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Morphology of evaluation: the peculiarities of modeling evaluative meanings through morphological means in the Ukrainian language

Морфологія оцінки: своєрідність моделювання оцінних значень морфологічними засобами української мови

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Abstract


This study examines the morphological means used to express evaluation in Ukrainian, drawing on a corpus of spoken language, literary texts, dictionaries, and internet resources. The analysis focuses on how evaluation is encoded in the morphology of nouns, pronouns, numerals, and adjectives, with particular attention to the use of augmentatives, diminutives, gender, and degrees of comparison. The findings reveal a rich and varied system for expressing subjective evaluation, including the frequent use of diminutive forms to soften negativity and the creative use of comparative and elative forms to express a high degree of intensity. The study also highlights the role of gender in shaping evaluative meanings and the tendency to use occasional and non-normative forms to achieve specific pragmatic effects. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and evaluation, and provides insights into the unique ways in which Ukrainian speakers express their attitudes and emotions through morphological choices.

Анотація

В основі дослідження – морфологічні засоби вираження оцінки в українській мові. Наукову розвідку здійснено на основі використання корпусу розмовної мови, художніх текстів, словників та інтернет-ресурсів. Аналіз зосереджено на тому, як оцінка кодується в морфологічних категоріях іменників, займенників, числівників та прикметників; особлива увага сконцентрована на використанні збільшувальних і зменшувальних форм, категорії роду та ступенів порівняння. Результати демонструють багату та різноманітну систему вираження суб'єктивної оцінки, включаючи часте використання зменшувально-пестливих форм для пом'якшення негативу та креативне застосування порівняльного та елятивного ступенювання для вираження високого рівня інтенсивності. У дослідженні, крім того, наголошено на ролі категорії роду у формуванні оцінних значень та виокремлено тенденцію до використання оказіональних і ненормативних форм для досягнення певних прагматичних ефектів. Ця розвідка сприяє глибшому розумінню взаємозв'язку між

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Keywords: linguistics, morphology, national character, evaluation, Ukrainian language.

мовою, культурою та оцінністю, а також дає уявлення про унікальні способи, якими українські мовці виражають своє ставлення до довкілля та емоції через морфологічні засоби.

Ключові слова: Лінгвістика, морфологія, національний характер, оцінка, українська мова.

Introduction

Language, with its lexical-phraseological and grammatical systems, is a living organism that functions according to its unique and distinctive laws peculiar to each individual linguoculture. "While a speaker controls their speech using vocabulary and phraseology, selecting words and set phrases, it is the **grammar that 'controls' the speaker**" (Radevych-Vynnyts'kyj, 2001, p. 86). This is why studies dedicated to various aspects of grammar are among *the pressing issues* in modern linguistics.

The aim of this scholarly investigation is to aspectually demonstrate the features of the morphological means of the Ukrainian language that verbalize the category of evaluation. This is carried out based on the author's observations on modelling the meaning of evaluation within the discursive space of Ukrainian linguoculture (language, speech, discourse) and is manifested in the categories of nominal parts of speech (noun, pronoun, numeral, and adjective). Additionally, the study aims to reveal the relationship between the national character of Ukrainians and the specifics of modelling axiologically marked meanings.

The illustrative material of the study is based on the authors' card index (over 350 contexts), which contains *samples* of (1) *contemporary spoken language* (colloquial style, including the authors' collected recordings of oral speech), (2) *language of literary texts* (literary style), where examples of grammatical evaluative meanings are documented in the works of Ukrainian literary classics and modern writers. The study also utilizes (3) *materials from explanatory dictionaries* and bilingual dictionaries, as well as (4) *internet resources*. The chronological scope of the illustrative material spans from the 19th century to the present, including linguistic facts from the period of the Russo-Ukrainian war (since 2014), thus emphasizing a *diachronic-synchronic approach*.

In the main part of this article, we intend to present the material according to the following scheme: (1) a brief overview of the research history on the issue, taking into account tradition and innovation, problematic and debatable questions, justification of the theoretical and practical significance of the work for specific linguistic fields, as well as an indication of the limitations of research aspects and sources; (2) a review of the expressive-evaluative suffix system of the Ukrainian language (categories of diminutiveness and affectionate diminutives, which are verbalized through a quantitatively extensive system of subjective evaluation suffixes); (3) an analysis of typical connotative forms of nominal parts of speech that present non-equivalent vocabulary of evaluative semantics; (4) a description of grammatical meanings of evaluation, which point to certain mental traits of Ukrainians, particularly the features of their mentality; (5) the emphasis on the sociolinguistic factor for modeling evaluative meanings, including those related to the Russian-Ukrainian war, which are characteristic only of the Ukrainian language; (6) an interpretation of the peculiarities of evaluative ambivalence; (7) a demonstration of the axiological power of compound nouns with negative evaluative meaning, used to denote people; (8) a description of axiological-manipulative capabilities, taking into account the formation of occasional forms or grammatical neologisms based on the actualization of (a) gender and number categories of nominal parts of speech, (b) comparative and (c) relative degrees of adjectives; occasional comparative forms of (d) numerals and (e) pronouns used for modeling evaluation; (9) a summary of the material in the conclusions.

