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Jim Hlavač
Monash University, Australia
jim.hlavac@monash.edu

Diana Stolac
University of Rijeka

Gender equality and occupational designations in Croatian

Abstract

This paper deals with gender equality as a principle and its implementation with respect to the form of designations that refer to occupations that both men and women may work in. The starting points are the changes that Croatian society has undergone from the middle of the twentieth century onwards that led to the participation of women across a wide range of occupations. Further to this, socio-political as well as ideological developments have challenged the dominance of men in the workforce or labour market in general. As far as language is concerned, this brings up the question of the way members of either sex are represented within the workface and the titles or terms used to refer to them. In Croatian there are many word formation possibilities that enable the development or coining of new terms for male or female *nomina agenti* (performers of actions). Diachronic and synchronic analysis shows that in Croatian, this process occurs invariably via suffixation. Therefore, there are few linguistic obstacles to achieving what is set out in Croatia's Act on Gender Equality which specifies that advertised positions must be clear in stating that any person from either sex may apply and that the title of the position should be provided in both the male and female variants.

Drawing on multiple corpora to examine the forms of occupational designations that are used in authoritative documents, in job advertisements, in select workplaces and in official or semi-official correspondence, we find that across three iterations of the National Classification of Occupations there are numerous inconsistencies, notably single-gender designations lacking counterparts for the opposite sex and

occasional semantic asymmetries reflecting contemporary usage. These issues are substantially reduced in the latest 2023 version, which contains approximately twenty such instances. Feminine-only forms persist mainly in traditionally female-dominated occupations (e.g. *vezilja* 'embroiderer', *primalja* 'midwife'), although masculine equivalents have since been proposed by linguistic authorities. Conversely, some masculine-only forms and gender-atypical "outliers" remain, while certain gendered nouns have expanded semantically to encompass both women and men.

Parallel developments are observed in job advertisements, where gender-inclusive strategies are increasingly adopted, though unmarked masculine forms remain common, especially in employer-generated advertisements. Educational settings reveal partial symmetry in formal terminology but asymmetries in colloquial usage. Official written communication continues to favour masculine-gender forms, except in politically salient contexts where inclusivity is more explicit. Finally, commercial signage demonstrates variable gender marking, with some professionals adopting gender-neutral constructions to avoid gender specification. Overall, the findings illustrate gradual but uneven progress toward gender-inclusive language for occupational designations.

Key words: gender equality; inclusive language; occupational designations; word formation in Croatian

1. Introduction

In many societies with universal education that have undergone industrialisation and urbanisation, with a commensurate diversification of the labour market, the issue of the equality of the sexes has become a major socio-political one. Gender equality is an issue that applies across all levels of government (national, regional, local), all areas of economic activity (public or private), across all facets of society (family/home life, education, culture etc.) and is one that relates also to inter-personal relations. This paper deals with gender equality in the area of work and employment with a specific focus on employment designations that exist for men and women.

The notion of gender equality and the need for occupational forms for women that are equal to or equivalent to those that exist for men has been part of a wider socio-political process that has occurred in Croatian society, as in many other societies, over the last 50 years (Dobos, 1983; Barilar et

al., 2005). A brief historical overview of developments related to the emancipation of women in Croatia from a linguistic perspective is provided by Glovacki-Bernardi (2008).

The question of gender equality also raises the question of what we understand by the term 'gender' or 'gender identity'. The terms 'gender' and 'gender identity' have, in recent times, been brought up by the issue of designations used for or claimed by people who do not identify with either gender, i.e. non-binary or gender-diverse people. This topic has been researched mostly in predominantly Anglophone countries (Cordoba, 2022; Thorne et al., 2023) and to a lesser extent in other countries, e.g. Germany (Buonasora, 2023). The issue of non-binary or gender-diverse (self-)descriptions is still emerging in Croatia and initial studies on the use of pronouns, adjectives and (occupational) self-designations point to mixed views amongst non-binary people themselves (Špoljar, 2021) as well as what appear to be unresolved linguistic challenges, at least at present (Mihaljević, 2018, 2021; Mihaljević et al., 2022). The authors of this paper acknowledge non-binary and gender-diverse identities and that people who self-identify in this way are part of the workforce just as they are part of society in general. This paper, however, does not address the situation and status of people who identify as non-binary or gender-diverse, and instead restricts analysis to forms of language that relate recognisably to either of the binary genders, male or female.

In Croatian, gender is also a grammatical category, i.e. all nouns bear a grammatical gender. Nouns belong to various classes, each of which are aligned with a particular gender. The gender of a noun also determines other sentence constituents such as determiners and attributive or predicative adjectives (Pišković, 2011). Thus, all occupational designations, as nouns, bear a grammatical gender. In relation to nouns that index biological sex, e.g. *muškarac* 'man' or *djevojka* 'daughter', the grammatical gender of the noun usually aligns with biological sex, i.e. nouns relating to male referents are masculine gender and those relating to female ones are feminine gender. This rule is not absolute as there are nouns such as *tata* 'dad' and *vojvoda* 'duke' that relate to male persons and which are masculine-gender nouns but which are declined as feminine-gender ones. Historically, masculine-gender nouns have been used as generic forms to denote collectively all referents of a particular category: detonyms, e.g. *Splićani* 'inhabitants (m.) of Split'; ethnonyms, e.g. *Talijani* 'Italians' (m.); and adherents of a religion, e.g. *Židovi* 'Jews'

(m.). Historically, the generic use of masculine-gender forms has applied to occupational designations as well, e.g. *Moramo zvati doktora* 'We need to call the doctor (m.)'; *Učitelji su u štrajku* 'Teachers (m.) are on strike'.

The participation of women in the workforce across a wide variety of occupations raises the issue of appropriate designations that relate to females as well as males. In Croatia, the development and popularisation of gender-inclusive language is not only a legislative and procedural task, it is a task that calls for the input of linguists to ensure that suggested designations are not only amenable, but also linguistically felicitous.

Here, word formation conventions and morphological features are relevant to show how *mocija* can be achieved in Croatian. *Mocija* refers to the morphologically productive process of suffixes being used to enable the creation of both masculine- and feminine-gender forms for the same lexical referent, i.e. the same *nomen agentis*. In many traditional descriptions of Croatian grammar, this process was seen as one where forms of one grammatical gender – almost invariably those of masculine gender – provided the model for the creation of forms for the other gender via a process of additive suffixation (Barić, 1987, 1988a, 1988b; Ćorić, 1982; Mihaljević & Štebih Golub, 2010). Contemporary descriptions of *mocija* in Croatian now view it as a process where particular derivational morphemes are used selectively for the creation of masculine-gender nouns while others are used selectively for the creation of feminine-gender nouns. This process is seen not as additive or hierarchically dependent, but as a process that is equivalent and comparable, with analogous patterns of suffixation occurring for occupational designations for both masculine-gender and feminine-gender nouns (Silić, 2004; Silić & Pranjković, 2007; Pišković, 2011).

This paper examines the processes that have been recorded diachronically (i.e. historically, in language varieties used in Croatian-speaking areas over the last 300 years) and synchronically (i.e. comparative contemporary usage) that now result in the availability of nominal forms for both male and female protagonists. This is relevant not only as a linguistic feature of Croatian, but as one that legislative regulations now require: the use of male and female designations in job advertisements.

This paper examines the application of these regulations in authoritative documents relating to designations for occupational designations from 1998, 2010 and 2023. Looking at the listings in the three iterations of the

National Classifications of Occupations, we examine both masculine- and female-gender forms to see that they are congruent to each other semantically (i.e. terminologically) and how this achieved morphologically. Further examples are provided from non-official sources which enable a comparison of ratified linguistic practices, with 'real life' linguistic practices observed in employment-based protocols and job advertisements, as well as media reporting that features people's employment designations. Fieldwork observation of public signage from a linguistic landscape perspective is reported on, together with some remarks on official and colloquial usage.

2. Gender equality, anti-discrimination legislation and gender-inclusive terminology

As stated above, the issue of equality of the sexes and equal opportunity for both men and women in all aspects of life is one that has been a focus of social movements in many countries over the last 100 years. Language use and the use of terms to refer to men and women has been a central focus of these movements. In predominantly Anglophone countries, this has usually related to the use of sexist or excluding language, in particular the use of masculine pronouns, use of the word *man,* and male-gender-marked job titles as generic terms. These were identified as examples of discriminatory language that, by their very form, suggested that members of only one sex were being referred to, or could hold such positions (Spender, 1980; Briere & Lanktree, 1983; Shepelak et al., 1984). In the 1970s, legislation was passed in many countries that prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of a person's sex, and in many English-speaking countries from the late 1980s onwards, guidelines were developed that addressed gender-marked occupational designations with recommendations for terms that are gender-inclusive or gender-unmarked. Thus, terms such as *policeman, fireman, cameraman, garbage man* or *newspaper boy* that are male-gender-marked forms, and terms such as *maid* or *air hostess* that are female-gender-marked forms have largely been replaced by gender-unmarked ones: *police officer, fire fighter, camera operator, garbage collector, newspaper deliverer, room attendant* and *flight attendant* (Pauwels, 1991, 1998).

These developments occurred in English, a language which "has a gender system based on semantic criteria" (Corbett, 1991: 12), or one in which

gender is not "'grammatical' in the fullest sense" (McConnell-Ginet, 2013: 6). Instead, McConnell-Ginet (2013: 6) sees English as having a "notional gender system" in which the "choice of an English pronoun is apparently determined by the sex that the speaker attributes to the referent". In relation to names of occupations, English has comparatively few gender-marked forms, as designations for most job titles are not marked for gender, e.g., *teacher, lawyer, doctor, journalist, surgeon, shopkeeper*, etc. In some instances, there is variety in the forms used, e.g. *chairperson* or *chair* for *chairman* and *chairwoman*. But the absence of gender as a full grammatical category as it is in most other European languages, and the relatively small number of gender-specific designations meant that the introduction of gender-inclusive language for occupational designations in English has been relatively straightforward.

Here, it is important to note that the catalyst for their use has been legislative regulations that prohibit discrimination, rather than lists of terms prescribed by governmental or other authorities. This is in line with the laissez-faire and pragmatic approach to legal regulations characteristic of many Anglophone countries with a *common law* tradition, which do not specify a particular type of response to a problem, but simply require that behaviours leading to a problem be avoided.

2.1 Formalising classification systems of occupations and cross-linguistic differences

Although most English-speaking countries have a permissive approach to the use of occupational designations, the formal description of occupations and occupational titles, i.e. the formal description of activities and skills performed by an employed person and matching these with a designation, is something that has been pursued at international levels. A key document is the International Labour Organization's *International Standard Classification of Occupations* (ILO ISCO), first developed in 1957, with the latest version released in 2008. Versions of the ILO ISCO are first written in English, then translated into other UN working languages. The ascendency of English as the world's *lingua franca* has meant that the issue of occupational designations for languages that distinguish gender as a grammatical category (and where masculine-gender forms contrast with

feminine-gender forms for all nouns, including job titles) has largely gone unnoticed, at least in English-speaking countries.[1]

Other supra-national bodies, such as the European Union, also employ formal descriptions of occupations. Building on the work of the ILO, in 2008, the European Commission released the *European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations* (ESCO) document as a generic register for each member state to apply uniform occupational designations, and for each member state to align existing occupational designations in its national language(s) with listings given in the ESCO. While the ILO ISCO is a *descriptive* document, the EU ESCO is more than this. Part of this has to do with the principles of parity and mobility between EU member states. With the mobility of workers within the European Union being a decisive feature, ESCO defines occupations and linked skills, stating that "over time, it [ESCO] will also display the qualifications awarded in the education and training systems from Member States, as well as qualifications issued by private awarding bodies" (Directorate General: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2018). In effect, ESCO *prescribes* a classification of job titles, and with it, the actual occupational designations that are to be used in the 24 official languages of the EU.

