

Call Signs of Ukrainian Military in The Language Of Mass Media: Functional Semantic Aspect

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Abstract

The article studies the call signs of Ukrainian military personnel, attested in the language of mass media during the period of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war (2022–2025). The sources of the analyzed material were all-Ukrainian and regional mass media. By the goal, the functional and semantic features of military call signs were studied, with an emphasis on the continuity of trends and the latest manifestations of nominations. The achievement of the goal was facilitated by solving the following tasks: 1) to characterize the linguistic parameters of call signs in Ukrainian linguistics; 2) to outline the relevant extralinguistic factors that influence the creation of the nominations under study; 3) to identify thematic groups structured by military call signs of different form and meaning; 4) to analyze the degree of openness of the specified group of anthroponyms that function in the language of Ukrainian mass media in 2022–2025. The analysis of the collected material and the results of the study show that during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war, the trend towards the creation of military call signs continues. Lexemes of this variety form the following thematic groups: designation of persons by profession, type of activity, occupation, position; names that characterize the bearer by external signs and character traits; nominations that express ethnicity, place of birth, residence, and other geographical concepts; anthroponyms, the basis of which is formed by zoolexemes and botanical names; nominations formed from mythonyms; lexemes that mark tools, objects, and parts of various structures; anthroponyms formed from names and toponyms; nominations of literary characters and film heroes; lexemes assigned to the expression of sweets, desserts, etc. It was found that among the corpus of collected material, the largest group is constituted by unofficial names formed from mythonyms and biblical names. Focusing on previous developments made it possible to state that call signs for female soldiers were added, among which there are attested lexemes for the designation of various types of snakes, objects of the solar system, representatives of flora and fauna, mythological images, and parts of various types of weapons. In addition, call signs are assigned to animals. Differentiation of anthroponyms built based on polysemantic words causes difficulties, since without communication with the bearers of secondary names, it is difficult to determine what semantic content constitutes the derivational basis of the nomination. In the language of Ukrainian mass media, several call signs have opaque semantics; these include digital names. A tendency towards the active use of the lexeme call sign in proper names has been traced. It has been studied that in the corpus of factual material, not only Ukrainian, but also borrowed words are attested. The expression of Ukrainian military call signs is associated with both neutral nouns and marked ones that have pronounced emotive features. The dynamics of informal lexemes towards an increase in the number of factually substantiated and non-standard models of creation indicate a great promising potential of these linguistic units.

Keywords: Anthroponym; Call Signs; Extralinguistic Factors; Functionalism; Lexical-Semantic Processes; Mass Media Language; Nominations; Proper Names; Russian-Ukrainian War; Semantics.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Ukrainian society is in a state of full-scale war, which was launched by the Russian Federation in 2022. In this regard, the communicative processes in the country have changed their vectors, themes, and directions. As Siuta rightly emphasizes, “the full-scale war, in which Ukraine and Ukrainians have been living since February 24, 2022, created a linguistic reality radically different from the peaceful one – with fundamentally new texts, proper and common names, and modernized meanings. Systematically stratifying and comprehending this phenomenon is the task of future generations. However, today, making only the first generalizations, linguists must most fully record

“living” linguistic material – as a factual, source base for studying this period of the literary language development. After all, modern texts of various styles and genres (journalistic, historical, colloquial, and occasionally official and business) in their lexical content and expressive tonality are documentary reliable fixers, mental and emotional “molds” of language in the plane of description and evaluation of “one’s own” and “other’s” [10].

One of the important factors in the exchange of information is to get messages from territories where active military operations are ongoing. In addition to public information operated by the mass media, the call signs (call names) of the Ukrainian military come into general use through various sources. The “Great Explanatory Dictionary of the Modern Ukrainian Language” explains two lexemes that are close in sound, structure, and derivational parameters: call sign – “which serves to draw attention to something” [2]; call signs – “plural. Conditional signals for recognizing a radio station, ship, military unit, etc.” [2]. In the modern scientific paradigm, the concept of call sign has undergone semantic expansion. Analyzing this nomination in the context of naming Ukrainian soldiers, researchers mostly treat it as an anthroponymic unit and consider it within the framework of a military pseudonym, the formation of which began in 2014, when the first Ukrainian territories were occupied, and continues to this day [1; 5; 7; 9; 8]. We agree with the reasoning of S. Verbych that the use of proper names, primarily anthroponyms, in various spheres of life of the current Ukrainian society is actively influenced by both intra- and extra-linguistic factors, which often transform the onymic space [11].

An important extralinguistic factor that became a prerequisite for the creation and use of informal military names is active military operations [12]. As L. Belei notes, military pseudonyms have a long tradition, “they appear not only from the operational need to encrypt one’s own identity, but also through cultural traditions, the roots of which can be traced back to the Cossacks, because a large number of surnames of Cossack origin are former military pseudonyms” [1]. Other linguists also emphasize the antiquity of the tradition of the existence of military pseudonyms: “Let us recall, for example, the use of military call signs during the national liberation struggles in the twentieth century by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army” [8]. L. Belei expressed valid considerations about the emergence of secondary names of those military personnel participating in military operations in the second decade of the 21st century: “In volunteer battalions, starting in 2014, there was a crossing of military pseudonyms and call signs, that is, a cultural tradition that implied the use of nicknames in war, and the tactical need to mask a person during the coordination of military operations using radio communication” [1].

1.2. Call signs classification in the literature

Several qualifying principles for studying the unofficial anthroponymicon include differentiation by motivational characteristics [3]. First, let us focus on the works that propose a classification of call signs of participants in the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) / Joint Forces Operation (JFO), which refers to combat operations before the full-scale invasion of Russia, i.e., until 2022. In the concept of Yu. Kopytko [6], the analyzed nominations form four groups, which were shaped taking into account the following parameters: 1) the attribute “person in society”, which unites unofficial anthroponyms by profession, preferences, national and ethnic characteristics, rank, family and other ties; 2) the characteristic features of the bearer; for modelling this group, the researcher took into account character traits, appearance, color, body parts, and included in the analysis the names of tools, weapons, military equipment, proper names of actors, singers, famous historical figures, heroes of films and cartoons, folklore, myths, etc.; 3) a feature of the “reality of the surrounding world”, which became the basis for describing the names formed based on the names of flora and fauna, toponyms, substances, materials, natural phenomena; 4) surnames, given names, patronymics, which made it possible to form a group of nominal names [5]. Having limited his research to the factual material of 2014, Kravchenko [7] divides call signs into two groups, each of which is structured by linguistic units of narrower semantics: 1) appellative call signs, the basis of which is formed by zoolexemes, phytotonimations, names of household items, professions, appearance, body parts, ethnonyms, names of persons by kinship, etc.; 2) onymous call signs, formed from proper names, surnames, patronymics, names of settlements, nominations of literary heroes, famous people, biblical and mythical creatures, etc. [7]. Belei distinguishes four functional types of call signs: operational (created for a specific operation, which are then changed); official (assigned to individual positions; people can change, but the call signs remain the same); positional (names of individual positions, observation points, etc.); heteronymic (names that are invented specifically for war, that is, in civilian life a person has a real name, in war - a heteronym) [1]. Thus, this new linguistic phenomenon deserves thorough attention and study.