Theoretical Framework

Grammar is significant because it profoundly influences the verbalization of thought. By developing theoretical grammar, Ukrainian scholars are expanding its new branches, including *functional, social, and poetic grammar*, as well as *the grammar of appellatives* and *the grammar of evaluation*. In her exploration of the grammar of evaluation, the scientists emphasize that "evaluative functions are oriented not only towards lexical but also grammatical semantics, and the part-of-speech division of vocabulary with evaluative semantics" (Kosmeda, 2003, p. 51). In light of this, Dariya Riazantseva partially examined the

potential of adjectives for modelling evaluative meanings (Riazantseva, 2013), while Oksana Khaliman focused on studying the morphological means of the Ukrainian language through which the category of evaluation is verbalized overall (Khaliman, 2019a), without considering the stative, service parts of speech, or interjections, nor addressing the distinctiveness of national morphological forms of verbalizing the category of evaluation. Oksana Kovtun conducts research on the grammar of evaluation in the Ukrainian language, highlighting a comparative perspective and partially focusing on the morphology of the English language, considering its potential for verbalizing specifically morphological meanings of the category of evaluation (Kovtun, 2022).

The category of evaluation belongs to universal linguistic categories that manifest at all levels of the language system. Evaluation is a process that operates at every stage of human life and is uniquely verbalized in language and speech. Evaluation encompasses a wide range of multi-level linguistic units, and the axiological orientation contributes to the development of new scientific directions (Kosmeda, 2000). Evaluative activity, by its nature, has both cognitive and pragmatic manifestations. Evaluation is multifaceted: it is socially, economically, politically, spiritually, and ethnoculturally determined, which is why it is studied comprehensively, in a multi-aspect and multi-vector manner, as a category of a high level of abstraction. It belongs to the categories shaped by human society, physical and psychological nature. Axiological principles regulate the behavioural activity of social subjects; they shape ideals and norms of coexistence in society and realize integrative functions in the social context, among others. Therefore, evaluation and its verbalization are closely connected with human mentality and national character.

If *the grammar of evaluation* is a direction in Ukrainian linguistics that is distinguished within the theory of linguoaxiology and is projected onto the study of the arsenal of grammatical means of modelling evaluative meanings, considering their pragmatic characteristics, then *the morphology of evaluation* is, accordingly, projected onto the study of morphological means of expressing axiological meanings (Kosmeda, & Khaliman, 2011; Khaliman, 2019a).

Particular reflections on the peculiarities of verbalizing national mentality are understandably presented in Ukrainian linguistics, for example, in the works of Iryna Holubovs'ka (Holubovs'ka, 2004), Tetyana Kosmeda (Kosmeda, 2016b), Orest Tkachenko (Tkachenko, 2006), and Oleksandr Tsaruk (Tsaruk, 1998). However, in the works of the aforementioned scholars, there is no focus on generalizing the features of modeling grammatical (morphological) meanings as they appear in nominal parts of speech as national specificity.

The study of the features of the verbalization of the category of evaluation extends to other languages, including English. For example, Hanna Prykhodko summarizes her thoughts on the unique semantics and pragmatics of representatives of the category of evaluation, which are verbalized by means of modern English (Prykhodko, 2004; Prykhodko, 2017). This linguist also focuses on more specific issues of grammatical linguo-axiology, primarily on the description of some patterns of suffixal formations during the modeling of evaluative words in modern English (Prykhodko, 2000). However, she does not systematize grammatical meanings of evaluation and does not point out the national specificity of the English language in this regard. Oleksandra Deichakivska studies the category of evaluation through the lens of the features of the functioning of predicative adjectives in the function of expressives, demonstrating the pragmatic load of these grammatical units for modeling communicative strategies of politeness (Deichakivska, 2024). This scholar found that the actualization of politeness strategies through the use of adjective forms depends, accordingly, on the cultural context, emphasizing the need for a deeper understanding of language norms and their variations. Moreover, she demonstrated that in the process of cross-cultural communication, it is not enough to simply have a good command of the language, as it is necessary to understand the cultural differences in the use of linguistic units, particularly axiological forms, which are frequent in speech. The expression of the features of ideological evaluation can be traced in the work of Liudmyla Diachuk, who characterized the main mechanisms of manipulation of people's consciousness, which include evaluative forms; she highlighted the stereotypes of Russian propaganda based on the analysis of Russian media and blogs. As a result of her analysis, she demonstrated how, through the actualization of axiologically marked linguistic units, including euphemisms, emotionally charged vocabulary represented by different parts of speech, slogans, the actualization of hate speech, historical mythologizing, and the verbalization of falsifications, Russian propaganda justifies the war crimes of the Russian occupation army during the Russian-Ukrainian war (Diachuk, 2024). Tetyana Ivanina notes that when rendering 'diminutive-affectionate suffixes of the Ukrainian language with its well-developed system into English, which has an analytical structure, certain difficulties arise due to the lack of means to express the meaning of

diminutiveness, endearment, disdain, etc., while conveying different shades of meaning. After all, the translator must convey the phonetic, lexical, and syntactic means of the work, find not only their lexical equivalents but also take into account their connotative meaning and possible phonetic associations. Through various means, the translator must reproduce the color of colloquialism, folklore, external features, and internal qualities of the characters, which are presented through the prism of deep authorial sympathy' (Ivanina, 2010). One can agree with the idea that 'in translation practice, there can be no standard for rendering diminutives in Ukrainian into English due to the lack of developed corresponding word-formation models in the latter. In such cases, the method of lexical compensation is most often used' (Ivanina, 2010). Indeed, most connotative forms of evaluation verbalization have no equivalents when translated into other languages.