An approach to the *prescription* of occupational designations is one based not only on practical or labour-mobility arguments; rather, there is a socio-cultural basis to this as well. Most continental European countries have a *code law* not *common law* tradition. Within the code law tradition, regulations typically seek to specify not only avoidance of dispreferred actions, but what forms of behaviour are to be displayed. Thus, for example, in Germany, a governmental authority the *Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* 'Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training' (2025) issues a list with the official designations of those occupations that have recognised and approved training requirements, the *Verzeichnis der anerkannten Ausbildungsberufe* 'Register of Recognised Skilled Occupations'. Job titles are therefore not designations that can be (self-)awarded arbitrarily, but are, to a great extent, prescribed by governmental authorities. Anti-discrimination legislation in Germany, as elsewhere in

[1] For example, there is a number of scientific papers written on this topic in relation to German, e.g. Hellinger (1980), Müller (1988), Irmen-Linner (2005), Trömel-Plötz (2008) and Vandergriff et al. (2008) that appear to have been unfamiliar to supra- or international standards authorities responsible for the development of terminology.

Europe, has resulted in the requirement that occupational designations should not discriminate against either sex and should be gender-inclusive. Therefore, the German Register of Recognised Skilled Occupations contains terms for all designations that encompass both males and females.

When we consider that most European languages also distinguish gender as a grammatical category, then the choice of terms used in lists or registers of occupations is not only a procedural one, it is also a *linguistic* one, as the terms need not only to be congruent to the specific occupational activity, they need to conform to the linguistic conventions that each language has in relation to the designation of a *nomen agentis*, the performer of an action. Where legal regulations state that advertised positions for employment vacancies are to be gender-inclusive so that no member of either sex feels excluded from applying, then designations conforming to these regulations need to be developed. The role of linguists in providing scientifically based recommendations is important so that two goals can be achieved: gender inclusiveness on the one hand; linguistically felicitous and amenable forms on the other.

3. Gender equality and legislative regulations of occupational designations in Croatia

From the 1950s onwards, Croatian society underwent a process of urbanisation and industrialisation. This was characterised by an influx of people who began working in a variety of occupations in the country's growing urban centres. A substantial proportion of those working in these occupations were women. This raised the question whether generic, masculine-gender designations were appropriate ones to refer to women. The first calls for consideration to be given to feminine-gender designations came from linguists. For example, one of the most prominent linguists of the time, Zlatko Vince (1955: 115), nominated linguistic criteria in support of his call for feminine-gender designations to be used for female employees, "[w]e […] can claim with certainty that people distinguish masculine gender from feminine gender forms in relation to titles [or designations]. The spirit of our language therefore compels us to follow this principle".[2] Vince (1955: 117) adds that if state authorities

[2] Croatian original: "Možemo sa sigurnošću ustvrditi, da narod i u nazivima razlikuje redovno muško od ženskoga. Duh našeg jezika prema tome traži, da se u svemu toga načela i držimo." (Vince, 1955: 115).

adopted a consistent practice of using feminine-gender designations for those occupations in which women are now working alongside masculine-gender ones, then the reception and acceptance of such designations could follow relatively easily where there is "good will" and "a bit of patience" [our translation].

For most of the remainder of the twentieth century, the use of feminine-gender designations became widespread only for those occupations which featured a high proportion of women, e.g. *učiteljica* 'teacher' (f.), *profesorica* 'teacher'/'professor' (f.), *tajnica* 'secretary' (f.) which are discussed in the following section (see also Babić, 1998). It was not until after Croatia became an independent country in 1991 that the use of occupational designations started to change in any measurable way.

The catalyst for such change was, as stated above, the ever-higher participation of women across an ever-increasing number of occupations. But in a country with a code law tradition such as Croatia, it was not until legislative regulations were introduced that the use of official (and non-official) female designations alongside male ones started to become widespread. In simple terms, such regulations can be described as 'top-down' ones, where state or national bodies pass laws to bring about desired changes. Parallel to this, ever since independence, Croatia had aspired to join the European Union and to be an active partner of international organisations. Where inter- or supra-national authorities or bodies pass declarations or even laws that a nation state is a signatory to, this has the flow-on effect that the nation state is required to adopt equivalent laws or statutes into its own legislature. As a result, many laws passed in Croatia have come about on the basis of UN regulations or EU laws. Other factors can be 'bottom-up' ones, where grassroots movements, groups of activists or even academics are able to exercise leverage on lawmakers to bring about reforms via legislation. The 'bottom-up' case for change came from civil sector organisations against discrimination, e.g. *Ženska mreža Hrvatske* 'Women's Network Croatia' (2007) as well as from linguist-activists such as Pišković (2014). Parallel to this, monitoring agencies such as the *Ured za ravnopravnost spolova*, the 'Office for Gender Equality' (2011) can play a role as advisors and also as reviewers of laws and of their operationalisation.

As a result of these and many other processes, there are now Croatian regulations with various degrees of authority that address gender equality and the ways that this can be operationalised. In this section, we present

excerpts from Croatian legislation that relate to occupational designations and titles or terms used in training qualifications. The effect of these regulations is also touched on in the discussion of employment listings in sub-section 5.5 below.

The legal basis for gender inclusive language are legislative regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, e.g. article 14[3] of the Croatian constitution, and in particular, the law on equality of the sexes, namely the Act on Gender Equality (*Zakon o ravnopravnosti spolova*) passed in 2008. The latter clearly states how advertisements for employment vacancies are to be phrased and how occupational designations are to be represented in people's employment records. Below are selected excerpts taken from the official English version of the Act.

> Article 13.
>
> (2) When advertising an employment requirement in an employment listing, it shall be clearly stated that persons of either sex may apply for the advertised position.
>
> (3) When a special law stipulates the obligation to call for public listings of the job selection process competition, it must be emphasized that persons of either sex may be admitted to the advertised position.
>
> (4) There shall be no emphasis in the public listings that persons of either sex may appear for the declared position only in relation to a particular job when the nature of the work is such that the characteristics associated with any of the grounds referred to in Article 6 of this Act represent the actual and decisive condition of performing job provided that the purpose is to be justified.
>
> (6) When deciding on the admittance for a position and other decisions on the civil servants' rights and obligations, the title of the position shall be used in both the male and female variant.
>
> (Act on Gender Equality, 2008).

[3] Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia reads: "All persons in the Republic of Croatia shall enjoy rights and freedoms, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other characteristics. All persons shall be equal before the law." (Ustav Republike Hrvatske, 1990)

Paragraph (6) above is important, as it makes clear that the masculine form of employment designations is not gender-inclusive, and instead, "both the male and female variant" are to be used in advertisements for employment. In reference to the designations used by training institutions and the terms used for occupational qualifications that are conferred, the Act states the following:

> Article 14.
>
> (2) Subject matters related to issues of gender equality shall be an integral part of pre-school, primary and secondary school education as well as higher education and lifelong learning and additional training and they shall include measures aimed at preparing both sexes for active and equal participation in all spheres of life.
>
> (3) Subject matters referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be used to promote non-discriminatory knowledge with regard to women and men, to eliminate inequality of sexes and gender-related stereotypes in the education process at all levels as well as to respect gender-related aspects in all areas of education. (Act on Gender Equality 2008).

Paragraphs (2) and (3) of Article 14 show that educational and training opportunities are to be provided to all children, regardless of their gender, and that stereotyping of educational and training pathways to students on the basis of their gender is to be avoided. Article 14 thus addresses the *content* and the *means* through which gender equality can be achieved.

> (4) At all levels of education and training appropriate attention shall be paid to achieving equal participation of both sexes in the population of students, and all educational institutions shall pay particular attention to a balance with regard to the representation of both sexes in managing bodies. (Act on Gender Equality 2008).

Paragraph (4) shows that representational *parity* between the sexes is an aim of the Act.

> (5) All educational institutions, as well as all others, shall use the language standards in the content of certificates, licenses and diplomas in accordance with this Act, specifying vocational qualifications, professions and occupations in female or male variation, depending on the sex of the recipient of the document. (Act on Gender Equality 2008).

This last paragraph prescribes the *form* of language to be used to work towards achieving gender equality. Article 14 of the Act clearly directs

persons or institutions who issue qualifications (or documents) that contain an employment designation that the masculine form is to be used for a male person, while the feminine form is to be used for a female person. We further discuss official regulations in section 5. The following section provides background information to linguistic features of Croatian and nouns that denote occupation titles for men and women.

4. Word formation in Croatian and morphological suffixes for *nomina agenti*

This section follows on from a point mentioned at the end of Section 2 above: developing linguistically felicitous and amenable designations that achieve gender equality. As stated above in Section 2, from the second half of the twentieth century, there have been discussions in Croatian society about the increasing proportion of women in the paid workforce and their job titles (Knežević, 2004). Considerations that are relevant to our discussion are the linguistic fields of the lexicon, word formation possibilities and morphology. As a Slavic language that marks gender as a grammatical category with a three-gender nominal system, Croatian has specific word formation conventions for the denotation of a *nomen agentis* 'the performer of an action' for both sexes. The relevant specialist literature (eg. Babić, 1991) on word formation provides us with a description and analysis of suffixation in Croatian.

Of importance here is that Croatian linguistic terminology distinguishes the notion of *mocija*. This term is based on Latin *motio substantivorum* (cf. German: *Movierung*; Italian: *mozione*) that refers to a process of gender marking that is common in languages that distinguish gender as a grammatical category. As stated in Section 1, the traditional view of how *mocija* is achieved is "the formation of a noun with a particular gender based on a noun of another gender that then achieves a change in the designation of the sex of the performer" (Barić et al., 1995: 304. Our translation.)[4]. Another statement in line with this traditional view is "if a noun which denotes a person of one sex is derived from a noun which

[4] Croatian original: "Mocijskom tvorbom zove se tvorba imenica jednoga roda od imenice drugoga roda s razlikom u spolu" (Barić et al., 1995: 304)

denotes a person of the other sex, then we can speak of an instance of word formation based on *mocija*" (Štebih Golub, 2008: 398. Our translation) [5].

Within Croatian linguistics, this traditional view has given way to an analysis of grammatical gender that does not presuppose masculine-gender nouns to be unmarked or 'more basic' to feminine- or neuter-gender ones; instead, the analysis espoused by Silić and Pranjković (2007) is that there are three declension types (classified according to GEN. SG suffix): *A-declension* (MASC. and NEUT.), *E-declension* (most FEM. nouns; MASC. nouns ending in *-a*) and *I-declension* (small no. of FEM. nouns ending in a consonant). This classification of nouns foregrounds common or distinct declensional morphology ahead of grammatical gender. By implication, no grammatical gender can be seen as more unmarked or 'basic' than another. Further, Silić and Pranjković (2007: 171) advocate an analysis of morphemes according to their derivation rather than their grammatical role. In relation to *nomina agenti* or 'performers of actions', they see the selection of morphemes that denote nouns as masculine or feminine gender as analogous and equivalent, rather than hierarchically dependent with masculine-gender nouns functioning as a baseline. We re-visit this more recent view of *mocija* and examine morpheme selection more closely in Section 5.3 below.