During 2022–2025, several new military call signs were formed, which were actively influenced by the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war. The call signs that entered the media space in 2022 were analyzed in detail by N. Shulska, N. Kostusiak, N. Rymar, I. Zavarynska, S. Mykhalchuk, and O. Bovda. Ukrainian researchers proposed ten thematic groups of call signs: 1) names indicating external features or internal characteristics of denotates; 2) nominations indicating a person’s occupation, profession, or hobby; 3) call signs based on floronomens; 4) unofficial anthroponyms of faunonomen origin; 5) secondary proper names of military personnel, consonant with the names of other persons (movie and multi-series heroes, fairy-tale characters, biblical or mythical creatures, actors, athletes, politicians, writers, etc.); 6) call signs, the formation of which is associated with ethnonyms and names of nationalities, countries; 7) unofficial anthroponyms, formed from nominations to denote family and kinship relations; 8) call signs, which are Ukrainian or foreign-language (own or foreign) colloquial variants of names, as well as names close in sound to the official surname; 9) military pseudonyms, consonant with the names of equipment and household appliances; 10) anthroponyms, semantically related to the nominations of natural phenomena, space, landscape [8].

1.3. The relevance of research

In publications of various genres and style parameters, attention has repeatedly been drawn to the functional purpose and motivation of the analyzed nominations, the commonality of which is condensedly conveyed by the reasoning presented in the media publication “Sky. Kropyvnytskyi News”: “A call sign is not just a unique name or a set of symbols. It is a way of identification and self-expression, which can have a deep personal and cultural context. Nowadays, when it comes to how to come up with a call sign, it is important to understand its meaning and functions. A call sign can be associated with professional activities, hobbies, personal qualities, or a person’s history” [4]. Summarizing the opinions of researchers, we note that the lexeme call sign means a temporary (fictitious) name of a person, which is used instead of a real name or surname in small groups of people related to the military sphere, for “disguise” for a certain professional purpose or personal safety, as well as to facilitate quick recognition and communication with a specific person during oral communication. Since an active stage of mobilization is currently underway, the process of creating and assigning new call signs to Ukrainian defenders is also ongoing, which requires fixation and thorough research. It is important to analyze unofficial anthroponyms in comparison with those described earlier, which will allow outlining manifestations that testify to compliance with established creation schemes, and identifying

new trends and, accordingly, drawing up an updated typology of secondary names of persons. All this indicates the relevance of the problem raised.

The purpose of the article is to study the functional and semantic features of call signs attested in the language of the mass media during the period of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war (2022–2025), to clarify the continuity of trends and the latest manifestations of nominations. Achieving the set goal involves solving the following tasks: 1) to characterize the linguistic parameters of call signs in Ukrainian linguistics; 2) to outline the relevant extralinguistic factors that influence the creation of the nominations under study; 3) to identify thematic groups structured by call signs of military personnel of different forms and meanings; 4) to analyze the degree of openness of the specified group of anthroponyms that function in the language of the Ukrainian mass media in 2022–2025.

2. Method

The source base of the study included modern information platforms of various types and forms of ownership (“Ukrainska Pravda”, “Ukraina Moloda”, “Detector Media”, “Suspilne”, Radio Svoboda”, “Ukrinform”, “Vysoky Zamok”, etc.) of the active phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The corpus of nominations compiled on their basis covers more than 100 units, presented in new, previously unanalyzed sentence constructions, which, in our opinion, emphasizes the innovative nature of the article.

The goal was achieved and the task was solved using the following research methods: descriptive, which made it possible to systematize and classify call signs selected from mass media texts; the method of complex analysis, aimed at studying nominations in the semantic aspect; the method of contextual-semantic analysis, which made it possible to characterize the selected statements in terms of the contextual environment and semantic specificity; the method of component analysis used to study the semantic characteristics of call signs.

The formation of samples for analysis was carried out based on two stages:

At the first stage, we conducted content analysis of publications on the topic of the Russo-Ukrainian war on the above-mentioned online news platforms. During the analysis, based on the toolkit of grounded theory, we conducted coding and categorization of the discourse elements related to military call signs.

At the second stage, we conducted a targeted search of publications based on categories identified within the first stage and conducted appropriate analysis of functional-semantic aspects.

The process of research is schematically depicted on Figure 1 below:



Fig. 1: The Scheme of Research Continuity.

In turn, functional-semantic analysis made it possible to trace the process of changes, possible mutual transitions of syntactic forms when expressing identical or close meanings, and secondly, to reveal the dialectical nature of the relationship between logical and grammatical categories, the dialectical unity of content and form.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Call signs by occupation (profession): examples and implications

In the language of Ukrainian media, we distinguish call signs to designate people by profession, type of activity, occupation, position, etc. The motivation of some of them is given in the publication, for example: “Я повернувся сьогодні – чесно кажучи, чудо, що повернувся. Після штурмів дають три дні відновитися. Просто після чотирьох діб, які в мене були, не кожен відновиться за три дні. Але бокс та випікання мене відновлюють». Таке повідомлення залишив нам Дмитро Бігас – солдат 80-ої окремої десантно-штурмової бригади ДШВ із позивним «Шеф». До жовтня 2023-го він керував кухнею у львівському закладі. Зараз – керує ударними дронами в Клішіївці. А поміж штурмами випікає хліб” (“I returned today – honestly, it’s a miracle that I returned. After the assaults, they give me three days to recover. It is just that after the four days that I had, not everyone will recover in three days. But boxing and baking helped me recover.” This message was left by Dmytro Bihas, a soldier of the 80th separate airborne assault brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with the call sign “Chef”. Until October 2023, he ran the kitchen in Lviv institution. Now, he oversees strike drones in Klishchiivka. And between fights, he bakes bread”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, May 23, 2024). From the content of the article, it is easy to determine that the nomination chef has expanded its semantic structure compared to the semantic shades interpreted in the dictionary: “1. Head of an institution, enterprise, department, etc. (chief) // Manager, chief, senior in relation to others who work together, have similar professions, etc. ... 2. A person or organization that exercises patronage over someone, something. 3. In Russia of the 18th–19th centuries - a chief, commander of a separate military unit, who exercised general supervision over the economy and management” [2]. We assume that the call sign Шеф (Chef) arose because of the truncation of the second part of the juxtaposition senior chef, absorbing the semantics of this component.