A discussion has emerged in linguistic literature regarding the degree of expressiveness of axiologicality (emotionality, expressiveness, intimacy) in individual languages, with some arguing that the most emotionally expressive and intimacy-oriented languages, where subjective evaluation is vividly verbalized, are the Slavic languages as the youngest ones, including Ukrainian. At the same time, it is believed that Romance-Germanic languages, including English, present emotional-axiological meanings less distinctly, as they are considered more perfected, more ancient, and developed languages (Tkachenko, 2006). We believe that the Ukrainian language differs from, for instance, English by the presence of more expressive grammatical axiological forms, which is evident when comparing linguistic structures. For example, the English language does not have the category of gender, and thus this category in English cannot present evaluative meanings; the number category in English is also limited in modeling evaluative meanings, which can also be said about comparative and superlative forms. As for closely related languages, such as Russian, Ukrainian stands out with specific unique ways of presenting evaluation. For example, the potential of actualizing subjective evaluation suffixes. One of the convincing examples is the following: the Ukrainian lexeme *думка* (*thought*) cannot produce a negative evaluation by attaching subjective evaluation suffixes, whereas its Russian counterpart *мысль* (*thought*) can, e.g., *мыслишка* (*insignificant thought*). In Ukrainian, such meaning cannot be reproduced because the modeling of derogatory-evaluative forms depends on the mentality of the people: for Ukrainians, *думка* (*thought*) is a concept that carries a high degree of positive evaluation, which does not allow for negative perception.

Methodology

This study is grounded in *the methodological postulates* of classical linguistics, particularly those of W. von Humboldt (Humboldt, 2018) and O. O. Potebnia (Potebnia, 1992), regarding the inseparable unity of language and thought, emphasizing the decisive role of language, as it directly influences the cognitive activity of its speakers, shaping their linguistic consciousness, mentality, worldview, and even national character. The methodology of linguoaxiology and the grammar of evaluation (morphology of evaluation) as a new linguistic direction is actualized. The article employs *the descriptive method* combined with *the classificatory approach*, which allows for the identification of a system of morphological categories that present linguistic originality in the verbalization of the category of evaluation. Additionally, *the interpretative method* is employed, which is connected with contextual and discursive analysis, aimed at formulating and characterizing the relevant morphological features and means of verbalizing the category of evaluation. The axiological method and the technique of scaling (actualization of the evaluation scale concerning the comparative and relative) are partially used, as well as the method of contrastive analysis, since linguistic facts from English linguoculture are provided to demonstrate untranslatable vocabulary. The study also utilizes *the method of morphological opposition*, along with *analysis and synthesis*, which pave the way from identifying particularities to generalization and modelling conclusions.

To confirm the theoretical postulates regarding the spread of specific morphological forms for the verbalization of the category of evaluation in the broad discursive-textual space of the Ukrainian language and its usage, we will highlight various types of discursive-textual practice (artistic, journalistic, mass media, advertising samples of speech, internet speech, as well as "live" spoken language) that represent different periods of the functioning of the Ukrainian language from the 19th to the 21st century, along with dictionary definitions.

Results and Discussion

The theoretical significance of the scientific study lies in the fact that its results allow for a deeper understanding of (1) linguoaxiology, as this article groups and systematizes the specific means of the

Ukrainian language for modeling evaluative meaning; (2) the grammar of evaluation: it demonstrates the distinctive morphological models through which the activation of evaluative meaning occurs, a feature not present in all languages; (3) the theory and practice of translation studies, as well as intercultural communication, since it involves considering non-equivalent evaluative meanings; (4) linguistic theory in general, explained by the distinction of the grammatical means of the national verbalization of the linguistic consciousness of Ukrainians, projected onto established traditions and innovations. The results of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the connection that exists between the Ukrainian language and its linguistic culture, which consists of the presence of specific axiological markers of linguistic culture that reflect different types of evaluation. This postulate is important to consider when teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, as mastering the specific grammatical forms for modeling evaluative meaning and activating them in the speech process is essential for adequately learning the Ukrainian language.

This study proposes only an aspectual, that is, fragmentary analysis of morphological forms, as it is impossible to present the entire system of specific axiological grammatical means for verbalizing evaluation within the confines of a single article. Therefore, only the most typical markers have been distinguished (characteristic morphemes of parts of speech with evaluative meaning that are distinguished by specific combinatorial features; as well as the categories of gender, number, comparative). This research has significant potential: to demonstrate the features of modeling evaluative meaning through the activation of verbal categories, as well as adverbs, the state category, functional parts of speech, and exclamations. The indicated material needs to be studied in direct comparison with the grammatical axiological potential of other languages, to comprehensively reveal the similarities and differences in the morphological strategies used to express evaluation during communication, as well as to determine the reasons for these similarities and differences.

Thus, we present an attempt to aspectually (based on the material of morphological categories of nominal parts of speech) demonstrate the uniqueness of the Ukrainian language in modeling evaluative meanings and, accordingly, their systemic representation. We emphasize that this phenomenon is connected, in particular, with the features of the national character and linguistic consciousness of Ukrainians. To achieve this, we draw on samples from Ukrainian artistic literature and contemporary journalistic discourse, considering traditional and modern communicative strategies, including the use of occasional forms and neologisms, and pragmatically motivated deviations, which highlight the novelty of this article.

We present an attempt to aspectually (using morphological categories of nominal parts of speech) demonstrate the uniqueness of the Ukrainian language in modelling evaluative meanings through specific morphological means and, accordingly, to systematize them, proving that this phenomenon is linked, among other things, with the peculiarities of the national character and linguistic consciousness of Ukrainians. To this end, we involve samples of Ukrainian literature, taking into account both traditional and contemporary speech, including occasional forms, neologisms, and pragmatically motivated deviations.