In order to gain an insight into word formation possibilities available in Croatian, a diachronic approach is adopted here in the first place and data from historical linguistic collections are drawn on, in particular from lexicographical sources that document varieties of what later came to be known as standard and non-standard Croatian in the period up until the Croatian National Revival (*Hrvatski narodni preporod*) from 1830 to 1874. These early lexicographical sources contain a large number of examples of *nomina agenti* or 'performers of actions', usually relating to males. Examples can be found in dictionaries of Old Kajkavian (a literary variety of the Croatian dialect, Kajkavian, spoken across northern Croatia) from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Habdelić, 1670; Belostenec, 1740; Sušnik & Jambrešić, 1742). Looking at the instances of word formation from these sources, we find that these are usually derived from *verbs* to which a suffix is added:

[5] Croatian original: "… ako je imenica koja označuje osobu jednoga spola izvedena od imenice koja označuje osobu drugoga spola, govorimo o mocijskoj tvorbi." (Štebih Golub, 2008: 398)

-ač e.g. *kopač* 'digger' (*kopati* 'to dig'), *kovač* 'blacksmith' (*kovati* 'to forge'), *krojač* 'tailor' (*krojiti* 'to cut to size')

-ar e.g. *čuvar* 'keeper' (*čuvati* 'to keep') *malar* 'painter' (*malati* 'to paint') *zvonar* 'bellringer' (*zvoniti* 'to ring')

-tel e.g. *delitel* 'partitioner' (*deliti* 'to divide'), *farbitel* 'painter' (*farbati* 'to colour'), *meritel* 'measurer' (*meriti* 'to measure').

Less commonly, a noun is the basis for derivation. Where this occurs, the *-ar* suffix is the most frequent one found:

-ar e.g. *gumbar* 'button-maker' (*gumb* 'button') *klobučar* 'milliner' (*klobuk* 'hat'), *knjigar* 'book-seller'/'publisher' (*knjiga* 'book'), *ptičar* 'bird-keeper' (*ptica* 'bird'), *ribar* 'fisherman' (*riba* 'fish').

Looking at the frequency of suffixes in the corpus of Old Kajkavian texts overall, the suffixes *-ec*, *-lac* and *-nik* are also recorded, though less often than the above ones:

-ec e.g. *delavec* 'worker', *lovec* 'hunter', *plovec* 'sailor' *tergovec* 'merchant'

-lac e.g. *davalac* 'donor', *klanjalac* 'worshipper, *prodavalac* 'vendor'

-nik e.g. *govornik* 'speaker', *oružnik,* 'master-at-arms' *vojnik* 'soldier'.

The above-mentioned examples containing the suffixes *-ec*, *-lac*, or *-nik* are all based on verb forms, with the exception of the last two, *oružnik,* 'master-at-arms' *vojnik* 'soldier', that are based on nouns (*oružje* 'arms', *vojna* 'war').

The corpus of Old Kajkavian texts also contains designations for female performers of an action, such as *dojitelica/dojka/dojica* 'woman who breastfeeds'/'wet nurse' and *baba pupkorezna* 'midwife'. The first term has no masculine counterpart due to the biological features of males, while the second term has traditionally been an exclusively female occupation (Stolac & Soldo, 2015). It is instructive to look at the formation of designations for males and females in relation to each other.

As shown above, diachronic analysis shows that the suffixes *-ač, -ar* and *-tel* are the most productive masculine ones in Old Kajkavian. Corpus analysis also shows that equivalent feminine forms most often bear the suffix *-ica*, such as the following (the English translation given after each

pair refers to both male and female protagonists): *rezač – rezačica* 'cutter', *plevač – plevačica* 'weeder'; *bubnjar – bubnjarica* 'drummer'*, čuvar – čuvarica* 'keeper'*, ključar – ključarica* 'key-keeper', *kuhar – kuharica* 'cook', *svinjar – svinjarica* 'pig-breeder'*, vodar – vodarica* 'water-bearer'*, vurar – vurarica* 'clock-maker'*, zvonar – zvonarica* 'bell-keeper'*; branitel – branitelica* 'guard', *dobročinitel – dobročinitelica* 'benefactor'*, hranitel – hranitelica* 'breadwinner', *miritel – miritelica* 'peacemaker'*, navučitel – navučitelica* 'teacher'.

Through diachronic analysis of texts written in Croatia in the nineteenth century we find that *-ic-a* is the most productive of all feminine gender suffixes. A synchronic analysis of texts shows that this is also the case with contemporary Standard Croatian as well as in most Croatian dialects (Babić, 1991; Barić, 1987, 1988a, 1988b).[6] Synchronic analysis reveals the wide variety of suffixes available to denote the performers of actions, not only in relation to traditional occupations practised by both men and women, but also in relation to newer ones as well. Synchronic analysis provides findings that are similar to those gained from diachronic analysis, i.e. research literature on word formation in contemporary Standard Croatian describes both the use of suffixes in word formation and the varying levels of productivity of suffixes, where it is found that verbs most commonly supply the root form, to which suffixes are added (Babić, 1991: 70, 276; Barić et al., 1995: 307).

What can be seen is that gender marking via derivational suffixes often results in equivalent pairs, e.g. *vršitelj* 'performer of action' (m.) / *vršiteljica* 'performer of action' (f.) and *učitelj* 'teacher' (m.) – *učiteljica* 'teacher' (f.). The latter pair, referring to a long-standing common occupation has been attested in Croatian dictionaries from the seventeenth century and we consider the model *učitelj* (m.) / *učiteljica* (f.) as a neutral or unmarked application of derivational pairing.

But sometimes this is not always the case and there are instances in which a formally similar pair exists which in practice do not function as a pair. Some of these limitations are culturally based while others are due to

[6] The suffix *-ic-a* is polysemic. In addition to having the meaning of the seme, 'female person', it has a further meaning as a seme, namely that of a diminutive marker. A detailed investigation into the implications of this second seme goes beyond the scope of this paper. However, the authors note that the meaning of this second seme is relevant in public discussions on political correctness where the diminutive function of *-ic-a* is identified as having a possibly pejorative effect.

pragmatic or morphological features. One such example is the pair *tajnik – tajnica* 'secretary' and the synonymous pair *sekretar – sekretarica* 'secretary', with the latter pair being the form that was primarily used in public and official use in the twentieth century. Its use now is restricted to informal and low-register speech. Both pairs encompass a wide range of meanings from those occupying senior positions in public and political institutions (where these positions are usually held by men) to those who are employed in office administrative roles (where this area of work is usually performed by women). The association of the latter group with the feminine form of the pair means that in some cases, a woman occupying a senior position in a political party or international organisation (with a rank congruent to *secretary* in English) is often addressed using the form *tajnik* or *sekretar*, which are both masculine nouns, instead of *tajnica* or *sekretarica*.

Another example is a derivationally based pair *bilježnik – bilježnica* where, by analogy to the many other examples, it would appear logical that the *-ic-a* suffix would denote the equivalent feminine form. But here, the masculine form means 'notary' (m) while the feminine form means not 'notary' (f.), but 'notebook', i.e. the only definition found in authoritative dictionaries for this form is "pages bound together within a front and back cover to serve the purpose of writing and note-taking" (Anić, 1998: 59)[7]. Although polysemy exists in Croatian as it does in other languages, in this instance, there appears to be strong resistance to *bilježnica* having multiple meanings. Therefore, a woman who performs the duties of a notary is referred to as a *bilježnik*, or less frequently as a *žena bilježnik* '(lit.) woman notary'. Data based on designations used in public signs indicate that *bilježnik* is the only form used. Dictionaries also record that *bilježnik* can be used as a masculine or feminine noun, e.g. Anić (1998: 59). A derived form from *bilježnik* is the form *bilježnikovica* that contains the suffix *-ovica* that can be used for feminine-gender forms. However, the term *bilježnikovica* is a low-register form with the meaning 'notary's wife' (*supruga bilježnika*) (Anić, 1998: 59) and is not a *nomen agentis*. The word *bilježnica* remains a commonly used one with the meaning 'notepad', and its high frequency of use in this sense prevented it from being considered a possible feminine equivalent of *bilježnik*.

[7] Croatian original: "...u korice povezani listovi predviđeni za pisanje i bilježenje." (Anić, 1998: 59)

In March 2019, the term *bilješkinja* 'notary' (f.) captured public attention as a term nominated to address the 'gap' of a female equivalent to *bilježnik* 'notary' (m.). It was awarded a prize as one of the three best neologisms for 2019 by the editorial board of the Croatian linguistics journal, *Jezik*. Neologisms are suggested by teachers and students of Croatian at secondary schools and tertiary institutions usually to replace English loanwords, but in some instances such as this, they are also coined in relation to terms where currently there are no readily accepted equivalent (usually feminine) forms to achieve gender-inclusive parity. The point we make here is that a suggested solution came from linguists, and not from a government authority or industry representative organisation.

Within this context another interesting example is the pair *poslanik* – **poslanica*. The masculine form means 'representative', 'deputy' or 'envoy', while the feminine form means 'missive' or 'letter'. The form *poslanica* is an archaic word of low frequency (not dissimilar to English 'missive'), but this meaning has prevented it from being a possible feminine equivalent for *poslanik*. This problem is overcome by employment of a synonymous term that does yield a congruent feminine equivalent: *zastupnik* (m.) – *zastupnica* (f.) 'representative', 'deputy' or 'envoy'. It is of interest to note that a compound noun based on *poslanik,* namely *veleposlanik* 'ambassador' (m.) (the prefixoid *vele-* is an augmentative marker) has as its feminine equivalent *veleposlanica* 'ambassador' (f.), i.e. in this instance, the derivational model of *-ik* and *-ic-a* is productive.

The next example we present relates to a healthcare occupation: *medicinska sestra* [lit. 'medical sister'] 'nurse' (f.). The second part of this designation *sestra* 'sister' clearly indicates that the performer of the action is female. The masculine equivalent to *sestra* 'sestra' is *brat* 'brother', and in some speakers' colloquial repertoires, the form *medicinski brat* [lit. 'medical brother'] 'nurse' (m.) can be heard. But this is not the official designation; the official designation is *medicinski tehničar* [lit. 'medical technician'] 'nurse' (m.). It might be reasonable to expect that the emergence of *medicinski tehničar* would lead to its 'formal equivalent' *medicinska tehničarka* [lit. 'medical technician' (f.)] emerging as a replacement for *medicinska sestra*, but this has not happened. We return to this example in section 5.

5. Occupational designations used in official classifications and in other contexts

In this section, we draw on data from a number of different sources, with examples coming from official documents such as the national classifications, as well as non-official sources such as job advertisements, pre-school education, examples of written communication and public places. This section seeks to match linguistic practices specified in ratified documents with linguistic practices recorded 'on the ground'. In addition, this section contains a response from a government-appointed body, the Croatian Language Council, in relation to a request from the Croatian government about gender equality and the right of women to be represented by feminine-gender forms.