Professional employment indirectly became the basis for assigning the military call sign Editor, e.g., “До ювілею Українського радіо. Як воює журналіст і ведучий Віктор Цвіліховський із позивним «Редактор»” (“To the anniversary of the Ukrainian radio. How journalist and presenter Viktor Tsvilikhovskiy fights with the call sign “Editor”) (headline) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, November 16, 2024). As we can see from the context, in peaceful life, the bearer of the unofficial name, although he did not hold the position of editor, was to some extent involved in the field of journalism.

The onymic space was filled with the unofficial name Maestro, motivated by the military’s favorite pastime of playing a musical instrument and singing, e.g.: “Прийду на дембель – розберемося». Історія 60-річного бійця ТРО з позивним «Маестро» (заголовок). Чоловік і зі зброєю вправляється, і дрова рубас. Коли ж видається можливість – грає на гітарі. І співає – звідси, ділиться, й позивний – «Маестро»” (“When it is time for demobilization – we’ll figure it out.” The story of a 60-year-old TRO fighter with the call sign “Maestro” (headline)). The man practices with weapons and chops wood. When the opportunity arises - he plays the guitar. And sings - hence, he shares, the call sign was given – “Maestro”) (<https://susplne.media>, January 3, 2023). The semantics of the analyzed call sign generally gravitates towards the first meaning of this word given in the dictionary: “1. Respectful name of an outstanding musician, composer, artist // Address to such a person” [2].

With the projection to the position and academic rank, the military man received the call sign Professor: “Пам’яті науковця Андрія Семеновича (позивний «Професор»)” (“In memory of the scientist Andrii Semenovych (call sign “Professor”) (headline)) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, January 6, 2025). From the publication, we learn that the defender was an associate professor of the Department of International Relations of the National University “Ostroh Academy” and died near Bakhmut in the Donetsk region. Like the nomination Maestro, the unofficial name Professor, although to some extent hyperbolizes the content embedded in it, has a transparent motivation.

In the language of the mass media, we occasionally come across two-component call signs of this thematic range, for example: “Після служби в радянському війську він сміявся сам і смішив публіку, працюючи 35 років у манежі цирку. В 2022 році повернувся з Англії в Україну, щоб піти добровольцем у ЗСУ. Клоун – стереотипне тавро, яке використовують обивателі. «Фартовий Арлекін» – позивний для побратимів. Артист оригінального жанру – квінтесенція самого себе” (“After serving in the Soviet army, he laughed himself and made the audience laugh, working for 35 years in the circus arena. In 2022, he returned from England to Ukraine to volunteer in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Clown is a stereotypical label used by ordinary people. “Fortunate Harlequin” is a call sign for his brothers. An artist of the original genre is the quintessence of himself”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, May 7, 2024).

It is difficult to identify the motivational history of the call sign if the publication does not describe the preferences, interests, and occupation of the bearer of the “second” name. In media texts, we often come across such nominations with a generalized indication of professional activity, e.g.: “Свідчення військового ЗСУ з позивним «Археолог» про втрати у гарячих точках фронту” (“Testimony of a military officer of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with the call sign “Archaeologist” about losses in hot spots of the front”) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, December 27, 2023); “Ми не думали, що можемо померти», – каже військовослужбовець на позивний «Боксер»” (“We did not think that we could die,” says a serviceman with the call sign “Boxer”) (<https://susplne.media>, February 18, 2024).

3.2. Call signs based on appearance: specifics

The continuity of functioning is evidenced by call signs that characterize the bearer based on external signs and character traits. The context in which the call sign Maliuk (baby) got used was of particular interest, e.g.: “Був менеджером і боксером – став бійцем. За два з половиною роки війни пройшов шлях від стрільця до командира роти. Це – про Віктора на псевдо «Малюк», військовослужбовця 128-ї бригади Сил територіальної оборони ЗСУ. Він – доброволець” (“He was a manager and a boxer - and became a fighter. In two and a half years of war, he went from a rifleman to a company commander. This is about Viktor, alias “Maliuk”, a serviceman of the 128th Brigade of the Territorial Defense Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. He is a volunteer (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, October 6, 2024). Although the publication does not mention the appearance of the serviceman, given his boxing training, which requires constant practice, we assume that the fighter has a strong physique. Therefore, the call sign is probably in an antonymous relationship with the motivator.

3.3. Character traits as a factor in call sign creation

Call signs, the basis for the creation of which are the traits of a person’s character, are chosen by the Ukrainian military themselves or assigned to them by others. For example, expressing disobedience, disagreement with the leadership became a prerequisite for a fighter to choose the unofficial name Buntar (rioter): “Бунтар: Спецпризначенець Бунтар: Є ‘совкові’ командири, яким важливіше отримати зірочки на погони, ніж перемогти (заголовок). «Один із моїх командирів сказав: „Звикай бути військовим”. Типу в армії чітка ієрархія. Але я як людина цивільна відповів, що не хочу до цього звикати...” Саме через бунтарську натуру він обрав собі позивний «Бунтар»” (“Special Forces soldier Buntar: There are ‘Soviet’ commanders for whom it is more important to get stars on their shoulder straps than to win (headline). “One of my commanders said, “Get used to being a soldier. There is a clear hierarchy in the army. But as a civilian, I replied that I don’t want to get used to it...” It was because of his rebellious nature that he chose the call sign “Buntar” (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, September 24, 2024). For his cheerful disposition, the fighter was assigned the combat nickname Smile: “Смайл: Невдовзі після цього інтерв’ю зенітник 22-ї бригади ЗСУ загинув. Максим отримав від побратимів позивний «Смайл» за усмішку” (“Shortly after this interview, an anti-aircraft gunner from the 22nd brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine died. Maksym received the call sign “Smile” from his brothers for his smile”) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, October 28, 2023). Let us note that the word Smile came to the Ukrainian language from English (smile) using the transcription method of its graphic transmission. Call signs that characterize the bearer by appearance and character traits are closest to individual nicknames, because nicknames are given to people mainly based on these characteristics.