The expressive-evaluative suffixal system of the Ukrainian language is quite representative, characterized by the productivity of *subjective evaluative suffixes*, which carry meanings of *positive* or *negative* expressive-evaluative characteristics: it includes *augmentatives* and *diminutives*, which, with the development of emotional-evaluative meanings, evolve into *names of subjective evaluation* (Boyko & Khomych, 2018) and can provide lexemes with a variety of expressive nuances depending on the meaning of the base and contextual conditions: *diminutive-affectionate*, *diminutive-derogatory*, *augmentative-rude*, etc. (Holubovs'ka, 2004, p. 53). Scholars note that in the Ukrainian language, "the mentioned formants attach to the bases of **almost all nominative parts of speech**, expressing a rather developed system of creating expressive lexical units" (bold typeface by the authors) (Boyko & Khomych, 2018, p. 37) with evaluative meaning. In particular, the Ukrainian language is characterized by an old yet productive and specific **category of diminutiveness** (smallness, triviality). Although it is characteristic of other Slavic languages as well, its realization differs among them due to functional features that are determined not only by communicative needs but also by expressive possibilities and the uniqueness of mentality: it "directly depends on the peculiarities of the national-psychic composition of the speakers of a given language" (Boyko & Khomych, 2018, p. 39), their perception of the world, and the uniqueness of its evaluation.

Analyzing articles from modern bilingual dictionaries, Ukrainian researchers have noted the quantitative significance of Ukrainian words with diminutive-mejorative suffixes, e.g.: дитина (dytyna) – дитинінка (dytynynka), дитиночка (dytynochka), дити́нонька (dytynon'ka), дити́нча (dytyncha), дити́нчатко

(*dytynchatko*), *дитиня* (*dytynya*), *дитинятко* (*dytynyatko*), *немовлятко* (*nemovlyatko*), *лялечка* (*lyalechka*); *хлопець* (*khlopets'*) – *хлопійко* (*khlopiuko*), *хлопцюга* (*khloptsyuga*), *хлопча* (*khlorcha*), *хлопчак* (*khlorchak*), *хлопчатко* (*khlorchatko*), *хлопчєня* (*khlorchenya*), *хлопчик* (*khlorchuk*), *хлопчина* (*khlorchyna*), *хлопчинка* (*khlorchynka*), *хлопчисько* (*khlorchys'ko*), *хлопчишок* (*khlorchychok*), *хлопчище* (*khlorchyshe*), *хлоп'я* (*khloruya*), *хлоп'яга* (*khloruyaha*), *хлоп'як* (*khloruyak*), *хлоп'ятко* (*khloruyatko*), *хлоп'яточко* (*khloruyatychko*); *баба* (*baba*) – *бабуся* (*babusiya*), *бабусєнка* (*babusen'ka*), *бабусєчка* (*babusechka*), *бабуня* (*babunya*), *бабця* (*babtsya*), *бабонька* (*babon'ka*); *серце* (*sertse*) – *сердєчко* (*serdichko*), *серденько* (*serden'ko*), *сердєня* (*serdenya*), *сердєнятко* (*serdenyatko*) (only for people) (Holubovs'ka, 2004, pp. 54-55). The use of the category of smallness (affectionateness) is not only a characteristic feature of the Ukrainian language but also normative Kosmeda, 2016a; Tkachenko, 2006), which gives rise to new forms in contemporary speech, including occasional forms.

We want to highlight Ukrainian folklore traditions that present *the connotations of corresponding nouns, fixed by national consciousness, and those that do not have equivalents in other Slavic languages*, e.g.: *голубочки* (*holubochky* – about lovers), *квітонька* (*kvitlon'ka* – about a young girl), *ластів'ята* (*lastiv'yata* – about children), as well as *бідонька* (*bidonka*), *дубище* (*dubyshe*), *вербиченька* (*verbichen'ka*), *коханнйчко* (*kokhannyachko*), *лишенько* (*lyshen'ko*), *мандрівочка* (*mandrivochka*), *народець* (*narodets'*), and so on. The features of the phenomenon of connotation in a comparative aspect through the lens of English and Ukrainian languages were also noted by S. Talko, H. Minchak, D. Hmyria (Talko, Minchak, & Hmyria, 2022). The presence of such connoted non-equivalent lexicon indicates, on the one hand, the lyricism and sentimentality of Ukrainians and, on the other, the high emotionality of perception, which is clearly seen in the presence of affectionate forms in concepts that cannot be evaluated as positive from either a social or individual perspective (e.g., *вороженьки* (*vorozhen'ky*), *зрадонька* (*zradonka*)), as well as in the "speaker's desire to subjectively soften the harsh, unpleasant impressions of bad things in the surrounding reality" (Holubovs'ka, 2004, p. 57). This can serve as an additional argument in support of recognizing the Ukrainian cordocentricity and unique emotionality, which are associated with Ukraine's tragic fate, expressed by Ukrainians through the verbalization of evaluative sensitivity. For instance, in modern Ukrainian advertising discourse, we observe the modelling of nouns with the activation of both diminutive-affectionate and augmentative-derogatory suffixes simultaneously, modelling particular emotionality and attractiveness in the discourse. Moreover, such nominations are singled out into independent nominative sentences, e.g., *Мемі. Мемчики. Мемаси. Більше мемів! А як же ЗНО? Яке ЗНО??? Та це аж влітку!...* (Edera, 2020). The Ukrainians' aspiration for victory in the current Russo-Ukrainian war is reflected in the frequent use of the diminutive *переможенька* (*peremozhen'ka*) in the discursive space. For example, the title of the website section "*Переможенька*" (*Peremozhen'ka*) (City of the Sun, 2023); Volodymyr Hrebionyuk verbalized his original association by projecting the diminutive noun *переможенька* (*peremozhen'ka*) onto the name of a Ukrainian woman, embodying faith in victory, blessed by God, presenting it in poetic lines with a series of diminutives: *А як звати тебе, Доню, / Донечко маленька? / Нам цікаво дуже-дуже! / – Мене звати – Женька! / – А як звучить повне ім'я, / Яке дав наш Боженька? / – Повне ім'я таке в мене: / Звучить – Переможенька!!!* (Grebonyuk, 2023). Based on the graphical technique of capitalization presented within the word (a type of graphical language play), the website name *ПеремоЖенька* (*PeremoZHEN'ka*) (@elit.writer) was created. However, we also encounter partially ironic uses of the given lexeme, e.g.: *Так усе ж просто: кава не заварилася, а переможенька забарилася* (Last Bastion, 2024); *Зараз буде контрнаступ, який нікого з українців не торкнеться, станеться (звісно сама по собі за божої волі) переможенька, і купа проблем залишиться в минулому* (Glavcom, 2023); *«Це космічна переможенька»: з держбюджету виділять 90 млн гривень для просування України у світі* (New Voice, 2022). We observe evaluative ambivalence.