The Croatian term *zanimanje* 'occupation' is defined as "a. that with which one occupies oneself (synonyms: *calling, field, profession*), b. a temporary activity that one occupies oneself with, work, leisure activity" (Anić, 1998: 1347)[8]. The *Nacionalna klasifikacija zanimanja*, the 'National Classification of Occupations' of 1998, hereafter referred to as 'NKZ98' defines the term *zanimanje* with a more specific description:

> "An occupation is the total sum of activities and work duties (work assignments) that are in terms of their content and type organisationally and technologically so congruent and mutually connected that all of them are performed by one protagonist who possesses the corresponding knowledge, capabilities and skills" [9].

The NKZ98 lists 10 categories of occupations with 28 types and 115 sub-types, which are equivalent to approx. 400 groups of occupations. A revised version of this document was released in 2010, hereafter referred to as 'NKZ10', which is aligned with the categories of occupations as set out in European Union guideline regulations. More recently, a 25-page Supplement that is officially entitled *Odluka o utvrđivanju NKZ10*, 'Decision on Confirmation of NKZ10' was released in 2023. Although appearing as a supplement to NKZ10, it is in fact a longer, more extensive

[8] Croatian original: "*a.* ono čime se tko bavi sin. poziv, struka, profesija *b.* privremeno bavljenje čim, posao, zabava" (Anić, 1998: 1347).

[9] Croatian original: "Zanimanje je skup poslova i radnih zadaća (radnih mjesta) koji su svojim sadržajem i vrstom organizacijski i tehnološki toliko srodni i međusobno povezani da ih obavlja jedan izvršitelj koji posjeduje odgovarajuća znanja, sposobnosti i vještine". (NKZ98: 1)

list than that contained in NKZ10 and contains many new additions to the list of occupational designations. As such, we label this supplement 'NKZ23'. Presentation of the three documents allows us to show how designations for occupations have changed in recent years, and if (and how) gender equality is represented through these.

English translations of Croatian occupational designations presented in this section are themselves gender-inclusive. As discussed above in Section 2, avoidance of gender-specific forms in English had been achieved more or less by the end of the twentieth century, and gender-inclusive forms are now the standard (unmarked) forms used in most predominantly Anglophone countries in most situations. Some Croatian designations have, in the past, been rendered in English via gender-specific forms, e.g. *sobarica* 'maid'. In these cases, the gender-inclusive form 'room service attendant' is given as the standard English translation. Other, gender-specific English forms that may have been used in the past (such as 'maid') are given in footnotes only.

5.1. National Classification of Occupations (1998) – NKZ98

We commence with a defining statement from the National Classification of Occupations from 1998 (hereafter: NKZ98) that explains what the purpose of the National Classification of Occupations is: "The National Classification of Occupations provides a means for the systematic collection, processing and presentation of information relating to occupations. It ensures unambiguous communication of the users of the results with the holders of these results for them to communicate with the providers of the data" (NKZ98: 1)[10]. National classification systems are today structured in a way so that comparison with other national classifications is possible: "International comparability is ensured by compliance with the principles and systems of the International Standard

[10] Croatian original: "Nacionalna klasifikacija zanimanja (dalje: NKZ) sredstvo je za sustavno prikupljanje, obradu i prikazivanje informacija o zanimanjima, ona osigurava jednoznačnu komunikaciju korisnika rezultata s nositeljima upotrebe da njima komunikaciju s davateljima podataka." (NKZ98: 1)

Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88), or its European version (ISCO-88 COM).” (NKZ98: 2)[11].

Linguistics, and in particular the sub-disciplines of standardisation and terminology, play an important role in ensuring that there is a consistent and clear approach to the compilation of lists of occupations. This is evident in the introduction to the NKZ98 that lists the role of linguistic specialists in their development:

> Standardization of occupation terminology in the systematic part of the classification and editing of texts was undertaken by the Institute of Croatian Language, [an official entity of] the Croatian Philological Institute in Zagreb. Terms for synonyms and terms for occupational activities (positions of employment) that are located in the addendum to the group of occupations are not standardised and are reproduced in their original form. (NKZ98: 3)[12]

In relation to the use of gender-inclusive forms for all occupations, we locate some inconsistencies in relation to either only a masculine form or only a feminine form. Instances of the latter include the following 16 designations presented according to the five thematically based sub-groups that they appear in:

balerina[13]	‘ballerina’ (f.); *striptizeta* ‘striptease dancer’ (f.)
medicinska sestra	‘nurse’ (f.); *časna sestra* ‘nun’ (f.)
domaćica zrakoplova	‘flight attendant’ (f.), *stjuardesa*[14] ‘flight attendant’ (f.)[15], ‘flight stewardess’; *hostesa,*

[11] Croatian original: “Međunarodna je usporedivost osigurana pridržavanjem načela i sustava Međunarodne standardne klasifikacije zanimanja (ISCO-88), odnosno njezine europske inačice (ISCO-88 COM).” (NKZ98: 2)

[12] Croatian original: “Standardizaciju nazivlja zanimanja u sustavnom dijelu klasifikacije i lektoriranje teksta obavio je Zavod za hrvatski jezik Hrvatskog filološkog instituta u Zagrebu. Nazivi sinonima i nazivi poslova (radnih mjesta) koji se nalaze u dodatku skupine zanimanja nisu standardizirani, preuzeti su u izvornom obliku.” (NKZ98: 3)

[13] Some references, such as the *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik* ‘Croatian Language Guide’ (Barić et al., 1999: 376), provide the form *baletan* ‘ballet dancer’ (m.).

[14] Some references, such as the *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik* ‘Croatian Language Guide’ (Barić et al., 1999: 1384), provide the form *stjuard* ‘flight attendant’ (m.).

[15] This is an integrated Anglicism in Croatian, based on the Eng. form *flight stewardess.*

	'flight attendant' (f.)[16], *hotelska sobarica* room service attendant' (f.)[17]*, servirka* 'food server' (f.)
dadilja	'childminder' (f.)[18], *paziteljica djece* 'babysitter' (f.)*, primalja* 'midwife'*, babica* 'midwife' (f.)*, kućna pomoćnica* 'housekeeper' (f.)*, glačarica* 'ironing attendant' (f.)[19]
gatara	'fortune-teller' (f.)

Further to this, it is interesting to note that for the occupation *čipkar* 'lace-maker' (m.), the masculine noun only is given, while for a similar occupation, *vezlija* 'embroiderer' (f.), only the feminine form of the noun is listed. Another conspicuous feature is the differences in the listings for common occupations where equivalent but non-symmetric forms are listed for the female and the male protagonist for the same occupational designation:

sobarica	'room service attendant' [20] (f.)*, mladić sobe* [lit. 'young man of the room'] 'room service attendant' (m.)
čistačica	'cleaner' (f.)[21]*, radnik na održavanju čistoće* [lit. 'worker for the maintenance of cleanliness'] 'cleaner' (m.)
pralja	'laundry worker' (f.) [22] – *radnik u praoni rublja* [lit. 'worker in a laundry'] 'laundry worker' (m.)
seljak, ugostitelj seoskog turizma	[lit. 'farmer, rural tourism hospitality manager'] 'farmer, rural tourism host' (m.) – *seljakinja, domaćica seoskog turizma* 'farmer, rural tourism host' (f.)

In the above-mentioned pairs the designations for male protagonists appear somewhat more cumbersome and more 'official'. The compound or multi-word designation for 'cleaner' (m.), *radnik na održavanju čistoće* (m.), compared to that for 'cleaner' (f), *čistačica* (f.), seems to endow the male

[16] This is an integrated Anglicism in Croatian, based on the Eng. form *air hostess.*
[17] Formerly, the gender-specific term *chambermaid* was used in English.
[18] Formerly, the gender-specific term *nanny* was used in English.
[19] Formerly, the gender-specific term *ironing lady* was used in English.
[20] Formerly, the gender-specific term *maid* was used in English.
[21] Formerly, the gender-specific term *cleaning lady* was used in English.
[22] Formerly, the gender-specific term *laundry lady* was used in English.

protagonist with a 'more impressive' job title, even though the duties performed are exactly the same, regardless of the sex of the worker. It is also curious to observe that in the lists some designations are given in the masculine form only, even though the occupations themselves are exclusive to females, such as *sopran solist* 'soprano soloist' (m.), *mezzosopran solist* 'mezzo-soprano soloist' (m.) and *alt solist* 'alto soloist' (m.).

5.2 National Classification of Occupations (2010) – NKZ10

Revisions were made to NKZ98 by the same linguistic authority that had contributed to the original document, the Institute for Croatian Language and Linguistics. In 2010, the National Classification of Occupations (2010) – NKZ10 was released. The document contains entries presented in table format with designations given in both the masculine and feminine form. We present below a selection of these, grouped according to semantic field, in their original, *plural* form:

1.	*dužnosnici* 'officials' (m.) *direktori* 'directors' (m.) *čelnici* 'leaders' (m.)	*dužnosnice* 'officials' (f.) *direktorice* 'directors' (f.) *čelnice* 'leaders' (f.)
2.	*znanstvenici* 'scientists' (m.) *inženjeri* 'engineers' (m.) *stručnjaci* 'experts' (m.) *skladatelji* 'composers' (m.) *plesači* 'dancers' (m.) *koreografi* 'choreographers' (m.)	*znanstvenice* 'scientists' (f.) *inženjerke* 'engineers' (f.) *stručnjakinje* 'experts' (f.) *skladateljice* 'composers' (f.) *plesačice* 'dancers' (f.) *koreografkinje* 'choreographers' (f.)
3.	*rudarski nadzornici* 'mining supervisors' (m.)	*rudarske nadzornice* 'mining supervisors' (f.)
4.	*tajnici* 'secretaries' (m.)	*tajnice* 'secretaries' (f.)
5.	*vodiči* 'guides' (m.)	*vodičice* 'guides' (f.)
6.	*lovci* 'hunter' (m.)	*lovkinje* 'hunters' (f.)
7.	*kovači* 'blacksmiths' (m.) *ronioci* 'divers' (m.)	*kovačice* 'blacksmiths' (f.) *roniteljice* 'divers' (f.)
8.	*mornari* 'sailors' (m.)	*mornarke* 'sailors' (f.)

In the nomenclature of occupations, most of the male and female forms feature derivationally based suffixes that are congruent to each other, e.g. *domaćini* 'hosts' (m.) – *domaćice* 'hosts' (f.); *predškolski odgajatelji*

'kindergarten teachers' (m.) – *predškolske odgajateljice* 'kindergarten teachers' (f.). But in some instances, additional forms are given that relate to one gender only, in these instances to female protagonists only, e.g. *čistači* 'cleaners' (m.) – *čistačice i kućne pomoćnice* 'cleaners and housekeepers' (f.); *šivači* 'seamsters' (m.) – *šivačice, vezilje i srodna zanimanja* 'seamsters (f.)[23], embroiderers (f.) and associated occupations'; *manekeni* 'mannequins' (m.) – *manekenke, modeli i srodna zanimanja* 'mannequins (f.), models (m.) and associated occupations'.

In NKZ10, other combinations of pairs occur which do not consist of derivationally based equivalents, e.g. *medicinske sestre* 'nurses' (f.) – *medicinski tehničari* (m.) 'nurses' (m.) that remained unchanged from NKZ98 as well as instances where the form of one gender only is given, usually the feminine form, e.g. *medicinske sestre-primalje* 'nurses-midwives' (f.) or *pralje i glačarice* 'laundry and ironing attendants' (f.), where these are listed as compound or dual-role occupations.