3.4. Ethnicity and origin as call sign formation factors

In the language of Ukrainian mass media, we come across call signs that denote ethnicity, place of birth, residence, and other geographical concepts, for example: “Саме історію Конана згадував інший борець «Артану» з позивним «Хохол» тієї миті, коли сили полишали його і була спокуса припинити боротьбу” (“Namely the story of Conan was mentioned by another fighter of “Artan” with the call sign “Khokhol” at the moment when his strength was leaving him and he was tempted to stop fighting”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, November 10, 2023) - the fighter received the nickname “khokhol” in peaceful life and decided to use it during the war, stating that he does not consider it offensive, because, as the military man himself explains, “khokhol is “son of heaven” (in Crimean Tatar kök oğlu - son of heaven)” (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, 10.11.2023); “Росіяни вивезли Валіда на адміністративний кордон із півостровом без документів та

речей. Так чоловік і вирішив стати добровольцем, взявши собі характерний позивний – «Крим»” (“The Russians took Valid to the administrative border with the peninsula without documents and belongings. So the man decided to become a volunteer, taking a characteristic call sign – “Crimea”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, January 9, 2024); “Біографія 56-річного тернопільця Тараса Михальчука з позивним «Іспанець» точно не вписується в стандартні рамки бійця Збройних сил” (“The biography of 56-year-old Ternopil resident Taras Mykhalchuk with the call sign “Spanish” definitely does not fit into the standard framework of a soldier of the Armed Forces of Ukraine”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, June 6, 2024) – the soldier lived and worked in Spain for a long time; “У цього хлопця позивний Чех. Просив, щоб не називати його прізвища, тільки ім’я – Андрій. Він – солдат, воїн, захисник...” (“This guy has the call sign Czech. He asked not to disclose his last name, only his first name – Andrii. He is a soldier, warrior, defender...”) (<https://wz.lviv.ua>, May 24, 2023) – the article talks about the places of residence, training, work of the Ukrainian soldier, but the Czech Republic or its inhabitants are never mentioned.

Given this, it can be stated that some of the call signs are conditional. The unofficial name Yankee (Янки) is of interest: “Ігор Янков, більш відомий за позивним «Янки» – один із найвпізнаваніших білоруських добровольців в Україні” (“Igor Yankov, better known by the call sign “Yankee” – one of the most recognizable Belarusian volunteers in Ukraine”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, August 6, 2024). On the one hand, we can associate it with the unchanged, outdated common name Yankee, explained in the dictionary as “a nickname for Americans, natives of the USA” [2], and on the other, with the surname Yankov, which has been truncated.

3.5. Zoolexemes and botanical names in call signs

We trace the continuity of the trend towards creating call signs using zoolexemes, for example: “Руслан з позивним «Ворон» – молодший сержант штурмової роти 128-ї окремої гірсько-штурмової Закарпатської бригади” (“Ruslan with the call sign “Raven” is a junior sergeant of the assault company of the 128th separate mountain assault Transcarpathian brigade”) (<https://suspilne.media>, May 20, 2024); “Оператор дрона молодший сержант Дмитро на позивний «Сич» – найстарший борець підрозділу безпілотних літальних апаратів 128 окремої гірсько-штурмової Закарпатської бригади” (“Drone operator Junior Sergeant Dmytro with the call sign “Athene” is the oldest fighter of the unmanned aerial vehicle unit of the 128th separate mountain assault Transcarpathian brigade”) (<https://suspilne.media>, December 23, 2024); “Історія гвардійця з позивним «Комар» (headline). «Комар» склав фізичні випробування та психологічні тести, втім, каже, що через велику кількість охочих стати снайперами йому не вдалося” (“The story of a guard with the call sign “Mosquito” (headline). “Mosquito” passed physical and psychological tests, however, he says that due to the large number of people who wanted to become snipers, he failed”) (<https://life.pravda.com.ua>, August 25, 2023). Usually, these call signs not only reflect the fauna, but also symbolize the special features of their carriers. The call sign was obviously chosen according to the corresponding associative connections between the individual features of the person and the features of a particular animal. In the article about the soldier “Raven”, although there is no history of the emergence of the unofficial name, there is a photo: the fighter has a black beard, which, presumably, served as the motivator of his call sign. In the photo accompanying the publication about the fighter with the call sign “Mosquito”, we see a short man with gentle features, which associatively explains his fictitious “second” name.

The call sign Sipa, attested in the language of the mass media, requires a separate comment, e.g.: “У бою на сході України загинув фінський медик-доброволець на позивний ‘Сіпа’” (“A Finnish volunteer medic with the call sign ‘Sipa’ died in battle in eastern Ukraine”) (<https://umoloda.kyiv.ua>, November 25, 2024). The emergence of this nomination is associated with the cuttlefish, known for its ability to secrete ink for self-defense. In translation into Finnish, the cuttlefish is *sepia*. Namely, the Finnish version of the name of the sea creature, having undergone simplification in pronunciation and approximation to the Ukrainian orthoepy, became the basis for the creation of the unofficial name of a combat medic from Finland.

Among the number of call signs, we single out a group of botanical names, for example: “Утім, наприкінці листопада, працюючи на сході, «Українська правда» натрапила на доволі широго співрозмовника – заступника командира 68-ї окремої егерської бригади імені Олекси Довбуша на позивний Явір” (“However, at the end of November, while working in the east, “Ukrainian Pravda” came across a rather sincere interlocutor – the deputy commander of the 68th separate Oleksa Dovbush Jaeger Brigade with the call sign Maple”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, December 4, 2024); “Аеророзвідник та кінооператор Олесь Самчук з позивним «Каркаде» поліг за Україну в бою з ворогом на Донецькому напрямку” (“Aerial reconnaissance and cameraman Oles Samchuk with the call sign “Hibiscus” fell for Ukraine in battle with the enemy in the Donetsk”) direction (<https://umoloda.kyiv.ua>, March 16, 2023). It is difficult to determine what constitutes the basis of the semantic associations of the call sign Karkade (Hibiscus) – a lexeme that has the meanings of ‘dried flowers of the Sudanese rose’ or ‘a sour-tasting drink of bright red color, prepared from dried periwinkles of rosella flowers’. In European countries, this drink is consumed as tea. Of course, ignorance of the motivation of the analyzed call sign does not indicate its absence. We agree with the considerations expressed on this subject by Ukrainian linguists: “Each call sign of a Ukrainian soldier, male or female, undoubtedly has a motivational feature, which is often unknown to distant recipients for security reasons in modern military realities. It is not always revealed in journalistic materials, only in some cases can we learn not only about the reason for the nomination by the call sign, but also find out the detailed combat history of its origin [8].

3.6. Mythonyms’ place in call signs formation

In the corpus of collected material, a separate group is formed by call signs derived from mythonyms, e.g.: “Голос належав начальнику штабу батальйону, 49-річному лейтенанту Рустаму Нургудіну на псевдо «Джин», який того дня був оперативним черговим. Одна з характеристик Джина, яку дав його побратим, лейтенант Олесь Маляревич (позивний Одисей), звучить так: «Джин дуже спокійна людина, яка вирішує задачі будь-якого рівня складності, не підвищуючи голос»” (“The voice belonged to the battalion chief of staff, 49-year-old Lieutenant Rustam Nurhudin under the pseudonym “Genie”, who was on operational duty that day. One of the characteristics of Genie, given by his brother, Lieutenant Oles Malyarevych (call sign Odysseus), sounds like this: “Genie is a very calm person who solves problems of any level of complexity without raising his voice”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, August 23, 2024). The call sign Odysseus evokes associations with the national hero of Greece, known from Greek mythology and epic as one of the main heroes of the Trojan War and sung in the “Iliad” and “Odyssey”. The call sign Genie is associated with a fairy-tale hero who guards treasures or rewards those who treat him with respect and punishes disrespectful people.

