named after O.M. Boychenko (nomination 'Primary Education').

There are no feminine articles (except *uchenyt'sia* – *female student*)) in the texts of orders and instructions of the Minor Academy of Sciences of Ukraine for the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

The need to respond to typical, frequently repeated communicative situations, processes, and facts characteristic of texts of the official business style motivates the development of certain genres and related linguistic units, means and formulas. It is noteworthy that in such texts, the need to choose a feminine or masculine form is levelled out, as the nominations of positions statuses are used in a generalised plural form: *A special thank you is extended to the directors <...> Osadcha Tetiana Volodymyrivna and <...> Matvieieva Lina Oleksandrivna for their assistance in conducting the competition "Lesson"; We also ask the heads of out-of-school educational institutions to strictly adhere to labour legislation. Necessary explanations regarding labour relations during martial law can be found on the website of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine; <...> the teaching staff of out-of-school educational institutions are adapting classes to current conditions, offering their students master classes, quizzes, virtual tours, excursions, multimedia presentations, engaging in project and research activities, and making every effort to organise various activities for children and their parents; We ask that the content of this letter be communicated to the heads of education management bodies at different levels, as well as to the heads and teaching staff of educational institutions to organise preventive measures with student groups and to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle among children; <...> contact information for the heads and staff of the educational institution should be placed in an accessible location within the institution, to whom <...> individuals can turn for the prompt resolution of issues related to the preservation of life or health, as well as the protection of children's rights and interests.*

Also, in letters, orders, and other directives regulating educational activities, this textual position is often occupied by complex (three-component) terms such as *participants in the educational process* and *recipients of educational services*. For example: "It is important to document crimes of which participants in the educational process have been witnesses or victims and gather as much evidence as possible to hold the perpetrators accountable"; "The Ministry of Education and

Science of Ukraine requests, with the involvement of local government bodies and in cooperation with international and non-governmental organisations within their competencies, to carry out preventive work among participants in the educational process and provide socio-psychological support to those affected by the war and violence related to the armed aggression of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine"; "The Ministry, educational management bodies, and educational institutions are implementing measures within the educational process to raise awareness among recipients of educational services and their parents on issues of combating child trafficking."

The outlined picture of the "non-receptiveness" of the administrative-management discourse in the educational and scientific sphere to feminine innovations can be partly explained by the fact that the mechanisms and strategies for gender standardisation, aimed at aligning Ukrainian official business communication with European standards, are still in the development stage. As a result, feminatives have not yet been codified as a unified grammatical norm but remain a recommended option. However, certain notable shifts in this area are already occurring. In particular, on September 9 2020, at the initiative of the National Commission on State Language Standards, a roundtable was held titled "Standardisation of the Ukrainian Language in the Context of Gender Policy." One of its main tasks was to discuss and outline ways to resolve "problematic issues regarding the use of feminised professional and position titles in the official documentation of central executive bodies" and to develop the foundations for codifying normative forms for naming women by professions and positions and their subsequent inclusion in the national "Classifier of Professions of Ukraine."

Under the influence of such measures and in response to societal demands (including accusations of insufficient efforts by the Ministry of Education and Science to ensure gender equality and uphold gender culture), the official business language of the educational-scientific sphere responds to feminisation trends very selectively, so far only in "transitional formats" and in certain genres of document circulation. Specifically, in the text of one of the Ministry's letters, paired constructions with masculine and feminine personal names connected by the conjunction *and* (or *and/or*) were observed (To prevent bullying (harassment), we recommend: <...> using the video "Resolving conflicts peacefully. Peer mediation of male and female peers"; <...> Ukrainians, both men and women, continue to be victims of labour or sexual slavery in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark (ibid.)) or graphically differentiated by a slash (<...> develop peer mediation, create peer understanding services based on the principle "equal – equal / equal (feminine) – equal (feminine)" and resolve conflicts peacefully in educational institutions (ibid.)). Notably, the illustrated writing options are recorded within a single document.

