

діяльністю. Він уможлиблює деривацію фемінітивів від різних твірних основ, а особливо від маскулінативів, що раніше не мали жіночих відповідників, тому має право на закріплення в статусі продуктивного словотвірного типу.

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ON THE GRAMMATICAL RESTRICTIONS OF THE USE OF FEMINATIVES IN THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article is focused on the grammatical and social aspects of the use of feminatives in the Ukrainian language. It was shown that the unreasonable use of feminatives may result in a number of inconsistencies leading to violation of grammatical and phonological rules and to the degradation of the language expressive ability. Helping little to make a woman more visible, this practice leaves no room to correctly denote non-binary persons and personified objects. It is also shown that the feminatives with the final «-kynja» are questionable from the phonological view. To resolve the grammatical issues resulting from the feminine usage, we propose to recognize the general gender that, similarly to the common one, is a complex gender. In contrast to the common gender, the general gender combines simple genders by

means of the logical «OR» instead of the «AND». The corresponding names should be used in place of the masculine nouns in the generalizing function.

Keywords: feminative, gender, non-binary persons, personification, Ukrainian grammar, generalizing function, grammatical restrictions.

Following the global trend, the Ukrainian media have been recently flooded with feminatives, revealing a number of problems in their use and acceptance. Alla Arkhangheljsjka cites the Czech grammar textbook that the complete elimination of masculine forms in the generalizing function when they refer to a group of people regardless of their gender, will result in undesirable consequences for the language system (Šticha, 2011, p. 575). She resumes that feminatives as means of linguistic identification of a woman do not emphasize her social status, so in a positive context linguists definitely prefer traditional «masculinitive» forms (2019, p. 376). Oleksandr Taranenko points out that linguistic androcentrism cannot be regarded as an attitude of the society to a woman, predicting that «the numerous and diverse traces of linguistic “patriarchy” in the language structures <...> are sure to remain,» and concludes that «different ways of overcoming linguistic “inequality” of females <...> impose some restrictions in realization» (Taranenko, 2020, p. 46). However, this academic adherence to the obsolete paradigm of «masculine vs feminine» helps little in resolving the fundamental problem to be equally represented regardless of gender. At the same time, the Ukrainian language, possessing highly developed grammatical tools and a long tradition of naming women, can serve as an example of solving such issues.

The inability to correctly express the desired sense is rather typical to feminatives. For example, an *elektrychka* is a suburban train, rather than a female electrician; a *panamka* is a hat, rather than a female citizen of Panama. These issues result from the fundamental law of linguistic sign asymmetry (Karcevskij 1929).

The words *mystkynja* (‘female artist’), *chlenkynja* (‘female member’) and similar, having a phoneme /k/ before the /y/ in a rare suffix «ynʲ», do not comply with the rule of positional alternation of Ukrainian phonemes. If the phoneme /k/ is followed by a suffix starting with an /y/, it turns into a /ch/: *bijka* – *bijchynja*, *mamka*

– *matchyna*, *vovk* – *vovchynja*, etc. Ivan Vaghylevych (1965) lists also the variant *lemchynja* as one of the derivatives of *lemko*. The exceptions exist only for rare words that did not have time to attain their normal form. Since the word end formant «-ynja» is relatively infrequent, so the decisive role here is not the etymology of the suffix and not even the palatalization of velars /k/, /gh/, /x/ but the phonetic and phonological similarity of the corresponding contemporary morphemes. Therefore, the words ending with «-kynja» are not organic to the Ukrainian language.

The linguistic sign asymmetry has another important consequence: the exact one-to-one correspondence between the social and the grammatical gender is not possible.

Indeed, what about the **non-binary** persons and those who have been changing their gender more than once? Is it appropriate to reflect this gender shift in documents? Therefore, the use of feminatives as opposed to masculinitives is realized at the expense of non-binary and other persons belonging to even more deprived groups than women.

Next, what about **personification** which is a common feature of fairy tales? Its application assumes that any living being and even any subject name should be prone to acquire necessary gender features (including non-binary, of course) which is impossible to realize within the paradigm «masculinitive vs feminative» (cf. Vakulenko 2018).

Then, do feminatives really make women more **visible**? The most effective gender indicator is a name, not a profession. At the same time, the Ukrainian female surnames with masculine endings «-yshyn» and «-iv» are still common: *Fedoryshyn*, *Kukharchyshyn*, *Ivankiv*, *Jurkiv*, etc. The inability of feminatives to form their own derivatives also restricts the desired «visibility». For example, a **dortorka* is supposed to have her *dortorsjka dysertacija* ('doctoral thesis') that loses all feminine features.