Call signs formed from mythonyms include the call sign Rollo, e.g.: “Комбат Першого штурмового батальйону Третьої окремої штурмової бригади Петро Горбатенко на позивний «Ролло» став добровольцем на третьому курсі історичного факультету” (“Battalion commander of the First Assault Battalion of the Third Separate Assault Brigade Petro Horbatenko with the call sign “Rollo” became a volunteer in the third year of the history faculty”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, December 23, 2023). Rollo is considered one of the Viking leaders, the first ruler of the Viking territory, which later became Normandy. Rollo’s descendants were the dukes of Normandy, and later

the kings of England. We assume that the deep knowledge of the past, obtained while studying at the history faculty, was a prerequisite for assigning the military call sign Rollo.

It is difficult to determine the motivational basis of the call sign Troll, since the publication does not mention this, e.g., “Позивний «Троль». Волонтери, військові та поліцейські зняли кліп, присвячений полеглим українським захисникам (headline)” (“Call sign ‘Troll’. Volunteers, military, and police officers shot a clip dedicated to the fallen Ukrainian defenders (headline)”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, July 28, 2024). The troll is known from Scandinavian folklore, mythology and fairy tales as an ugly dwarf or giant, a demon that harms people, scares them. Perhaps the goal of the military to punish the enemy, to inflict the greatest possible losses on him, was the prerequisite for assigning this call sign.

We consider the call sign Demon, formed from the name of a certain spiritual force, known from myths and biblical texts, to be close in motivational features, e.g.: “Будем сподіватися, що всіх військовослужбовців, захисників Маріупольського гарнізону поміняють на строковиків Курської області. Тому будемо сподіватися, і чекати на якийсь конструктив зі сторони Росії», – сказав Радіо Свобода оборонець Маріуполя, боєць Національної гвардії Олександр на позивний «Демон», який повернувся до України під час обміну полоненими 31 січня 2024 року та долучився до акції у Запоріжжі” (“Let us hope that all the servicemen, defenders of the Mariupol garrison will be exchanged for conscripts from the Kursk region. Therefore, we will hope and wait for some constructive action from Russia,” explained Radio Liberty, the defender of Mariupol, a fighter of the National Guard Oleksandr, with call sign “Demon”, who returned to Ukraine during the prisoner exchange on January 31, 2024 and joined the action in Zaporizhzhia”) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, August 18, 2024). In the myths of different cultures, demons carry evil and much less often contribute to the implementation of something good. On the other hand, in many religions, in Christianity, a demon is only an evil creature that seeks to harm people, causes associations with sin, temptations, and evil spirits. This is probably how a Ukrainian soldier sees himself in relation to the Russian occupiers. In media publications during the active phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, we come across the call sign Top (Thor), e.g.: “23 березня 2024 року під час виконання бойового завдання на Запорізькому напрямку в селі Роботині загинув відомий розвідник Тор, командир зведеної роти 65-ї окремої механізованої бригади ЗСУ бригади молодший сержант Максим Отінов” (“On March 23, 2024, while performing a combat mission in the Zaporizhzhia direction in the village of Robotyne, the famous scout Thor, commander of the combined company of the 65th separate mechanized brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, junior sergeant Maksym Otinov, was killed”) (<https://uanews.zp.ua>, March 27, 2024). The motivational basis for this unofficial name is a word with different meanings, interpreted in Ukrainian lexicography as: “Thor¹. ... A geometric body formed by the rotation of a circle around an axis that lies in the plane of this circle and does not intersect it. Thor². ... A track. Thor³. ... An extra-system unit of pressure... Thor⁴. ... In Old Norse mythology, the god of war, thunder, and lightning” [2]. We assume that the call sign of a soldier is associated with the nomination of a deity, because a fighter takes part in active military operations, that is, according to behavioral stereotypes, he is as close as possible to a mythical hero. In addition, in the press and oral communication, Ukrainian defenders are repeatedly called the gods of war, emphasizing their courage, high skill, and indomitability. It is important to add that sometimes the names of non-beings also receive a call sign; it applies to combat vehicles: “Броньовик із позивним ‘ТОР’ повернувся до строю (headline)” (“An armored vehicle with the call sign ‘TOR’ has returned to service”) (headline) (<https://spgr.org.ua/ua>, July 5, 2023).

3.7. Undefined motivation of call signs: the latency of roots

Call signs with a clearly undefined motivation include Saba, e.g.: “У п’ятницю, 18 жовтня, на війні загинув молодший сержант Віктор Стельмах з позивним «Саба» 1995 року народження, якого вважали одним з найкращих операторів БПЛА у бригаді” (“On Friday, October 18, Junior Sergeant Viktor Stelmakh with the call sign “Saba” born in 1995, who was considered one of the best UAV operators in the brigade, died in the war”) (<https://umoloda.kyiv.ua>, October 19, 2024). The analyzed nomination has several meanings, one of which is related to the biblical theme: in the biblical tradition, the legendary ruler Queen of Sheba (Saba) is known, who is mentioned in the context of a meeting with King Solomon. In addition, Saba is an island in the Caribbean Sea, and the partially modified version of Sabo is a popular name in some countries, especially in Georgia. Therefore, it is quite difficult to determine what associative characteristics are embedded in the call sign.

The call sign Ярем (Yarem) is attested in the media space, e.g., “Пам’яті десантника, спортсмена Миколи Яремчука (позивний «Ярем») (headline)” (“In memory of the paratrooper, athlete Mykola Yaremchuk (call sign “Yarem”) (headline)”) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, May 29, 2023). The mentioned “second” name is potentially related to two motivators: on the one hand, it should be qualified as a truncated part of the surname Yaremchuk, and on the other hand, it should be considered about the dialect noun ярем (bow, yoke), the literary equivalent of which is yoke [2], i.e., “1. A harness for cattle, made of wooden bars connected in the form of a frame, which is put on the neck of the animals and locked with splinters. // only singular, figurative. Burden, hard load. 2. only singular, figurative. Oppression of someone. 3. el. Part of the magnetic circuit of an electric machine, which connects its poles” [2]. Despite the presence of several semantically related interpretations, we are inclined to believe that the call sign Yarem is a truncated form of the military’ surname, since such creation of unofficial names of Ukrainian defenders is a widespread phenomenon.