Looking at the choice of suffixes used for feminine forms, the most commonly used suffix, as expected, is *-i-ca*, e.g. *plesačica* 'dancer' (f.)*, čistačica* 'cleaner' (f.). Other feminine gender suffixes include *-k-inj-a,* e.g. *filozofkinja* 'philosopher' (f.)*, lovkinja* 'hunter' (f.) and *psihologinja* 'psychologist' (f.) [here, assimilation of <k> to <g> occurs in inter-vocalic position], and also the suffix *-ka*, e.g. *zakonodavka* 'lawmaker' (f.), *ribarka* 'fisherwoman' (f.), *mornarka* 'sailor' (f.).

We draw attention here also to two common suffixes for masculine nouns, *-telj* and *-lac* (see above section 4) and feminine nouns that contain the suffix *-ica*. A typical example of a noun with the masculine suffix *-telj* to which the feminine suffix *-ica* is added is the pair *pratitelj* (m.) and *pratiteljica* (f.) 'guide'. However, in the case of masculine nouns with the *-lac* suffix, we find that for the equivalent feminine forms, the suffix *-telj* is used, to which *-ica* is added: *ronilac* (m.) *roniteljica* (f.) 'diver' and *ličilac* (m.) *ličiteljica* (f.) 'painter'. In NKZ10 we also find that the asymmetric relationship of *tajnik* (m.) 'secretary' and *tajnica/sekretarica* (f.) 'secretary' that had existed in NKZ98 has been addressed and the forms for 'secretary' are given as *tajnik* (m.) and *tajnica* (f.), without further qualification.

[23] Formerly, the gender-specific term *seamstresses* was used in English.

5.3 Confirmation of the National Classification of Occupations (2023) – NKZ23.

In formal terms, the 2023 document (NKZ23) is a confirmation of the 2010 (NKZ10) national classifications. In real terms, it is a 25-page document that not only confirms the 15-page document from 13 years earlier, but one that adds and supplements significantly to its predecessor such that we consider it an authoritative document in its own right. In the first place, it reverts to the practice of the original 1998 guidelines by providing masculine and feminine forms in the singular only. Some of the asymmetries noted above about NKZ 98 and NKZ10 have been removed and both masculine and feminine gender forms are given as symmetrical equivalents, e.g. *čistač* 'cleaner' (m.) – *čistačica* 'cleaner' (f.); *šivač* 'seamster' (m.) – *šivačica* 'seamster (f.); *sobar* 'room service attendant' (m.) – *sobarica* 'room service attendant' (f.).

However, some asymmetries remain. We present these here, and where possible, we add equivalent terms that have been put forward by the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics' (2022) through its electronic resource entitled *Muško i žensko u hrvatskome* 'Male and Female in Croatian'. Suggestions from this source are given, where available, in square brackets afterwards. (See also Hudeček & Mihaljević, 2025). Entries without an equivalent in the other gender are: *vezilja* 'embroiderer' (f.) [*vezilac* 'embroiderer' (m.)], *primalja* 'midwife' (f.) [*primaljski pomoćnik* 'obstetric assistant' (m.) and *primaljska pomoćnica* 'obstetric assistant' (f.) as a suggested replacement for *primalja* 'midwife' (f.)], *kućna pomoćnica* 'house-keeper' (f.) [*kućni pomoćnik* 'house-keeper' (m.)]

Further feminine-gender entries for which no masculine-gender equivalent has been suggested are: *pralja* 'laundry attendant' (f.), *glačarica* 'ironing attendant' (f.), *hostesa* 'hostess' (f.), *domaćica kuhinje* 'kitchen hostess' (f.), *zemaljska domaćica* 'airport ground-staff hostess' (f.). Masculine-gender entries for which no feminine-gender equivalent is given include: *diskodžokej* 'disc jockey' (m.), *hotelski teklič* 'bellboy' (m.) and *otpremnik* 'shipping agent'/'dispatcher' (m.).

The above listed feminine-gender and masculine-gender forms that lack equivalent forms from the other gender appear to relate to that gender only. There are other instances, known as *epicenes* (Cro.: *epicene*) where only one form is provided, such as *umjetnički model* 'artistic model' (m.) and

fotomodel ‘photo model’ (m.), which apply to both sexes (Pišković, 2015). Although both are masculine-gender nouns, definitions of them in authoritative sources[24] and job advertisements[25] clearly show that both men and women are encompassed within this term. Both terms appear to have replaced the designations *maneken* ‘mannequin’ (m.) *manekenka* ‘mannequin’ (f.) which are not listed in NKZ23.

In relation to the form *otpremnik* ‘shipping agent’/‘dispatcher’ (m.), this is similar to the form *poslanik* ‘representative’ (m.) mentioned above. An equivalent feminine-gender form exists, *otpremnica* (f.), but this has a different semantic meaning: that of ‘dispatch note’. As such, it appears that an amenable female equivalent form for *otpremnik* is yet to be developed.

Some of the anomalies identified above in section 5.1 in relation to NKZ98 have been addressed and corrected in NKZ23. Where NKZ98 featured masculine-gender forms only for occupations that are exclusive to females, such as *sopran solist* ‘soprano soloist’ (m.), *mezzosopran solist* ‘mezzo-soprano soloist’ (m.) and *alt solist* ‘alto soloist’ (m.), NKZ23 now represents these in a way that matches the feminine- or masculine-gender designation with the sex of the protagonist where this relates to physiological differences between male and female voices: *alt solistica* ‘alto soloist’ (f.), *sopran solistica* ‘soprano soloist’ (f.), *tenor solist* ‘tenor soloist’ (m.), *bariton solist* ‘baritone soloist’ (m.), *bas solist* ‘bass soloist’ (m.). In a similar way, there are masculine-gender designations used for members of religious orders or members of the clergy belonging to religions that allow only men to exercise these roles, e.g. *biskup* ‘Roman Catholic bishop’ (m.), *episkop* ‘Eastern Orthodox bishop’ (m.), *imam* ‘imam’ (m.), *pastor* ‘minister’ (m.), *rabin* ‘rabbi’ (m.).

[24] The Croatian Linguistic Portal (Hrvatski jezični portal), founded by two publishing houses, has become an authoritative source on questions relating to standard Croatian. It contains the following entry: *Photo model: a person who poses for photographs used for marketing or artistic purposes, and who is a professional model working for a photographer.* Croatian original: “fotomodel: osoba koja pozira za reklamu ili umjetničku fotografiju, koja je profesionalni model fotografu”. (Hrvatski jezični portal, n.d.)

[25] Information on this commercial website contains the following: *How to become a photo model? Most often models are girls or boys under 22 years of age*. Croatian original: “Kako postati fotomodel? Najčešće su modeli djevojke ili dečki mlađi od 22 godine.” (Fashionhub-hr.decorespro.com, n.d.)

One group of occupations listed in NKZ23 relates to those that contain the noun *vođa* 'leader' as the first component of a noun phrase, e.g. *vođa palube* 'boatswain' *vođa posade marine* 'naval crew leader' *vođa plovećega radnog stroja* 'floating machinery leader'. Although ending in *-a*, *vođa* relates to males only, and any preceding attribute attracts masculine gender marking. For example, the form for "new leader" in Croatian is: *novi* 'new' (m.) *vođa* 'leader' (m.). In this way it patterns in the same way as other masculine-gender nouns that relate to male persons but which are declined as feminine nouns, e.g. *tata* 'dad' (m.) or *papa* 'Pope' (m.). In NKZ23, the occupations containing *vođa* as their first component are provided without a counterpart for females. This raises the following question: is *vođa* as an e-type masculine-gender noun that has always referred to male persons only but which is declined as a feminine-gender noun, now starting to function as a noun that can refer to female persons as well? There are other feminine-gender nouns listed in NKZ23 such as *knjigoveža* 'book-binder' (m.) or (f.) and *pazikuća* 'janitor'/'concierge' (m.) or (f.) that can refer to both male and female persons. Could the semantic and syntactic features of *vođa* be changing in contemporary Croatian for it to pattern in the same way? The answer to this question is negative. When any attributive adjective preposes *vođa*, the gender marking features of that attribute must be masculine, i.e. *stari* 'old' (m.) *vođa* 'leader' (m.) meaning 'old leader'; feminine gender marking is disallowed, i.e. * *stara* 'old' (f.) *vođa* 'leader' (m.) [26]. From a linguistic point of view, it will be interesting to see whether a clearly distinct form that relates to women that is equivalent to *vođa* 'leader' (m.) will emerge in the future.

Lastly, we return to a point made in Section 4 above, relating to contemporary analyses of *mocija* in Croatian that show that the selection of morphemes to form masculine- and feminine-gender designations for occupations proceeds in an analogous and parallel process. Based on Silić and Pranjković's (2007: 171) structural analysis of grammatical gender

[26] In neighbouring Montenegro, a media outlet posed a similar question, i.e. is there a distinct form to refer to a 'female leader'? It makes the following assertion: *How can a female-gender form be created from the noun* ***vođa*** *from the title of this article? As becomes evident, there's no way to do this; we could attempt to create something like* ***voćkinja****, but in sum, this would be something that's just grotesque.* Original: "Kako tvoriti feminimum, npr., od imenice **vođa** iz naslova članka? Očito nikako; mogli bismo pokušati nešto kao **voćkinja** i slično, ali u rezultatu bismo očito dobili grotesku". (Abović, 2018. Original emphasis).

and the formation of equivalent masculine- and feminine-gender nouns, we set out in Table 1 the selection of (derivational) morphemes as affixes and suffixes in Croatian occupational designations.

Table 1. *Morphological structure of masculine- and feminine-gender occupational designations.*

Morphological structure according to derivational morphemes				English gloss
Suffix	Masculine gender	Feminine gender	Suffix	
-ac(-Ø-Ø)	lov-ac-Ø-Ø	lov-k-inj-a	-k-inj-a	‘hunter’
-ac(-Ø-Ø)	zakon-o-dav-ac	zakon-o-dav-k-a	-k-a	‘lawmaker’
-ak(-Ø-Ø)	vješt-ak-Ø-Ø	vješt-ak-inj-a	-ak-inj-a	‘expert’
-ač(-Ø-Ø)	rez-ač-Ø-Ø	rez-ač-ic-a	-ač-ic-a	‘cutter’
-and(-Ø-Ø)	doktor-and-Ø-Ø	doktor-and-ic-a	-and-ic-a	‘PhD student’
-ant(-Ø-Ø)	labor-ant-Ø-Ø	labor-ant-ic-a	-ant-ic-a	‘laboratory technician’
-ar(-Ø-Ø)	bub-njar-Ø-Ø	bub-njar-ic-a	-njar-ic-a	‘drummer’
-aš(-Ø-Ø)	košark-aš-Ø-Ø	košark-aš-ic-a	-aš-ic-a	‘basketball player’
-at(-Ø-Ø)	advok-at-Ø-Ø	advok-at-kinj-a	-at-k-inj-a	‘lawyer’
-ent(-Ø-Ø)	asist-ent-Ø-Ø	asist-ent-ic-a	-ent-ic-a	‘assistant’
-er(-Ø-Ø)	magazin-er-Ø-Ø	magazin-er-k-a	-er-k-a	‘storeperson’
-er(-Ø-Ø)	spik-er-Ø-Ø	spik-er-ic-a	-er-ic-a	‘radio/television announcer’
-ič(-Ø-Ø)	vod-ič-Ø-Ø	vod-ič-ic-a	-ič-ic-a	‘guide’
-ik(-Ø)	uč-en-ik-Ø	uč-en-ic-a	-ic-a	‘pupil’
-in(-Ø)	dom-ač-in-Ø	dom-ač-ic-a	-ic-a	‘host’
-ir(-Ø-Ø)	port-ir-Ø	port-ir-k-a	-k-a	‘janitor’
-ist(-Ø-Ø)	sol-ist-Ø-Ø	sol-ist-ic-a	-ist-ic-a	‘soloist’
-l-ac(-Ø)	tješ-i-l-ac-Ø	tješ-i-l-ic-a	-l-ic-a	‘comforter’
-or(-Ø-Ø)	dokt-or-Ø-Ø	dokt-or-ic-a	-or-ic-a	‘doctor’
-telj(-Ø-Ø)	bran-i-telj-Ø-Ø	bran-i-telj-ic-a	-telj-ic-a	‘defender’

5.4 Normative authorities and recommendations regarding linguistic conventions

As stated above in section 3, it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that the issue of occupational designations that encompass both men and women began to occupy public attention in Croatia. Only in certain occupations such as those in education, retail, or those at the hierarchically lower levels of public administration or in certain service industries were feminine-gender designations in wide use. Otherwise, the designations used for women working in most other occupations were masculine-gender forms.