Orest Tkachenko emphasizes that "the Ukrainian language, especially the folk variety, is very rich in *diminutive-affectionate forms, even possible for infinitives* (e.g., in the language directed at children from the verb *купатися* (*kuvatysya*), forms such as *купуси* (*kupsi*), *купці* (*kuptsi*), *купусеньки* (*kupsiśen'ky*))" (bold and italicized by the authors). (Tkachenko, 2006, p. 14). Diminutive suffixes are also attached to *neutral adjectival and adverbial bases*, creating lexemes with positive or negative evaluative meanings, adding an ironic or derogatory semantic tone, e.g.: *поганенький* (*poĥanen'ky*), *поганесенький* (*poĥanesen'ky*), *пaskудненький* (*paskudnen'ky*), *примітивенький* (*prymityvnen'ky*), *ніякогісінький* (*niyakohis'n'ky*), *простісінький* (*prostyśin'ky*), *п'яненийкий* (*p'yānen'ky*), *підленький* (*pidlen'ky*). Derivative expressive lexemes with augmentative-pejorative suffixes attest to the existence of a developed system of word-formation tools in the Ukrainian language, through which connotative meanings of coarseness, contempt, disdain, etc., are conveyed.

Another specific feature of the Ukrainian language is **the activity of compound nouns with a negative evaluative meaning for naming people, which is formed according to the model "verb of the 2nd person singular of the imperative mood + noun"** (Tsaruk, 1998, p. 247), e.g.: *вертихвіст*, *держиморда*, *зірвіголова*, *скалозуб* (*скализуб*), *урвіголова*, *шибайголова*, *пройдисвіт*, *дерилюд*, *знайди біда*, etc. The above mentioned lexemes have been proven to be active in the field of live folk speech, as well as in fiction texts, e.g.: *Добрий, видно, вертихвіст, та все ж таки втіха матері, є хоч до кого в хаті озватись* (Honchar, 2004); *Не боюсь я царів держилюдів, – Хоч у них є солдати й гармати* (Franko, 2005); *Дай цьому дерилюду синеньку, бо він такий, що здер з живого й мертвого* (Stelmakh, 2005); *А що можна сказати про волоцюг і пройдисвітів, які ганяють по світу вітер...?* (Zahrebelnyi, 1981). The majority of such names have a pronounced negative evaluative marking with a tone of contempt, irony, contempt, etc. **Some of them are characterized by a female correlative (feminine gender), which also presents the national Ukrainian linguistic specificity**, e.g., *вертихвістка*, *крутихвістка*, *пройдисвітка*, *шалапутка*, *шелухвістка*. The examples of a contextual use of the above mentioned lexemes: *От він і вважає нас за ні на що не здатних вертихвісток* (Юрій Шовкопляс); *Пройдисвітка* зубаста знала, *Чого хвостатий кум бажав* (Hlibov, 2019); *Я була хоч і гарна, але зроду вже вдалась вітрогонка та шелухвістка* (Nechui-Levytskyi, 2008). Separate composites are also of a common gender that presents the same semantics, cf.: *вертиголова*, *крутиголова*, *паливода*.

The main morphological categories of nouns include **gender**, which, accordingly, expresses a national identity in the Ukrainian language: based on the actualization of the category of gender, **original national axiologically marked images are created**, which are revealed when comparing languages since in another language it is difficult to convey such peculiar images-metaphors. A similar phenomenon can be identified in other linguistic cultures, but they still present linguistic uniqueness. For example, the Ukrainian noun *калина* – feminine: a number of symbolic meanings, associations, and connotations are based on this categorical sign, which has an exclusively positive evaluation, but on the condition that the gender meaning coincides, cf.: in traditional folklore *калина* – *дівчина*. In the Ukrainian linguoculture, in particular, during the period of the Russian-Ukrainian war, *калина* is not only the name of the plant but also a symbolic designation of *Ukraine as the state* (updated taking into account the meaning of the feminine gender of the nouns compared). We trace the spread of the song "Oy u luzi chervona kalyna...", written by Stepan Charnetsky (Charnetsky, 1914) based on the Ukrainian Cossack song "The Steep Banks Spilled out" (the 17th century). Therefore this song received the status of a folk song: it was performed by fighters for the freedom of Ukraine. After the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war in February 2022, this song received a second birth and became known all over the world. On the basis of *folklore symbolism* and actualization of *the morphological category of gender*, the national symbol is formulated: *калина* – *Україна*. But, for example, there is no such image in the English language, so translators mostly use the botanical term in this case: Ukr. *калина* – Eng. *viburnum*, which "levels the idea of a song and devalues the importance of this concept for the Ukrainian people" (Mykytiuk & Ursaki, 2023, p. 67). However, Steve Repa – the author of the first translation of the song – used transliteration «*Ой у лузі червона каліна* – *In the meadow, a red kalyna*» with the interpretation of the Ukrainian reality of *viburnum* in the comments submitted, e.g., "*The kalyna – the high bush cranberry – is a symbol of Ukraine. It blooms white. In the fall it is heavy, bent over (burdened) with red berries*" (Repa, 2016).