Given the creative base, the call sign Boxa (Vokha) is close to the analyzed one as a shortened and slightly modified form of the name Володимир (Volodymyr), e.g.: “Одне з найкращих уособлень нашого народу: у бою загинув програміст Володимир Івашченко «Вокха», головний сержант із 4-ї бригади НГУ” (“One of the best personifications of our people: programmer Volodymyr Ivashchenko “Vokha”, a senior sergeant from the 4th brigade of the National Guard, died in battle”) (<https://novynarnia.com>, May 4, 2024).

Even greater difficulties in terms of motivation are caused by call signs that have no equivalent in the Ukrainian language. The nominations with opaque semantics include the proper name Yangrr recorded in the mass media language, e.g., “Олексію Павлічуку 46 років. Його позивний – «Янгрр». Він головний сержант батальйону ударних безпілотних авіаційних комплексів (БУБпАК) «Ахіллес» 92-ї штурмової бригади” (“Oleksii Pavliichuk is 46 years old. His call sign is “Yangrr”. He is the chief sergeant of the battalion of strike unmanned aviation complexes (BUBpAK) “Achilles” of the 92nd assault brigade”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, September 26, 2024). So, a call sign with opaque semantics is an unofficial designation of a military person, the origin of which cannot be explained without a motivation heard from the bearer of this name. In the military, opaque call signs are distinctive identifiers, frequently nicknames, that are used on military papers and in radio conversations in place of names. By making identification easier, these call signs facilitate communication and are essential for preserving anonymity, particularly during operations. Peers may assign them, the individual may choose them, or they may be based on personal traits or experiences.

3.8. Structures and objects as call signs, “building blocks”

In the language of Ukrainian mass media, we record call signs that correlate with the names of tools, objects, parts of various structures, etc., e.g.: “«Бур» під Бахмутом: одна з тисяч історій про героїчну оборону міста-фортеці на Донеччині” (“Drill” near Bakhmut: one of thousands of stories about the heroic defense of the fortress city in the Donetsk region”) (<https://umoloda.kyiv.ua>, January 18, 2023); “Вже рік Микола Русецький на позивний «Молот» служить на протезі. А деякі співслужбовці про це і не здогадуються: хоча Микола ходив з ними на штурми, та вже «відпрацював» у найгарячіших точках фронту: зокрема у районі Бахмуту та Соледару” (“For a year now, Mykola Rusetskyi has been serving on a prosthesis under the call sign “Hammer”. And some fellow servicemen do not even suspect this: although Mykola went with them to storms, he has already “worked out” in the hottest points of the front: in particular, in Bakhmut and Soledar”) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, September 7, 2023). In the “Great Explanatory Dictionary of Modern Ukrainian Language”, a drill is interpreted as “a tool for drilling wells in the soil and various rocks” [2], and a hammer – “1. A large-sized hammer for crushing stone, for forging iron, hammering something, etc. 2. A machine for impact action for processing metal blanks and materials by pressure. 3. A sports projectile for throwing, consisting of a metal core with a cable” [2]. Taking part in the modeling of call signs, the analyzed words underwent semantic shifts towards expressing the strength, stability, power, courage, endurance of Ukrainian defenders in the fight against the Russian aggressor.

In the media space, we find a headline with the unofficial name “Замок” (Zamok), e.g.: “Позивний «Замок». Херсонець переплив Дніпро на човні, щоб дістатися Миколаєва та піти захищати рідний край” (“Call sign “Zamok”. Kherson dweller swam across the Dnipro by boat to reach Mykolaiv and defend his native land”) (<https://inshe.tv>, October 7, 2022). The article does not contain information about what exactly the prerequisite was for assigning the call sign to the fighter, and which syllable is stressed. One of the most common meanings of the word замо́к (keylock) is “a device for locking doors in rooms, cabinet doors, chests, drawers, etc.”, although, in addition to it, the dictionary records six more semantic shades [2]; замо́к (castle) – “1. A fortified dwelling of a feudal lord of the Middle Ages with defensive, economic, religious, etc. buildings, usually surrounded by a high stone wall with several towers. // A large landowner’s house; palace. 2. obsolete, rarely. Prison building; prison” [2]. The given meanings of both tokens do not allow for determining what motivation is embedded in the call sign Замок. The analyzed unofficial name indicates that the sources of call sign formation are mostly close to the consumer of information, even if they have entered the language of the mass media. A correct idea aimed at solving the problem raised was expressed by L. Belei: “The problem of Ukrainian military naming requires a broader survey, a more detailed analysis of typical models according to which combat pseudonyms are formed” [1].

3.9. Foreign words in call sign formation

In the language of mass media, we come across military call signs, the basis of which is formed by words of foreign origin. Similar to the previously analyzed nominations, a significant part of the unofficial names of this variety do not have a transparent motivation, e.g., “Військовослужбовець на позивний ‘Ліон’ воює на Харківщині та публікує у своєму YouTube-каналі відеосвідчення, як росіяни знищують українські села” (“A serviceman with the call sign ‘Lion’ is fighting in the Kharkiv region and publishes video evidence on his YouTube channel of how the Russians are destroying Ukrainian villages”) (<https://suspilne.media>, September 11, 2024). Let us note that the lexeme Lyon denotes a city in France, a French football club, and a male name. It is also difficult to determine other unofficial names’ associative connection with the formed word, in particular - Kurt: “Військовий із позивним ‘Курт’ доєднався до війська” (“A soldier with the call sign ‘Kurt’ joined the army”) (<https://suspilne.media>, July 17, 2024). The foreign language word Kurt, as a proper name, is a male name, and functioning as a common name, this noun denotes a dry fermented milk product. We are inclined to the first option as the motivator of the call sign.