Such inconsistencies happen in other languages, too. The female professors at the Ca' Foscari University appear as «Professoressa» but with the masculine endings

«-i», «-o» in their surnames: *Cerasi, Masiero, Santulli, Turano*¹. The same happens in the German language where the formant «mann» ('man') appears in the surnames of women and in the word «die Mannschaft» ('team') which is used even for female teams. This «mannish» tradition is unlikely to be eradicated because the formant «man» became a base for many important concepts, including «woman» and «human».

The negative attitude of the majority of Ukrainian women towards feminatives reported in (Arkhangel'sjka, 2019), grounds on the semantic load of feminatives that implies segregation, relating women to an inferior category. Except for historical non-prestigious «female» professions, feminatives are used in sports to denote female athletes that compete separately from men. To provide positive discrimination for women who would have little chance if competing with men, the European Commission offers special grants². This linguistic tradition may not be ignored.

The solution to the above-mentioned problems does exist, and not only for Ukrainian. Some nouns, pronouns, and verbs (in the past tense) do not show a definite gender (cf. Vakulenko 2018): *dity* ('children'), *batjky* ('parents'), *ljudy* ('people'), *druzi* ('friends'); *mrecj* ('dead'), *mudrecj* ('sage'), *predok* ('ancestor'); *khto* ('who'), and so on. We should add here the names of animals, insects, and other living beings that have certain grammatical gender which does not correlate with their biological sex.

The phrase displaying this phenomenon may be the following: *odnogho z batjkiv togho, khto ce zrobyv, proshu pryjty do klasnogho kerivnyka* ('one of the parents of the person who has this done, is asked to come to the classroom teacher'). What is the gender of *khto*, given that the verb *zrobyv* is masculine? What if it were a girl? What is the gender of *odnogho* and *batjkiv*, given that the pronoun's ending indicates the masculine gender but this is probably a mother?

¹ Università Ca' Foscari Venezia. Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati. URL: <https://www.unive.it/pag/16871/>.

² The REWIRE Programme: REinforcing Women In Research. URL: <https://rewire.univie.ac.at/>.

Thus we may conclude that the language practice requires recognition of the **general gender** (Ukr. *zagaljnyj rid*, Rus. *oguljnyj rod*), which is a combined gender and acts in place of the masculine in the generalizing function (Vakulenko 2018). In contrast to the common gender, the general gender combines simple genders by means of the logical «OR» instead of the «AND». Note that the rise of such combined genders is a consequence of the language's tendency for the grammatical gender to disappear.

So, the words *chlen* ('member'), *zastupnyk* ('deputy'), *osoba* ('person'), *ljudyna* ('human'), etc., used in the generalized function, should be considered as having a general gender, though they display formal masculine or feminine characteristics. The same goes for personification. If the name of the profession is denoted by a substantive participle, like *upovnovazhenyj* ('authorized'), we should keep in mind the omitted noun that was present in the full form. This is *predstavnyk* ('representative') which governs the grammatical gender of the profession name (masculine acting as general). Then the problems to name non-binaries and personified objects are resolved.

Then the feminatives may be used if a biological sex or a social gender is emphasized, prevalently in the conversational style: *avtorka* ('a woman who writes'), *spivrobotnycja* ('a co-working woman'), *vchyteljka* ('a woman doing teaching'), etc. For example: *svoju pershu vchyteljku dity pam'jatatymutj use zhyttja* ('the children will remember their first *uchyteljka* all their life'); *cja avtorka ghlyboko rozkryvaje zhinoche jestvo* ('this *avtorka* deeply reveals the feminine essence'); *nasha spivrobotnycja peremoghla na zhinochomu shakhovomu turniri* ('our *spivrobotnycja* won the women's chess tournament). But: *vona – Vchytelj z velykoji litery* ('she is a Teacher with a capital letter'); *sered nashykh spivrobotnykiv lyshe odna zhinka* ('there is only one woman among our employees'), etc. The names of female athletes and some historical professions are used also in the official style.

So, we investigated the grammatical and some social aspects of feminatives in the Ukrainian and other languages. It was demonstrated that the unrestricted use of these results in deterioration of the communicative function of a language, leaving

unresolved the problems to denote non-binary persons and personalized objects, as well as the task to make a woman more «visible». It was shown also that the feminatives with the final «-kynja» hardly comply with the Ukrainian phonology. It is proposed to recognize the general gender, which combines simple genders by means of the logical «OR» and may serve as the basis to successfully resolve all mentioned issues.

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THE PROBLEM OF GENDER IDENTITY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Gender-neutral language, also referred to as gender-sensitive language, is an umbrella term for feminist language reform efforts. Such reforms are aimed at changing the masculine, androcentric, i.e. a male-centric