This situation only started to change when Croatia formally applied to join the European Union in February 2003, gained candidate status in June 2004 and commenced accession negotiations in October 2005. This process heralded a large number of discussions about what changes would need to be implemented legislatively and administratively, and what effects this would have on Croatian society, including anti-discrimination laws and efforts to provide equal access and to ensure equality for all residents, regardless of their gender.

In 2005, the same year that Croatia formally commenced negotiations to join the European Union, its centre-right government at the time created an official body, the *Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika*, lit. 'Council for the Croatian Standard Language Norm', which we hereafter refer to as the 'Croatian Language Council'. Although the main brief of the Croatian Language Council was to systematically monitor the use of standard Croatian and to discuss uncertainties and issues pertaining to language use in Croatian society at the time, it was not until 2011, and only due to a directive from the Croatian government, that it started to address the question of gender equality and occupational designations. The explicitly worded directive from the government was entitled, 'Opinion of the Croatian Language Council about the use of feminine-gender forms for occupations as a token of respect for gender equality' [27].

The official response from the Croatian Language Council consisting of 13 linguists, headed by Radoslav Katičić, was announced at the time and published two years later in the oldest Croatian linguistics journal in

[27] Croatian original: "Mišljenje Vijeća za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika o uporabi oblika ženskoga roda za zvanja kao izraza poštovanja ravnopravnosti spolova". (Vuković, 2020: 63)

Croatia, *Jezik* 'Language' (Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika, 2013). The opening passages of the response adopt a defensive tone and make assertions about Croatian in comparison to other languages:

> In Croatian, there are more possibilities for coining feminine-gender nominal equivalents from nouns whose grammatical gender is neutral (i.e. masculine) than in some of the largest European languages such as English and French. Such possibilities should be availed of wherever they are congruent to the basic linguistic structure of Croatian. [28]

In relation to English, the assertion that Croatian has a greater number of possibilities for coining feminine-gender forms is correct. But such a comparison is hardly apt as gender in English is not so much a grammatical as a semantic category, as mentioned in Section 2, where in structural terms, it is evident only in 3.SG pronouns. The number of gender-specific forms in English that index biological gender through suffixes such as *-man* , *-woman* , or *-ess* is not large e.g. *policeman*, *camerawoman*, *stewardess* and these have been replaced by gender-inclusive terms such as *police officer, camera operator* and *flight attendant*, something that is readily acknowledged by Croatia-based linguists, e.g. Mihaljević (2021: 666). It is not clear why this misaligned reference to English was made. The response continues in a similar tone:

> Often it is not well known that in Croatian (as in other Indo-European languages and in most languages of the world) there is one grammatical gender that is unmarked - that gender being the so-called masculine gender, while others are marked i.e. the feminine (and neuter) gender. […]
>
> Therefore, in Croatian and in most other languages, masculine-gender nouns often denote both male and female persons. […]
>
> There is no way of looking at things other than respecting the basic structure of the language, otherwise we run the risk of

[28] Croatian original: "U hrvatskome jeziku postoje veće mogućnosti tvorbe imeničkih (mocijskih, fleksijskih) parnjaka ženskoga roda imenicama za zvanja i vršitelje radnje u neutralnome (muškome) rodu nego u nekima od najznatnijih europskih jezika poput engleskoga i francuskoga." (Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika, 2013: 155).

> language becoming incomprehensible. This has nothing to do with inequality of the sexes. [29]

The assertion that the masculine gender is the unmarked gender in Croatian is the basis for the traditional view of *mocija* that maintains that one form (usually the masculine one) functions as a model from which another form (usually the feminine one) is derived via affixation (or conversion or transposition). One thing implied in the above statement that all linguists agree on is that verb government rules in Croatian require the plural masculine form of the main verb (i.e. past participle) to be used in past tense clauses even when the subject relates to both men and women. Vis-à-vis the relationship between grammatical gender and biological sex, the Council's position is:

> The Council recommends that [biological] sex be distinguished in the grammatical gender of nouns for occupations and performers of an action wherever word formation conventions allow this and where this relates to particular persons of a certain sex. These are the only instances that matter when considering respect for others and gender equality. The general use of nouns for occupations and performers of actions has to do only with the general basic structure of language and what is linguistically economical, which is something that every educated person has to respect. In linguistic terms, it's quite erroneous to consider this an instance of disrespecting the equality of the sexes. [30]

The above statement is clear that where word formation conventions exist for feminine-gender forms to denote female subjects, these conventions

[29] Croatian original: "Često se ne zna da je u hrvatskome (kao i u drugim indoeuropskim jezicima i većini jezika svijeta) jedan rod neobilježen, i to je tzv. muški rod, a drugi su obilježeni, a takav je ženski (i srednji) rod. [...] Stoga se u hrvatskome i većini jezika imenicom muškoga roda često označuju osobe i muškoga i ženskoga spola. [...] Tu nema pomoći nego treba poštovati ustroj jezika ili razumijevanje postaje nemoguće. A to nema veze s neravnopravnošću spolova." (Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika, 2013: 155).

[30] Croatian original: "Vijeće preporučuje razlikovanje spolova u rodu imenica za zanimanja i vršitelje radnje gdje je to god tvorbeno moguće i gdje se odnosi na pojedine osobe određenoga spola. Jedino takvi slučajevi imaju veze s poštovanjem osobe i s ravnopravnošću spolova. Opća uporaba imenica za zanimanja i vršitelje radnje ima veze samo s općim ustrojem jezika i njegovom ekonomičnošću, koje svaka obrazovana osoba mora poštovati, i jezikoslovno je posve pogrješno smatrati ju izrazom nepoštovanja ravnopravnosti spolova." (Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika, 2013: 155).

should be applied. But, such word formation conventions are subject to the lexical, morphological and syntactic features of Croatian which may limit word formation possibilities for the coining of feminine-gender equivalents for some (masculine) nouns. The argument of economy is made in view of the fact that a consistent use of both masculine- and feminine-gender nouns would also require use of both masculine- and feminine-gender attributive forms (e.g. determiners, adjectives) and sometimes also verb forms (i.e., past participles).

> For a long time, Croatian linguists—compelled by both logic and the grammar of the Croatian language—have been granting full civic legitimacy to feminine-gender equivalent nouns via a process of *mocija* (as feminine-gender nouns are most commonly derived from masculine-gender ones). In this way, both real and potential (attested and systematically created) terms began to be introduced for female performers of actions, holders of titles, professions and personal features, as well as for female inhabitants of villages, towns, regions and countries, and for female followers and members of movements, schools of thought and so on. From a linguistic perspective, the frequently voiced demand that all legal texts consistently bear in mind the equality of sexes is, in linguistic terms, neither economical nor acceptable. Adopting such a requirement would not advance gender equality; instead, it would create semantic ambiguity and confusion on multiple levels.[31]

The Council goes on to provide a sample 64-word legal text featuring a consistent use of both masculine- and feminine-gender forms for each noun denoting a human agent, including the attributive forms for each such noun, e.g. adjectives and numerals. This sample text has 16 ‘compound’ nouns or noun phrases that contain slashes that distinguish masculine-

[31] Croatian original: “Hrvatski su jezikoslovci već poodavno, jer ih je na to prisiljavala logika i gramatika hrvatskog jezika, dali puno pravo građanstva ženskim mocijskim parnjacima (jer se imenice ženskog roda najčešće tvore od imenica muškog roda), pa su se tako počeli uvoditi i realni i potencijalni (potvrđeni i sustavno načinjeni) nazivi za vršiteljice radnje, nositeljice zvanja, zanimanja i osobina, stanovnice sela, gradova, pokrajina i država, sljedbenice i pripadnice pokreta, pravaca itd. S jezikoslovnoga je stajališta prijedlog koji se često čuje da se u svim zakonskim tekstovima dosljedno vodi računa o ravnopravnosti spolova neekonomičan i neprihvatljiv jer prihvaćanje toga prijedloga ne bi doprinijelo ravnopravnosti spolova, nego bi proizvelo značenjsku i svaku drugu zbrku.” (Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika, 2013: 155).

from feminine-gender components. The visual appearance of many instances of a slash separating the distinct masculine-gender form from the distinct feminine-gender form does hamper the reader's ability to fluently read the text and easily comprehend its content.

The overall message that we can infer from the above response from the Council is that it supports the coining and use of feminine-gender equivalents to masculine-gender nouns for, amongst others, occupational designations, where word formation conventions allow this. As demonstrated above in section 4, Croatian has a wide variety of word formation conventions that enable the creation of new forms—particularly nominal ones—through affixation of bound morphemes. Thus, although the Council opposes the universal use of both masculine- and feminine-gender forms for *all* nouns (and their attributives) denoting human beings, it appears to be supportive of a practice that allows occupational designations, for example in job advertisements, to contain both the masculine-gender form and its feminine-gender equivalent.

5.5 Public employment listings

As foregrounded above in section 3, the Act on Gender Equality (2008) sets out how occupational designations are to be represented in a way that does not exclude either gender. In this sub-section, we report on the features of publicly advertised employment positions from before the passing of the Act and after it. Following the publication of NKZ98, Glovacki-Bernardi, (2012) reports on a study conducted in 2004 of 162 vacant positions that were advertised in eight high-circulation daily newspapers. She found that the vast majority of positions contained masculine-gender forms for occupational designations and that only a small number featured feminine-gender designations that related to "stereotypically female" jobs, e.g. "*sekretarica* ('secretary'), *domaćica zrakoplova* ('stewardess'), *dadilja* ('nanny/nurse'), *spremačica* ('cleaning lady')" (Glovacki-Bernardi, 2012: 150). The same author goes on to report that in the following years occupational designations in job advertisements became increasingly gender-inclusive through use of a now well-established contraction, *m/ž* 'm/f' (i.e. 'male' or 'female'), and less frequently through forms for both genders (the percentage of advertisements that were gender inclusive is shown in brackets): 2006 (60%), 2007 (70%) and 2008 (78%) (Glovacki-Bernardi, 2012: 150). Two

years later, from 1 to 30 September 2010, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality conducted a study of 131 job advertisements in three major daily newspapers and found that 96% (n=131) complied with the provisions of the Gender Equality Act by making clear, in one way or another, that applicants could be of either gender (Glovacki-Bernardi, 2012: 150). Compliance here also relates to occupational designations that are provided only in the masculine gender form only, but which contain the following addendum, usually at the bottom of the advertisement: "Terms used in these positions vacant listings that refer to a particular gender are understood to be used neutrally and refer to both masculine- and feminine-gender variants" [32].