The moderators of the Young Scientists Council page on the Ministry of Education and Science website are also loyal to feminatives (the linguistic-stylistic organisation of the texts posted here allows them to be classified as semi-official discourse). In line with the thematic specifics covered, the following feminatives are used: *zdobuvachka* (female applicant), *aspirantka* (female postgraduate student), *asistentka* (female assistant), *naukovytsia* (female scientist), *naukova spivrobitnytsia* (female research associate), *dotsentka* (female associate professor), *zaviduvachka* (female head), *studentka* (female student), *finalistka* (female finalist), *spikerka* (female speaker). For example: *The Young Scientists Council at the Ministry of Education and Science involves associate members (without voting rights) from among national experts who have significant experience in the field that corresponds to the purpose of the MSG at the MES <...> zdobuvachka PhD, asistentka of the department of marketing, reputation and customer experience management at the State Biotechnology University.*

A notable example of situational saturation of feminatives in a text is the announcement published on February 10 2020, for an event dedicated to the International Day of Women in Science titled "The Ministry of Education and Science invites you to meet Ukrainian **female scientists**." Its presentational nature motivates the systematic use of feminine forms as obligatory structural components in identification formulas that introduce or promote the event's participants (although they often appear alongside masculine forms as components of a list).

At the event, the L'Oréal "For Women in Science" Award 2018-2019 finalists will discuss how they achieved success in science <...> Uchenytsi (female schoolgirls) and studentky (female students) of STEM specialties are invited to join the event. Among the top speakers:

- *Olena Vanieieva, candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, spivrobitnytsia (female senior researcher) at the Institute of Mathematics of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, peremozhnytsia (female winner) of the L'Oréal-UNESCO "For Women in Science" Award 2018;*
- *Viktoriia Savaryn, candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, asistentka (female assistant) at the Department of Physics and Mathematics, Lviv National University of Veterinary Medicine and Biotechnologies named after S.Z. Gzhytskyi;*
- *Kateryna Terletska, Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, spivrobitnytsia (female senior researcher) at the Institute of Mathematical Machines and Systems of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, winner (peremozhnytsia: female winner) of the L'Oréal-UNESCO "For Women in Science" Award 2019;*
- *Valeriia Trusova, Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, dotsentka (female associate professor), zaviduvachka (female head) of the Department of Medical Physics and Biomedical Nanotechnologies at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University;*
- *Oksana Krupka, candidate of Chemical Sciences, spivrobitnytsia (female senior researcher) at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.*

The texts of reports on the Centre for Innovative Education's activities for 2019-2023 published on the Centre for Innovative Education platform are informative about the feminisation of official business practices in the educational sector. The number of feminine lexemes recorded shows that a clear guideline for compliance with gender-tolerant language has been developed, as set out in instructions and recommendations (including the roundtable above, 'Standardisation of the Ukrainian Language in the Context of Gender Policy'). For example: *Viktoriia Bryndza – sociolohynia (female sociologist), member (chlenkynia: female member) of the "Nestor Group"; Inna Hindych – metodystka (female methodologist) at Myropil Community, Zhytomyr region; Oleksandra Mukhina – koordynatorka (female coordinator) of the "School 3.0" project; Lina Kovalenko – uchytelka (female teacher), nastavnytsia (female mentor) of the "Fulcrum" team at Boyar Academic Lyceum "Harmony"; Anastasiia Martynenko – ekokonsultantka (female eco-consultant), lektorka (female lecturer), holova (female head) of the NGO Zero Waste Society, mentorka (female mentor) at the ZERO WASTE Academy; Marianna Bilyk – kerivnytsia (female head) of the social department at the LOF charity organisation; Liliia Borovets – spivzasnovnytsia (female co-founder) of the organisation; Oleksandra Mukhina – menedzherka (female manager) at Pro.Svit and GoFundEd.*

We note the template of lexical and syntactic structures - again, these are formulas for identifying a woman educator's speciality, social status, and functional responsibilities.