In contrast to the previously given unofficial names, the call sign Tom Sawyer has a transparent meaning, for example: “Том Соєр, наприклад: Позивний Том Соєр: історія нацгвардійця, який врятувався після вибуху міни під Бахмутом (headline)” (“Call sign Tom Sawyer: the story of a National Guardsman who survived a mine explosion near Bakhmut (headline)”) (<https://life.pravda.com.ua>, January 27, 2023). In the publication, the soldier explains why he received such a name from his comrades, but even without this information it is clear that the motivator is the hero of the works addressed to children, the author of which is Mark Twain: “Воїн каже, що позивний Том Соєр йому обрали не тільки через те, що це його улюблена книга, а й через непосидючість на позиціях” (“The soldier says that the call sign Tom Sawyer was chosen for him not only because it is his favorite book, but also because of his restlessness in positions”) (<https://life.pravda.com.ua>, January 27, 2023). We also come across the one-word call sign Sawyer, the semantics of which is associated with the same character in the novels of the American writer: “Данієль Салем служить у розвідгрупі і має позивний «Соєр», який натхненний книгою Марка Твена «Пригоди Тома Соєра». «Соєр» разом з побратимами приймає виклик від ворога в ближніх боях, разом з побратимами пройшов найзапекліші штурми, неодноразово потрапляв під ворожі обстріли, звільняв Херсонщину, чим власне і продовжує займатися” (“Daniel Salem serves in a reconnaissance group and has the call sign “Sawyer”, which is inspired by Mark Twain’s book “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer”. “Sawyer”, together with his comrades, accepts the challenge from the enemy in close combat, together with his comrades, went through the fiercest assaults, repeatedly came under enemy fire, liberated the Kherson region, which he continues to do” (<https://apostrophe.ua>, October 18, 2024).

Sometimes, call signs correlate with movie heroes, e.g.: “Врятував понад сім сотень життів: історія парамедика на позивний «Йода»” (Saved over seven hundred lives: the story of a paramedic with the call sign “Yoda”) (<https://ye.ua>, October 28, 2023). Let us recall that Yoda, known from the movie “Star Wars”, was distinguished by wisdom, strength, and agility, and at the same time was endowed with several superhuman abilities.

Another group is formed by military call signs denoting sweets, desserts, e.g., Snickers, for example: “Військовий з позивним «Снікерс», який служить у Рівному, розповів про допомогу пораненим на Покровському напрямку” (“A soldier with the call sign ‘Snickers’, who serves in Rivne, spoke about helping the wounded in the Pokrovskyi direction”) (<https://suspilne.media>, November 14, 2024). Snickers is a popular brand of chocolate bars that many people like, including military personnel. That is why the fighter was assigned the call sign Snickers, as the bearer of the unofficial name himself tells about: “Нацгвардійцю Роману з позивним «Снікерс» – 22 роки. Він є водієм-санітаром. З його слів, він любить солодке та «Снікерси»” (“National Guard Roman with the call sign “Snickers” is 22 years old. He is a paramedic driver. According to him, he loves sweets and “Snickers””) (<https://suspilne.media>, November 14, 2024). Due to his stocky build, the Ukrainian serviceman received the call sign Растішка (Rastishka), as we learn from the publication: “6 листопада минає дев’ять днів, як цей світ покинув військовий медик, майор ЗСУ Антон Шевчук з позивним «Растішка». ... Побратими охрестили Шевчука «Растішкою», ймовірно, вирішивши, що, тільки вживаючи йогурт, можна сягнути майже двох метрів зросту, як у Антона” (“November 6 marks nine days since the military medic, Major of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Anton Shevchuk, with the call sign “Rastishka”, left this world. ... The brothers-in-arms nicknamed Shevchuk “Rastishka”, probably deciding that only by eating yogurt, one

can reach almost two meters in height, like Anton (<https://wz.lviv.ua>, November 6, 2024). Given the motivational basis, we include the call sign Pepsi in the specified group: “Обороняв Шостку, а тепер служит на Донеччині. Історія бійця з Сумщини з позивним «Пепсі»” (“He defended Shostka, and now serves in the Donetsk region. The story of a soldier from Sumy region with the call sign “Pepsi””) (<https://suspihne.media>, September 8, 2024). Unlike the previously described unofficial names, built based on the real or attributed to the fighter’s consumption of a certain product, the Pepsi call sign is associated with the professional activities of its bearer, as the reader learns from the article: “Свій позивний чоловік отримав через те, що до 2022 року працював торговим представником, продаючи соки та газовані напої” (“The man received his call sign because he worked as a sales representative until 2022, selling juices and carbonated drinks”) (<https://suspihne.media>, September 8, 2024).

3.10. Numbers as call signs

Among the corpus of collected material, we note the digital call sign 79, e.g.: “На Луганщині в боях з ворогом загинув полковник Валерій Гудзь. Про це повідомив фонд «Повернись живим». Попри позивний «79», його часто називали Федорович” (“Colonel Valeriy Hudz died in battles with the enemy in Luhansk region. This was reported by the “Return Alive” foundation. Despite the call sign “79”, he was often called Fedorovich”) (<https://lb.ua>, March 13, 2022). The article further states that “Валерій Гудзь служив у 79 десантній бригаді, звідки звільнився у 2001-му у званні майора” (“Valeriy Hudz served in the 79th Airborne Brigade, from which he was discharged in 2001 with the rank of major”) (<https://lb.ua>, March 13, 2022). Presumably, the number of the airborne brigade motivated the assignment of an unofficial name to the defender of Ukraine.

Without additional information from the servicemen, it is quite difficult to determine the semantics of the call sign Brutto, e.g.: “35-річний військовослужбовець з Луцька на позивний «Брутто» з червня 2022 року служить на посаді водія взводу протитанкових ракетних комплексів у 118 окремій механізованій бригаді. Торік у жовтні чоловік отримав поранення” (“A 35-year-old serviceman from Lutsk with the call sign “Brutto” has been serving as a platoon driver of anti-tank missile systems in the 118th separate mechanized brigade since June 2022. Last year, in October, the man was wounded”) (<https://suspihne.media>, September 14, 2024). In Ukrainian lexicography, the invariable noun brutto is explained as: “1. Weight of goods including packaging. 2. Gross income without deduction of expenses... 3. Registered tonnage, accepted in international maritime shipping, is an indicator of the size of the vessel” [2]. In addition, the word “Brutto” written in Latin and with a capital letter functions as the name of the Belarusian punk rock band of Serhii Mikhalok. Despite the presence of several meanings, we do not dare to outline the associative connection with the unofficial name of the fighter.

Figure 2 below presents the percentage distribution of Ukrainian military call signs thematic groups:

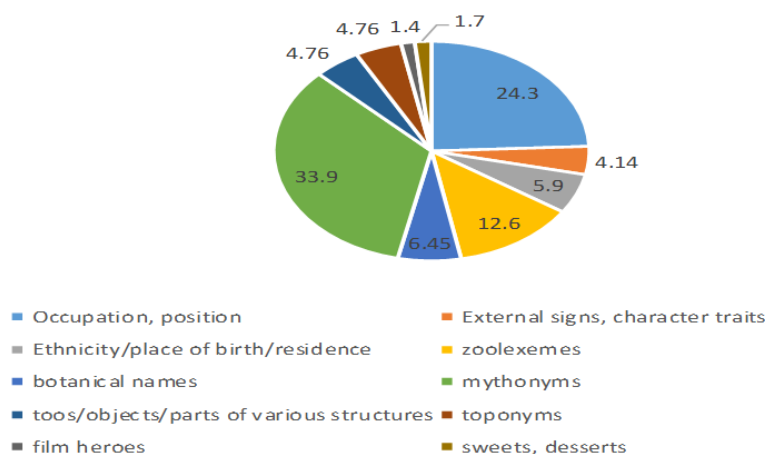


Fig. 2: Percentage Distribution of Ukrainian Military Call Signs Thematic Groups.