A characteristic feature of the Ukrainian language is also **an active use of neuter gender forms to verbalize positive evaluative meanings**, which is not characteristic of the majority of Slavic languages. Meanings with positive semantics are modelled by means of metaphorical transference and the creation of a positive modality, which is manifested, in particular, in dialogues between an adult and a child, cf.: *А воно, його щастячко, вже дрібно ступало босоніж курними шляхами на схід, поміж остогидлими дорфами, поміж бункерами* (Honchar, 2004); *Дякую, сонечко, що ти в мене є!* (Tarabarova, 2020). These forms, in addition to the modelling of the evaluative meaning, contribute to the intimization phenomenon of verbalization.

Nouns of masculine and neuter gender with the ending -o are also unique: they nominate negative characteristics of people mostly, e.g.: *агакало*, *базікало*, *доробало*, *дурко*, *зазнайко*, *ледащо*, *мурмило*, *невмійко*, *незнайко*, *немійко*, *хвалько*, *хизько*, *чванько*, and also **with the meaning of masculine and neuter or feminine and neuter in -иц(е)**, e.g.: *такий вовчице і таке вовчице, такий дубице і таке дубице, така ручице і таке ручице, така дівчице і таке дівчице, такий хлопчице і таке хлопчице, така свекрущице і таке свекрущице*.

Common gender nouns are also a special feature of the Ukrainian language. There is no doubt that these nouns present a negative evaluation of the agent mostly, e.g., *гуляка, забіяка, зайда, злюка, недоріка, недотепа, нетяма, ненажера, плакса, рева, сердеха* та под.

As we know, *the adjective* was formed as part of the language somewhat later than the noun: it has more abstract semantics. Some of its grammatical forms expressing the evaluation category also present national specificity, such as the elative category. **Elative** is a grammeme of the category of manifestation degree of adjectives and adverbs, which is an indicator of an increased intensity of the feature manifestation of an evaluative meaning. Elative is, as is known, a homonymous form to the highest degree of comparison of adjectives, which denotes an extremely high degree of quality. In Ukrainian, the elative is formed with the help of prefixes *як, що-* and superlative forms with a prefix *най-*, c.f.: *щонайменший огріх, щонайкоротший шлях, найвдаліший засіб*, etc. (Zahnitko, 2012, p. 257). The meaning of the elative indicates an extremely high, highest or maximum level of quality intensity, an apparent excess of this level compared to the "norm" of a certain subject. It is believed that the **elative** arose on the basis of emotional tension expressed by the Ukrainians, i.e. it is mostly of an **affective, evaluative nature, and the comparative is of an intellectual nature** (Bartonek, 1995). Andrii Savula notes that "the concept of degree is often accompanied by an evaluative tone, because a high degree can express both a pleasant and unpleasant impression" (Savula, 2015, p. 307).

As the author's observations prove, the Ukrainian colloquial style and fiction are characterized by the presence of a large number of emotional and evaluative *elatives*. The reason for the active creation of such forms consists in the fact that in modern narrow speech, speakers do not find a sufficient number of "strong" and apt words that could fully realize a creative intention, and, accordingly, they resort to the creation of new forms that are able to paint the picture more brightly, cf.: *Сахно зібрала всі сили і кинулася плисти щонайшвидше* (Smolych, 2020); *Я постараюся якнайшвидше переглянути рукопис кожного присланого Вами оповідання* (Kotsiubynskyi, 2023). We support the idea of the Ukrainian linguists that, by creating such grammatical forms, communicators enrich modern speech and demonstrate powerful possibilities of the Ukrainian language, in fact, its axiological potential (Zhyzhoma, 2009, p. 160). According to the author's observations, this is actively manifested in modern advertising discourse. It is common knowledge that the activities of advertising creators are mainly designed to implement a manipulative strategy of positivity. Here are the characteristic phrases extracted from the advertising texts. The superlative is used, in particular, in educational advertising to describe agents (eg: *найкращі викладачі; найкращий друг / наставник, спеціалісти найвищого рівня*) and unliving beings, certain realities (*найважливіші навички; найсучасніші підходи; найпрестижніший факультет; найпрогресивніші методи; найкращі традиції*). Compare the contexts: **Найкращі викладачі для найкращих студентів** (Ukrainian Catholic University, 2022). The word combination is often updated in the names of advertising sites *найкращий вибір*, c.f.: **Найкращий вибір**. Вирішуємо конфлікти (Mur-Mallinos, 2018); **Найкращий вибір** онлайн українською мовою в HD (Uakino Bay, 2024).

In the Ukrainian speech, the possibilities of presenting evaluative meanings are revealed during **the transition of relative adjectives into qualitative ones** when they form occasional (non-normative) forms of degrees of comparison, e.g.: *більш томатна паста; щонайтоматніша паста; більш кавовий напій; найкавовіший напій* etc. Let's compare the fragments of advertisements: «Чумак» – *найтоматніша паста*. «Олейна» – *найoleyніша олія*. «Бухгалтерський облік» (the name of the newspaper) – *Найбухгалтерська газета* (Znannia, 2018); «Всесвіт» – *найдитячіша газета* (Yevseienko, 2019), *Тож, щоб придбати собі гарячу найкавовішу каву необхідно зайти на сайт, або через мобільний додаток WOG, та замовити одразу 10 порцій* (Wog, 2015). The contextual examples: *З шести зразків соусу різних марок наші дегустатори-аматори спробували визначити «найтоматніший» та «найшашличніший»* (Yaskova, 2018); *Найтоматніший салат. Готуємо з чотирьох видів томатів з молодого бронзою...* (Shalom | Lviv, 2023).