Since 2022, using feminine pronouns has become an increasingly cultivated norm in the 'report' genre on the Pro.Svit platform: *Nataliia Pipa – deputatka (female deputy) of Ukraine from the 115th electoral district in Lviv, sekretarynia (female secretary) of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Education, Science, and Innovation; ekspertka (female*

expert) involved – *Nataliia Katashynska*; *Anna Uvarova* – *ekspertka* (female expert) and *kerivnytsia* (female head) of the NGO "Pro.Svit" from 2019 to 2021; *Olena Viednikova* – *dyrektorka* (female director) of Mykolaiv Classical Lyceum; *prezydentka* (female president) of our lyceum *Tetiana Trofimchuk*, edited a video about the project and shared it on Instagram; *Yana Ratman*, *chlenkynia* (female member) of the supervisory board; *Varvara Sierova* – *asystentka* (female assistant).

However, it is also important not to ignore examples of conscious adherence to the classical norm, according to which the names of people by profession, occupation, or position do not exhibit features of femininity/masculinity. Therefore, nouns in the masculine form are rightly "used to denote both men and women <...> as general personal names."

One could also assume that the illustrated inconsistency in linguistic presentation models (designer, developer – *spivzasnovnytsia*) is related to linguistic taste and personal positions regarding the appropriateness or inappropriateness, correctness or incorrectness of using feminine forms. Let us recall the indicative opinion of I. D. Farion on this matter: "I am categorically against being called 'profesorka' or 'doktorka' (comment on Facebook)." Moreover, this is convincing evidence of the status of feminatives in the current edition of the orthography – not as a mandatory norm, but as a recommended option, used as needed by the user.

The orientation of the moderators and contributors of the Pro.Svit resource to adhere to the standards of gender equality in language is also demonstrated by mini-texts with paired feminine and masculine forms: *expert* – *expertka*, *trener* – *trenerka*, *uchasnyk* – *uchasnytsia*: *In the project, over 200 uchasnykiv and uchasnyts were involved; To our ekspertam and ekspertkam, treneram and trenerkam, respondentam and respondentkam of the research.*

On educational platforms such as "Vseosvita" and "Na Urok," we observe the use of feminatives in various texts, from recommendation materials to analytical articles. Predictably, the most frequently used terms are: *uchytelka* (female teacher), *vykhovatelka* (female caretaker), *vykladachka* (female lecturer), *asystentka* (female assistant), *dotsentka* (female associate professor), *esperka* (female expert), *konsultantka* (female consultant), *pedahohynia* (female pedagogue), *psykholohynia* (female psychologist), *lohopedynia* (female speech therapist), *defektolohynia* (female defectologist), *metodystka* (female methodologist), *retsenzentka* (female reviewer). Based on this corpus, we can identify the most productive models for forming feminine nouns from masculine nouns that denote persons by profession or social activity. These models are described in the current edition of the "Ukrainian Spelling" and are created using suffixes:

-k-: *uchytelka* (female primary school teacher); *vykhovatelka* (female preschool educator); *metodystka* (female methodologist at the methodological office); *asystentka* (female teaching assistant); *Nataliia Zyma*, the best chemistry *uchytelka* (female chemistry teacher) according to the Global Teacher Prize Ukraine 2020 and *ekspertka* (female expert) of the EdEra online course "Courage to Teach"; *ekspertka* in clinical psychology and health psychology, crisis psychology, family work; this year, *avtorka* (female author) of the text for the National Unity Radio Dictation will be the Ukrainian *pysmennytsia* (female writer) and *rezhyserka* (female director), *chlenkynia* (female member) of PEN Ukraine, *Iryna Tsilyk* ("Na Urok", 09.11.22); *Inna Horbenko* <...> *kandydatka* (candidate of pedagogical sciences), *trenerka* (female trainer) and *konsultantka* (female consultant) of the educational programmes of WCF "Step by Step," UNICEF. Such visible productivity in creating feminine nouns – names of female persons from masculine nouns (sometimes linguists metaphorically refer to it as "feminine creation monopoly") – is motivated by the ability of this suffix to combine with different types of stems.