At the same time, it is very rare for an occupational description to be clearly gender-specific, and where this is the case, it is usually done so with a justification as outlined in section (4) of article 13 of the Law on Gender Equality, presented above in 3.1. One such example is given below that shows an advertised position that is gender-specific for an actor (f.) in the Italian Drama Ensemble of the Croatian National Theatre in Rijeka (*Hrvatsko narodno kazalište Ivana pl. Zajca u Rijeci*). We provide excerpts of the advertised position below in Croatian, with the gender-specific terms underlined. This is followed by the English gloss immediately below:

> *NATJEČAJ za izbor kandidata za obavljanje poslova DRAMSKA GLUMICA u ansamblu TALIJANSKE DRAME: dramska glumica – SREDNJE uloge – jedan izvršitelj.* [...] *Na natječaj se mogu prijaviti osobe ženskog spola što je uvjetovano prirodom i potrebama posla i mogućnosti izvršavanja repertoara (sukladno čl. 13. stavku 4. Zakona o ravnopravnosti spolova…). /.../ Kandidati koji udovoljavaju traženim uvjetima i koji su priložili svu potrebnu dokumentaciju, obvezno pristupaju audiciji prema općem aktu o audiciji. Audicija će se održati u drugoj polovici ožujka 2018. u zgradi kazališta. O točnom datumu kandidati će biti pravovremeno obaviješteni.* (Hrvatsko narodno kazalište Ivana pl. Zajca, Rijeka, n.d.)

[32] Croatian original: "Izrazi koji se koriste u ovom Natječaju, a imaju rodno značenje, koriste se neutralno i odnose se jednako na muški i ženski rod."

> POSITION VACANT for the selection of a candidate (m.) for the position ACTOR (f.) in the ITALIAN DRAMA ENSEMBLE: actor (f.) SUPPORTING roles – one protagonist (m.). /…/ This position is open to female persons (f.) based on the nature and duties of the position and on the ability to fulfil the requirements of the position's repertoire (in accordance with Article 13, Paragraph 4 of the *Gender Equality Act*…) [...] Applicants (m.) who meet the necessary requirements and who have submitted all necessary documentation are obliged to attend an audition as per standard practice. The audition will be held in the second half of March 2018 in the theatre itself. Candidates (m.) will be informed of the exact date of the audition in due course.

As can be seen, feminine nouns are used for the occupational designation itself, *glumica* 'actor' (f.) but what follows are masculine nouns *izvršitelj* 'protagonist' (m.), and *kandidati* 'candidates/applicants' (m.), even though feminine equivalents for these forms are available, i.e. *izvršiteljica* 'protagonist' (f.) and *kandidatkinje* 'candidates/applicants' (f.). The same job listing was also published in Italian. However, all corresponding terms in the Italian version were of feminine gender: *una candidata* 'candidate' (f.); *attrice* 'actor' (f.); *un esecutrice* 'protagonist' (f.); *le candidate* 'candidates' (f.) etc. It is not clear why the same job advertisement featured different conventions of gender-specific designations according to language, and why the Italian-language version featured a consistent use of feminine-gender forms for a position for a female, where the Croatian version did not. It may be that for many of those composing vacant position descriptions, masculine-gender forms (still) function as generic ones that they believe apply to applicants of both sexes. In such instances, the feminine-gender form is used alongside the masculine-gender form for the occupational designation itself, so that the advertisement conforms to legal requirements that prohibit the exclusion of members of either sex from applying for employment. Elsewhere in such texts, the other instances of nouns relating to performers of actions appear to be still given in the masculine-gender form only.

The above examples deal with job advertisements composed by employers. It can be instructive to compare job advertisements from employers to publicly posted texts from job seekers who present themselves on the Croatian labour market, i.e. 'want ads'. In a large-scale survey of a weekly newspaper that contained only classified and personal

advertisements, *Oglasnik* 'Bulletin Board', Bernardi-Glovacki (2012) located 584 messages: 282 were positions vacant advertised by employers; 302 were 'want ads' from job seekers looking for employment. Bernardi-Glovacki's analysis of these texts showed that advertisements placed by employers typically still featured masculine-gender forms used generically. Where a female was sought, this was expressed less often through a feminine-gender designation of the relevant occupation and more often through terms that semantically relate to biological gender such as *girl* or *woman,* e.g. *Marljivu ženu za kućanske poslove tražim* 'a diligent woman for household work', or *Djevojku za prodaju pekarskih proizvoda tražim* 'a girl to work in retail sales of bread and pastries' (Bernardi-Glovacki (2012: 153-4). In some advertisements, the feminine-gender, but neutral form *osoba* 'person' (f.) is used, e.g. *Osobe za rad u uredu prodaje u Zagrebu* 'persons to work in a retail sales office in Zagreb'. In sum, only 25% of employers' advertisements conformed to the Gender Equality Act. In contrast, 70% of the 'want ads' from job-seekers contained gender-specific forms that reflected the sex of the jobseeker, e.g. *knjigovotkinja* 'bookkeeper (f.), *konobar* 'waiter' (m.) (Bernardi-Glovacki, 2012: 154-5).

5.6 Occupational designations and forms of address in pre-school settings

We comment here briefly on terms that are not official designations, but which are used colloquially and which have a high frequency of use in a specific occupational setting: pre-school education. In Croatian, the designations *predškolski odgajatelj* (m.) and *predškolska odgajateljica* (f.) both mean 'kindergarten teacher'. This is a job that has traditionally been performed by women, and most women working in this job are referred to, by both children and adults, as *teta* [lit. 'aunt']. This is the common, colloquial form used; the equivalent colloquial form used in English-speaking countries would be 'Miss'.

However, there is now an increasing number of male kindergarten teachers working in pre-school education and it is interesting to observe how they are addressed. It has been observed that in some instances children address them by their first name. This is unusual and appears to contravene the conventions of Croatian pragmatics that require children to address adults unrelated to them in semi-formal (or formal) settings via a specific form of address or title, e.g. *gospodine* 'Mister' and their surname.

But, in relation to female kindergarten teachers, use of the first name to address adults is recorded, i.e. as part of the syntagma, *teta + first name*, 'Miss + first name'. Following this model, what has been observed in recent years is that male forms congruent to *teta* 'aunt' are being used by pre-school children, i.e. *barba* along the Adriatic coast, or *striček* in northern Croatia which are non-standard forms for 'uncle' used in these parts of the country [33]. At the same time, what is also recorded is that in order for male kindergarten teachers to clearly identify their job to others, they often initially self-identify as a *teta* 'aunt', alongside their official title of *predškolski odgajatelj* 'kindergarten teacher' (Jutarnji list, 2018). This mirrors the use of masculine-gender forms that women new to an occupation often adopted, with the distinction that male kindergarten teachers already have an official designation to point to, *predškolski odgajatelj* (m.).

In sum, language use in this workplace points to the legacy of a widely used colloquialism for females, *teta*, that continues to be used. The absence of an established male form has led to (non-standard) forms congruent to *teta* being used as forms of address to male pre-school teachers, sometimes followed by their first name, or in some instances, replaced entirely by their first name (Personal communication: Dunja Stolac, 23 November 2024).

5.7 Usage in official and semi-official written correspondence

As the previous section showed, forms of address may, on first glance, appear to be conventionalised and uniform. But these can be reconfigured when the gender make-up of those working in that occupation begins to change. In relation to written texts, and in particular, to formal correspondence, specific salutations and forms of address are a feature of official as well as semi-official written texts. In English, where these are addressed to people who are not personally known to the senders of these texts, semantic hypernyms are often employed, e.g. *Dear Guest, Valued Customers, Fellow Members* etc. Drawing on data from two large corpora consisting of Croatian written texts harvested from electronic sources, Hudečak and Mihaljević (2021) examine the use of salutations. They

[33] The terms *teta, barba* and *striček* mean not only 'aunt' and 'uncle' respectively, but are terms that children and younger interlocutors can use to address or to describe any older person, including those not related to them.

report variation where, in many instances, only masculine forms are used, e.g. *Dragi prijatelji* 'Dear friends' (m.pl.) or *Cijenjeni birači* 'Esteemed voters' (m.pl.) but also locate instances where both masculine and feminine forms are used together, e.g. *Poštovane čitateljice i poštovani čitatelji* 'Respected' (f.pl.) 'readers' (f.pl.), and 'respected' (m.pl.) 'readers' (m.pl). The authors observe that use of forms for both genders is more characteristic of more formal discourse and discourse with a thematic link to politics, e.g. public addresses at political rallies or salutations used in political party pamphlets. In the case of the latter, they conclude that "the reason for using feminine/masculine pairs are politeness strategies" (Hudeček & Mihaljević, 2021: 326).

Where both forms are used, the feminine one usually precedes the masculine one. Sometimes the attribute adjective for the second (masculine) noun form is omitted which itself also indexes the grammatical gender of its noun head. This then results in the feminine attributive adjective then relating to the masculine form as well, e.g. *Drage pretplatnice i pretplatnici* 'Dear' (f.pl.) 'subscribers' (f.pl.) and 'subscribers' (m.pl.). In this instance, the gender marking of the attributive adjective *drage* 'dear' (f.pl.) is determined by the closest noun that can control it, in this case *preplatnice* 'subscribers' (f.pl.). This overrides the usual convention of agreement in Croatian that an attributive that precedes and relates to two nouns each referring to people of different sexes should bear masculine-gender marking. In overall terms, the use of forms for both genders in salutations in formal letters is found to be comparatively rare and the data that Hudeček and Mihaljević (2021: 323-4) present show that masculine forms are still more widely used as the generic form for both genders.

5.8 Usage in public spaces – a snapshot of commercial signage

Lastly, we briefly mention designations that are found on signage of commercial businesses. Data on the language used in public signs were collected in Croatia's four major cities, Zagreb, Rijeka, Split and Osijek, over a two-year period from 2016 to 2017 (cf. Stolac, 2018; Stolac & Vlastelić, 2014). Focusing on designations that lawyers use in advertising signs outside their offices, we examine the incidence of the terms *odvjetnik* 'lawyer' (m.) and *odvjetnica* 'lawyer' (f.) amongst a sample of lawyers, all of whom are female. We examined the titles used in commercial signs

visible at the entrances of 29 legal offices where it was clear by the name of the lawyer that they were female[34]. This sample of 29 instances is a modest one and we make no claim that the results we present here are representative. Our results are, at best, indicative of some of the types of linguistic forms that can be found on commercial signs that are publicly visible. While some female lawyers (n=8) use the gender-congruent term *odvjetnica*, followed by their name, the majority (n=17) of female lawyers still use the male form, *odvjetnik* to precede their name. What is also found is that sometimes the term *odvjetnički ured* 'law firm' is used (n=4), followed by the name of the legal practitioner. Image 1 below shows an example of this, followed by the feminine-gender designation *odvjetnica* and the lawyer's title and name. But, the web address of her legal firm contains the masculine-gender form, *odvjetnik*, i.e. *www.**odvjetnik**-holjar.hr*.