We state that not only relative but also possessive adjectives are involved in the process of gradation (Riazantseva, 2011, p. 73-74), although, of course, the forms of the higher and highest degrees of comparison can only have qualitative adjectives, so we trace a relatively **new active process of modelling evaluative meanings to reveal the intensity of evaluation**, which is needed, in particular, for modelling advertising discourse. The Ukrainian researchers also write about this phenomenon, but let's emphasize that **the tendency mentioned above is becoming more active in an active progression**, cf.: "And in this, we put a considerable percentage of responsibility on the most effective means of manipulating mass, including

linguistic, consciousness – advertising. Probably, everyone has already heard about *найпомідорнішу томатну пасту* та *найтоматніший кетчуп торгової марки «Чумак»*. Of course, the lexical units *найпомідорніший* and *найтоматніший* are occasional, but they fulfill the social purpose of advertising: to attract the attention of a potential consumer in any way, without violating the word-forming norms of the Ukrainian language at the same time. We can even say that in these contexts relative adjectives *помідорний* and *томатний* acquire a quality shade of meaning, and the innovations themselves are accepted as situationally justified and do not cause active rejection" (Siuta, 2010).

We will also provide examples of *modelling comparative forms using possessive adjectives*, e.g., «*Україніша Україна*» – вона така: *неймовірно душевна, гармонійна, тиха, негаслива* (Tilda, 2023). We confirm the scholars' opinion that gradations can "undergo adjectives that represent the meaning of temporal and locative attributiveness, materiality, adjectives of socio-political and scientific spheres" (Riazantseva, 2013, p. 7), c.f.: *Юрка Коха називають «найльвівськішим художником»* (Kruger, 2014). Oksana Khaliman also emphasizes an active functioning of the following constructions, for example: *найетимологічніший з етимологів; з усіх Андріїв найандрійніший Андрій; найдедлайнний дедлайн; найкінотеатровіші кінотеатр* (Khaliman, 2019b, p. 24).

In the Ukrainian language, **ordinal numerals quite often acquire the meaning of quality and express evaluative meanings** during their functioning: in this case, they become qualitative adjectives and can also form comparative forms. For example, the numeral *перший* fixed the normative meaning 'one that surpasses all others in a certain respect'; 'найбільший', 'найкращий', 'найвидатніший', etc.: e.g.: *перший сорт*; the ordinal number *другий* has the meaning of "a less pronounced positive sign", e.g.: *другий сорт*. In the explanatory dictionaries, the form *найперший* – 'найвищий ступінь до перший', розм. 'найважливіший', 'найголовніший' (Ukrainians, 1971, p. 696), in colloquial speech the form *першіший* is used, e.g.: *Концерт, всі стоять попереду, а мій син все-таки «першіший»* (Tumik, 2019); *Обидва будуть першими, – заявив я. – Перший заступник першим і другий заступник ще першіший першого* (Chornohuz, 2021); *...один Масалов чого вартий – першіший хабарник!!!* (Volynsky News, 2016). During the Russo-Ukrainian war, **numeral forms perform the function of euphemisms** in speech, neutralizing the negative, respectively, passing into the category of qualitative adjectives that can be substantivized, cf.: *двохсотий* ('убитий'), *трьохсотий* ('поранений') – *Рідні ... у цей час думали, що він двохсотий. Але вижив, повернувся додому* (Shved, & Omelian, 2023); *Втрати окупантів. Ким був сотисячний «двохсотий»? (Hudymenko, 2022); «Ваш Андрій тяжкий трьохсотий»: хлопець з Рівненщини отримав важке поранення під Енергодаром* (ITV Media Group, 2023); *«30 важких трьохсотих, без рук, без ніг було за день»: як парамедик з Нацгвардії рятував військових на фронті* (Levchenko, 2022)..

The pronouns acquired the ability to create comparative forms, in particular possessive ones: *Жінка твоя. Але я твоїша* (Kostenko, 2023); *Ніка Кічурка видала збірку віршів «Я твоїша»*. Книгу присвятила своєму чоловіку Геннадію, який був оборонцем Маріуполя; Мені «зайшла» фраза «я твоїша». *Це ще більше, ніж просто «я твоя»*, – пояснила Ніка Кічурка. До збірки увійшли 54 вірші. *Це інтимна лірика про ...* (Kaliuzhna, 2023). Many examples of such occasional gradation are illustrated by the pronoun *сам*, cf.: *Краєзнавча година «Саміший з найсаміших» (до 80-річчя від дня народження Бориса Нечерди)* (Andrushivka LibraryTal'veh, 2019); *І я зі своєї сибірської глибинки дивлюся на киян, на москалів, на білорусів як на чужих людей, котрі між собою посварилися й сперечаються – а хто саміший?* (Rudenko, 1998).

There should be also emphasized **functional and pragmatic features of the Ukrainian neuter gender pronoun ВОНО**, which can replace the masculine and feminine pronouns *він* and *вона*. The specified technique serves to model shades of a negative evaluation, in particular contempt, insulting name-calling, and belongs to the invective means of speech, which are evidenced by the artistic texts of the classics of Ukrainian literature and modern discourse of the Ukrainians, e.g., *Воно звинувачує, галасує...Слизняк він і є слизняк...* (Kotovenko, 2009). At the same time, this pronoun can also verbalize a positive evaluation, a friendly and supportive attitude: *Воно* (a child – the authors) *сповитеє лежало...* (Shevchenko, 1978). In colloquial speech: *Воно таке розумне, гарне*⁴ (about a teacher – the authors).

⁴ The example is taken from the author's card index, where samples of live spoken Ukrainian language are recorded. The recording was made in October 2023.