-yn(-ya): *psykholohynia* (female practical psychologist); *lohopedynia* (female speech therapist); *defektolohynia* (female defectologist); while preparing this journal, we wanted to cheer up *pedahohynia* (female educators) at least a little and help her; female journalist of "Vseosvita" along with *filolohynia* (female philologist) analyse the Ukrainian language and correct mistakes.

-yts(-ya): *zastupnytsia* (female deputy director) for educational work; *Olena Patrykeieva*, *nachalnytsia* (head) of the STEM education department at the Institute of Educational Content Modernization; *Inna Horbenko* <...> *spivzasnovnytsia* (female co-founder) of the preschool educational institution "Sad Mozhlyvostei ShchastiaKids".

No feminine nominals with the suffix **-es(a)** were recorded in the analysed texts, apparently due to its ability to give newly created units a stylistically reduced colouring.

Our summary of reflections on the language of educational resources aligns with the idea that today 'it is semi-official language practice that is the sphere of generation and use of grammatical variants of the names of professions and positions to refer to women'.

5 Discussion

The study (Kostusiak et al., 2020) outlines the latest feminine nouns for professions, job titles, and other activities and their use in media texts. A gender-linguistic balance is created based on the usage of feminatives, which contributes to the liberalisation and modernisation of the contemporary Ukrainian language. It is noted that in the new Ukrainian orthography, feminatives have been codified. The functional-cognitive category of femininity is developing and regularly supplemented with these units' lexicosemantic classification. The main method of studying the means of expressing feminine gender was chosen as the analysis of suffixes and case forms of feminine personal nouns and their codified use (Xiang et al., 2021).

In analysing the spread of feminatives in literary language, a comparative analysis of the process of creating feminine nouns becomes necessary (Iakymenko-Laumont, 2022). Because the development of feminatives has intensified in recent decades, there is a need to analyse the ways of word formation of feminine forms. From the perspective of the official business and semi-official style of the Ukrainian language, suffixal word formation is the most productive.

An essential role in maintaining the activity of feminine-forming processes is also played by language fashion and individual speakers' beliefs, under the influence of which the naming of women with masculine nouns is perceived as discrimination, a violation of the strongly promoted principles of gender tolerance, gender-sensitive communication, and gender-correct language behaviour (Villar-Mayuntupa, 2020).

The evolution of language is significantly related to external factors such as the political situation, economic conditions, and diplomatic relations. It is also influenced by purely linguistic factors, including structural-semantic transformations and changes in the stylistic affiliation of words. However, researchers (Ahmedova & Ibadov, 2023) identify several trends when applying official business and diplomatic styles. It is noted that during the 18th–19th centuries, the official business style moved away from foreign borrowings, while in the 20th century, new formations related to the establishment of the socialist regime – abbreviations, neologisms, and linguistic clichés – appeared. Regarding the contemporary period (late 20th – early 21st century), there has been an increase in the use of neologisms, linguistic clichés, and feminatives.

The formation of norms for business correspondence is accompanied by standard and commonly used address formulas, which are stereotypical elements of the addresser's speech behaviour and correspond to the linguistic and ethical norms of written communication, following the principle: address + first name +

patronymic (Kuvárova & Budilova, 2024). During the prolongation of the official business style and the transition to the fine line of the semi-formal style, individual features of vocative models manifest, varying depending on social status and individual factors.

6 Conclusion

The functional styles of literary language and the genres that develop within these styles respond differently to the challenges of feminisation. One of the least receptive to these challenges is the official business style (especially its administrative-clerical variety, which serves the needs of administrative and managerial communication). According to the current stylistic norm, masculine forms for naming professions, specialities, and positions still dominate in the corresponding texts. The semi-official language practice, particularly in the language of educational platforms and online resources, has proven to be more sensitive to feminisation innovations, reflecting educators' tolerant attitude toward using feminatives and, thus, becoming a tool for spreading them into the official language domain.

It is necessary to consider that official business language is quite hermetic by nature; it slowly adopts feminine innovations, and the mechanisms and strategies for gender standardisation of language are still in active development. As a result, in the official business practices of various spheres of public activity, feminatives have not yet been codified as a unified grammatical norm but remain a recommended option.

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