Image 1: Signage outside a lawyer's office in Rijeka (Stolac & Hlavač, 2021: 63)

We locate an analogous trend amongst other professions, e.g. *ordinacija* 'doctor's surgery'/'dental surgery', *poliklinika* 'medical clinic', *laboratorij* 'laboratory' and similar terms occurring together with the name of the doctor or dentist, so that the use of a gender-specific term is avoided.

6. Conclusion

The starting points for this paper are gender equality as a principle, legal regulations that seek to enable this, and the lexical, word formation and

[34] The sex of the lawyer was usually immediately identifiable to the first author as almost all given names in Croatian are specific to one sex only.

morphological features that Croatian has so that occupational designations encompass both genders in an equitable and comparable way.

While Croatian, like many languages, has a large repertoire of lexical forms for all sorts of occupations, the impetus for the coining and popularisation of forms that relate to female protagonists, alongside those already established forms for male protagonists, resulted from many factors. The factors identified in this paper are summarised here as the following. The first factor was educational, socio-economic and demographic: universal education, industrialisation and urbanisation that resulted in a large proportion of women in Croatia working across a range of occupational fields from the middle of the twentieth century onwards. The second was socio-political and ideological, and partly a consequence of the first factor: the dominance of men and their position in society that enabled them to wield political, economic, familial and physical power over women began to change (and began to be challenged) from the early twentieth century onwards in many countries of the world, not only Western ones. The women's emancipation movement included calls for gender equality in the terms and designations used for women in their places of employment. The third factor is based on the first two factors and is of a macro-political nature: Croatia made changes to its legislative regulations following authoritative or normative guidelines from international (i.e. ILO) or supra-national (i.e. EU) entities, as part of its integration into the 'Trans-Atlantic' community and accession to the European Union.

In relation to the linguistic features of Croatian that enable the development of new forms for female *nomina agenti,* diachronic analysis informs us of suffixes used over the last 300 years or so for male protagonists, i.e. *-ač*, *-ar*, *-tel,* and less commonly *-ec*, *-lac*, *-nik*, while for female protagonists these were *-ica*, *-ka*. Synchronic analysis confirms the productivity of the above suffixes (where Standard Croatian *-telj* is now more common than Kajkavian *-tel*) while the suffix *-inj-a* is also shown to be productive alongside other, contemporary suffixes for females.

What this means is that the above word formation processes and the productive suffixes identified enable the coining of designations for females. The basic structure of Croatian therefore can provide linguistic solutions in response to the need for occupation designations that support gender equality. This is confirmed by the Croatian Language Council (*Vijeće za normu hrvatskoga standardnog jezika*) which, in 2011,

supported the coining and popularisation of feminine-gender forms, not only for occupational designations, but for any female *nomen agentis*.

With these things in mind, this paper examined a number of corpora to see if and how gender equality is being achieved from the following sources: three iterations of the Croatian National Classification of Occupations from 1998, 2010 and 2023; multiple examples of public employment listings; an informal sample from pre-school settings; examples of official and semi-official written correspondence; a random sample of commercial signs found outside female lawyers' offices.

Analysis of each of the three iterations of the National Classification of Occupations from 1998, 2010 and 2023 shows certain inconsistencies in the 1998 iteration, usually in the form of single designations that lack equivalent forms for the opposite sex. In a small number of cases, there are semantic asymmetries that perhaps reflect popular language use at the time. In the 2010 and 2023 iterations, the number of inconsistencies and asymmetries is greatly reduced so that the most recent document contains around 20 such instances. Some of the designations with only feminine-gender forms are: *vezilja* 'embroiderer' (f.), *primalja* 'midwife' (f.), *kućna pomoćnica* 'house-keeper' (f.), *pralja* 'laundry attendant' (f.), *glačarica* 'ironing attendant' (f.) and *hostesa* 'hostess' (f.). But even here, we see that for many of them, such as the first three mentioned, there are now equivalent masculine-gender forms that have been suggested by the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics' (2022). Some masculine-gender forms appear not (yet) to have feminine-gender equivalents: *diskodžokej* 'disc jockey' (m.), *hotelski teklič* 'bellboy' (m.) and *otpremnik* 'shipping agent'/'dispatcher' (m.). Some other forms appear as 'outliers', for example, *umjetnički model* 'artistic model' (m.) and *fotomodel* 'photo model' (m.). Both are masculine gender nouns, but refer to occupations that have traditionally been dominated by women. Designations for occupations that have traditionally been female-dominant are more likely to be feminine-gender ones, such as *vezilja* 'embroiderer' (f.) and *primalja* 'midwife' (f.) mentioned above. But both *umjetnički model* and *fotomodel* are masculine-gender nouns, and contemporary usage points to them being widely employed for both women and men. Lastly, the masculine-gender noun *vođa* 'leader' (m.) which is declined as a feminine-gender noun, has traditionally referred to men only, but its semantic field also now encompasses women in the absence of an equivalent form with a typical feminine-gender suffix such as **voćk-inj-a*.

In the same way that national classifications of occupations have, over time, been revised to achieve gender-equality, the designations used in public employment listings now more commonly contain both masculine- and feminine-gender designations, the masculine-gender form only followed by the contraction *m/ž* 'm/f' (i.e. 'male' or 'female'), or in some instances, an addendum stating that the masculine-gender form is intended to relate to members of both sexes. But, the occurrence of masculine-gender forms without further qualification still occurs, with this being more frequent in advertisements composed by employers compared to 'want-ads' from jobseekers who are more likely to use a designation that is congruent to their own gender.

Accounts from pre-school settings show that while equivalent terms exist for both males and females, i.e. *predškolski odgajatelj* (m.) and *predškolska odgajateljica* (f.) both meaning 'kindergarten teacher', the popularity of the colloquial term used for female kindergarten teachers, *teta* [lit.] 'aunt', has given rise to the use of similarly colloquial terms for their male colleagues, *barba* or *striček*, both meaning 'uncle'. But, some asymmetries are reported; use of the equivalent male terms is not as entrenched as that of *teta*, and children are reported to use first names for their male teachers more often than they do for their female ones.

As reported from a large-scale study on written communications from official bodies, many such communications contain masculine-gender forms of address only, usually in the plural. Instances of both masculine- and feminine-gender forms are found in forms of correspondence that are either more formal or official, or in communications that have a thematic link to politics. Here it may be that those composing such communications are aware that their addressees are also potential voters with the following implication: omitting the feminine-gender form may be perceived as disregarding female voters or constituents.

Lastly, commercial signs are an interesting data source as they represent linguistic models of the way that a person wishes to publicly present themself to potential clients. A random sample of 29 signs outside female lawyers' offices showed that 27% (n=8) featured the feminine-gender form *odvjetnica* 'lawyer' (f.), while a majority (n=17) of the signs contained the designation *odvjetnik* 'lawyer' (m.). What the sample also revealed was that some lawyers' signs contained a construction that circumvented the need for a gender-specific designation and instead featured the adjectival

form *odvjetnički* followed by a noun, in this case *ured* (m.) 'office', i.e. 'lawyer's office'.

What do the above findings mean for Croatian linguistics and for our understanding of word formation conventions and applications in particular? We see how *mocija* is a word formation process that involves, in Croatian, the selection of morphemes in a congruent and parallel way resulting in masculine- and feminine-gender nouns that are semantically equivalent to each other. This process has been shown to be productive in enabling the creation of new forms to address the need for feminine-gender occupational designations to be provided alongside masculine-gender ones. It will be interesting to see from further, longitudinally-based data if and how gender-inclusive terms become more popular and therefore unmarked, and to what extent and in which areas gender-specific terms may remain resistant.

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Sažetak

Ovaj se rad bavi ravnopravnošću spolova kao načelom i njezinom primjenom u pogledu naziva koji se odnose na zvanja i zanimanja u kojima mogu raditi i muškarci i žene. Polazne su točke promjene koje je hrvatsko društvo doživjelo od sredine dvadesetog stoljeća nadalje, a koje su dovele do participacije žena u velikom broju zanimanja. Društveno-političke prilike i ideološke promjene dovele su u pitanje dominaciju muškaraca u mnogim zanimanjima i na tržištu rada općenito. Shodno tome, postavlja se pitanje naziva koji se koriste za pojedina zanimanja te postojanja, odnosno raširenosti, ne samo muških nego i ženskih oblika tih naziva. U hrvatskom jeziku postoji mogućnost stvaranja novih riječi (tvorenica) za muške i ženske osobe koje su *nomina agenti*, odnosno izvršitelji radnji. Dijakronijska i sinkronijska analiza pokazuje da se u hrvatskom jeziku taj proces ostvaruje korištenjem nastavaka, odnosno sufiksa. Gotovo da ne postoje jezične prepreke za ostvarivanje cilja Zakona o ravnopravnosti spolova Republike Hrvatske koji propisuje da oglasi za radna mjesta moraju jasno navoditi da se mogu prijaviti osobe oba spola te da se naziv zanimanja mora navesti u muškom i u ženskom obliku.

Analizom više korpusa, uključujući službene dokumente, oglase za posao, odabrana radna mjesta te službene i poluslužbene dopise, ispitani su oblici naziva zanimanja koji se koriste. Utvrđeno je da u trima inačicama Nacionalne klasifikacije zanimanja postoje brojne nedosljednosti, ponajprije nazivi koji se odnose samo na jedan spol, a kojima nedostaju ekvivalenti za suprotan spol, kao i određene semantičke asimetrije koje su još uvijek prisutne u svakodnevnoj uporabi. Takvi su primjeri neekvivalentnosti znatno smanjeni u najnovijoj verziji iz 2023. godine koja sadrži dvadesetak takvih slučajeva. Ženski oblici bez muškog ekvivalenta još uvijek se uglavnom pojavljuju u zanimanjima koja su tradicionalno u ženskoj domeni (npr. *vezilja*, *primalja*) iako u međuvremenu postoje i alternative koje je predložio Institut za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje. S druge strane, još uvijek postoji poneki muški oblik bez ekvivalenta u ženskom rodu, kao i pojedini oblici poput *vođa*, no oni se sve češće smatraju iznimkama kao i oblici poput *fotomodel* koji se u suvremenoj uporabi odnose i na žene i na muškarce.

Paralelni trendovi uočavaju se i u oglasima za posao, u kojima se sve češće primjenjuju rodno uključive strategije, iako se muški oblici bez ženskih ekvivalenata i dalje pojavljuju, osobito u oglasima koje sastavljaju poslodavci. U predškolskom obrazovanju uočava se djelomična simetrija u formalnoj

terminologiji ali i određene asimetrije u kolokvijalnoj uporabi. U službenim i poluslužbenim dopisima zamjetna je dominacija oblika u muškom rodu, dok iznimku čine konteksti s političkim predznakom u kojima je težnja za uključivošću izraženija. Komercijalni natpisi pokazuju veliku raznolikost u obilježavanju naziva koji se odnose na odvjetnice: dok većina sadržava muški oblik *odvjetnik*, neki koriste oblik *odvjetnički ured*, odnosno konstrukciju koja izbjegava rodnu obilježenost. Zaključci upućuju na to da se ravnopravnost spolova kao društveni cilj te rodno uključivi oblici kao sredstvo njegova ostvarivanja postupno uvode iako je riječ o neujednačenom procesu.

Ključne riječi: rodna ravnopravnost; uključiv jezik; nazivi zanimanja; tvorba riječi u hrvatskom jeziku