We agree with the scholars' conclusion that in modern grammar, "there is a need to describe creative interpretations of grammatical units, which will make it possible to supplement the known descriptions of the Ukrainian language grammatical system and, obviously, explaining the laws of interpretation of grammatical units, recording the emergence of new forms and new phenomena, predict their development to a certain extent" (Khaliman, 2019b, p. 22). Indeed, the process of grading adjectives, ordinal numerals, and some classes of pronouns is marked by activity. *Structural elements, constructions, consideration of typical lacunae, symbols, connotations, associations, metaphors, paremic system, grammatical constructions*, in particular, and those that are typical of each specific language, *it is crucial to systematize*, since the selection of the specified means is designed to meet the needs of translation activities, as well as the teaching of the Ukrainian language as a native language and as a foreign language, which is carried out in this research.

Conclusions

The scientific study presents the axiological potential of Ukrainian speech, the peculiarities of creating nationally marked grammatical meanings and senses, which deepens the theory of linguoaxiology and demonstrates the relevance of distinguishing an independent study referred to as the morphology of evaluation. We trace the unique interaction between grammatical semantics and pragmatics.

The evaluation verbalized in the speech of Ukrainians through a system of morphological means characteristic of nominal parts of speech allows for the identification of distinct Ukrainian linguistic models, reflective of the linguistic consciousness of Ukrainians, which represent both the continuity of tradition (established forms) and innovative tendencies (occasional formations). The examined models are not consistently observed in other languages and primarily form non-equivalent forms in the Ukrainian language, encompassing a wide range of grammatical meanings. The theory of linguoaxiology is supplemented with new models based on the special linguistic creativity of Ukrainians, the individualization of their speech, while also adhering to its standardization, indicating the presence of typical formulas of linguistic creativity as well as significant potential for communicative competence. The characterized models are productive and regular, allowing for the tracking of trends in the development of the Ukrainian language and the enrichment of the axiological cognitive and linguistic picture of the world of Ukrainians, which requires documentation in explanatory dictionaries. Some models are motivated by sociolinguistic factors that reflect contemporary Ukrainian reality.

Based on the author's observations on the functioning of *specialized morphological forms* that serve to model the meaning of evaluation, it can be stated that in the system of nominal parts of speech such forms are formed modelled on the actualization of the meanings of (1) *categories of augmentation* (mainly augmentative pejorative or meiorative meanings) / *diminutives* (diminutive pejorative or meiorative meanings); (2) *the noun and pronoun gender categories* (mostly these are the forms of the middle, double, even and common gender nouns: these forms are peculiar national forms of the Ukrainian language): (a) the neuter gender of the noun is projected onto the verbalization of positive and negative evaluative meanings (the fact of manifestation of a peculiar grammatical enantosemy and ambivalence), which can be traced in the forms of the neuter personal pronoun *воно*; (b) paired masculine and neuter nouns ending in -o: they usually denote negative characteristics of people; (c) common nouns also mostly verbalize a negative evaluation; (3) *the comparative category* of the adjective mainly refers to an intellectual evaluation, with the help of which degrees of comparison, which are not typical of normative speech, are formed on the rating scale (higher and the highest): (a) other relative and possessive adjectives, in which comparative forms violate the current norm; (b) ordinal numerals for which the comparative is also not characteristic; (c) possessive and meaningful pronouns that occasionally model these forms; (4) *the category of elative*, which arose on the basis of the verbalization of the tendency of Ukrainians to violent expression of emotions – affectivity, which always expresses a certain degree of manifestation of evaluation, which is recorded on the evaluation scale: low, high, higher, highest or maximum, which may exceed the norm, although the concept of the norm is relative. In order to actualize evaluative values, the Ukrainians realize their linguistic creativity by modelling occasionalisms and neologisms and creating grammatically incorrect morphological forms, which, however, present powerful axiological pragmatics.

It has been observed that in the Ukrainian language, *nouns with evaluative semantics* present a sharper manifestation of axiologicality compared to their root adjectives. Additionally, many complex nouns in Ukrainian carry a strong negative evaluative meaning, particularly those formed using the model 'verb 2nd person singular imperative + noun.'

Ukrainian speakers strive to soften negativity, somewhat neutralize it, and verbalize the category of intimacy. This is why a large number of *affectionate forms* are recorded even in concepts that cannot be positively evaluated due to their inherently negative semantics. This reveals the ironic nature of the language.

The aforementioned models model a wide range of meanings of subjective evaluation, expressing a system of stylistic tonalities, including hybrid types: affectionate, diminutive-affectionate, derogatory, diminutive-derogatory, coarse, augmentative-coarse, disdainful, and so on. We also observe non-equivalent grammatical forms.

Moreover, the arsenal of morphological tools for modelling evaluative meanings **the uniqueness of the national-psychological composition of the Ukrainian language speakers**, who strive to powerfully express emotions and feelings and verbalize the category of intimacy. In grammar, particularly in morphology, **the specificity of the Ukrainian national character is reflected**, characterized by cardio-centrism (sensibility, "heartiness" in speech), heightened emotionality, sentimentality (external impressions affect feelings rather than reason and thoughts), lyricism (elevated emotional experience of events or phenomena), and a tendency toward intimacy (intimating forms of affection). This indicates a significant potential for verbalizing evaluation, which is expressed in the large number of subjective evaluative suffixes that attach to practically all parts of speech, especially nominal ones. This is documented in folklore traditions and actively manifests in the modern discourse of Ukrainian linguistic culture, including during the period of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

We observe the contemporary Ukrainians' aspiration to model creative speech within a nationally colored discursive-textual space, saturated with grammatical forms that express evaluative meaning, particularly at the level of morphology. The current speech reality compels the search for new forms of expressing evaluative meaning, taking into account national uniqueness, as these forms present a more powerful speech pragmatics that stands out against the backdrop of other national languages.

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