3.11. Female call signs

In most studies, linguists resort to analyzing call signs denoting military men. Like men, they receive call signs, as they are also involved in military operations. The prerequisites for receiving a second name are the same as for the male group of Ukrainian defenders it concerns the convenience of communication, concealment of real official data in case of interception of conversations by the enemy, etc. Among the corpus of collected material, we record unofficial names used by female servicemen. A group of language units of this variety is formed by lexemes denoting:

- 1) Various types of snakes, e.g.: “Військовослужбовиця Оксана – з Волині, на службі з 2020 року. Зізнається: це була її дитяча мрія. За свій бойовий характер отримала позивний «Чорна мамба» – це небезпечна змія. Служила зенітницею, далі бойовим медиком” (“Military servicewoman Oksana – from Volyn, in service since 2020. She admits: it was her childhood dream. For her militant character, she received the call sign “Black Mamba” - this is a dangerous snake. She served as an anti-aircraft gunner, then as a combat medic”) (<https://konkurent.ua>, December 23, 2024); “Волонтерство в окупації та вступ до ЗСУ: історія військової з Херсона з позивним «Кобра» (headline)” (“Volunteering in the occupation and joining the Armed Forces of Ukraine: the story of a military woman from Kherson with the call sign “Cobra” (headline)”) (<https://suspihne.media>, September 4, 2023); “Позивний «Анаконда»: багатодітна мати, яка захищає Ірпінь, звернулася до українців” (“Call sign “Anaconda”: a mother with many children, defending Irpin, addressed Ukrainians (headline)”) (<https://bigkyiv.com.ua>, March 6, 2022). The motivational basis of call signs, which semantically correlate with the names of snake species, is mainly the character traits of their carriers, in particular, energy, ambition, indomitability in the fight against the enemy. In the media space, we also come across call signs that are consonant with the generalized name of these reptiles – snake, for example: “У Рівненському районному ТЦК служить військова з позивним «Змія» (headline)” (“A military woman with the call sign “Snake” serves in the Rivne District CCC (headline)”) (<https://rivne.media>, March 24, 2024); “Пам’яті бойового медика Діани Вагнер (позивний «Змія») (headline)” (“In memory of combat medic Diana Wagner (call sign “Snake”) (headline)”) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, December 20, 2024). In our opinion, one of the motivators of the military name “Snake” may be the performance of combat medic duties by women, because, as is known, the emblem of medical workers depicts a bowl with this reptile;

- 2) Objects of the solar system, e.g., “Позивний – «Сонечко»: як служити в ЗСУ одна з перших жінок-капеланок” (“Call sign – “Sun”: as one of the first female chaplains serves in the Armed Forces of Ukraine”) (<https://www.radiosvoboda.org>, December 23, 2024) – the highlighted diminutive serves as a means of expressing the positive-evaluative characteristics of the bearer of the “second” name;
- 3) Representatives of flora and fauna, e.g.: “Наталія закінчила курси військової психології і вступила до полку «Азов», щоб продовжити шлях Юрія. Отримала позивний «Ромашка» (“Natalia graduated from military psychology courses and joined the “Azov” regiment to continue Yuri’s path. She received the call sign “Romashka” [camomile]”) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, January 22, 2024). Although the article does not contain information about why the woman received this call sign, her surname Luhovska allows expressing certain considerations on this issue, building a motivational chain. The proper name Luhovska is derivationally related to the common-root noun луг (meadow). Since one of the most common meadow flowers is chamomile, we assume that this was the motivator of the call sign. The same unofficial name was assigned to another woman: “Пам’яті бойової медицині Валентини Пушич (позивний «Ромашка») (headline)” (“In memory of combat medic Valentyna Pushych (call sign “Romashka” [camomile]) (headline)”) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, November 23, 2023). In the photo accompanying the text of the publication, we see that Valentyna was blonde. Presumably, it was the color of her hair that became the prerequisite for the appearance of the unofficial name Romashka (camomile). Among the defenders whose call signs are correlated with the names of representatives of the fauna, Ptashka (Birdie) is well-known, e.g., “Захисниця Маріуполя з ‘Азовсталі’ на позивний ‘Пташка’, розповіла про загибель на війні свого нареченого” (“The defender of Mariupol from ‘Azovstal’ with the call sign ‘Ptashka’ [Birdie] spoke about the death of her fiancé in the war”) (<https://wz.lviv.ua>, November 6, 2022). The woman received such an unofficial name because she has a beautiful voice and is fond of music. The video of Ptashka singing Ukrainian songs at Azovstal became a reflection of courage and indomitability.
- 4) Mythological images, e.g.: “Ви чули про птаку Фенікс? За легендою, це чарівна істота, яка воскресла з попелу й відроджується юною. Можливо, саме тому 25-річна Анастасія Савка, яка пішла добровольцем на фронт, обрала собі такий позивний – Фенікс...” (“Have you heard of the Phoenix bird? According to legend, it is a magical creature that rises from the ashes and is reborn young. Perhaps that is why 25-year-old Anastasia Savka, who volunteered for the front, chose such a call sign for herself – Phoenix...””) (<https://wz.lviv.ua>, December 20, 2023); “Якби не Афіна, Діду був би гаплик», – так коротко охарактеризував роботу військової медицині один із бійців батальйону ударних безпілотників «Ахіллес». «Афіна» – позивний лікарки, її справжнє ім’я Юлія Хом’як” (“If it weren’t for Athena, Grandpa would have been a mess,” – this is how one of the fighters of the “Achilles” strike drone battalion briefly described the work of a military medic. “Athena” is the call sign of the doctor, her real name is Yulia Khomiak”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, August 9, 2024). Athena is known as a wise and indomitable ancient Greek goddess, the patroness of the defenders, whom she helped in case of danger. We believe that such features became the basis for assigning the call sign. With a hint of the well-known female deities from Scandinavian mythology, who evoke associations with a raven circling over the battlefield and gathering the most worthy warriors, we associate the call sign Valkyrie: “Валькірія: У Києві попрощалися з медициною Третньої штурмової бригади Валентиною Нагорною на позивний Валькірія, передає кореспондентка Суспільного” (“In Kyiv, they said goodbye to the medic of the Third Assault Brigade, Valentyna Nahorna, with the call sign Valkyrie, reports the correspondent of Suspilnyi”) (<https://suspilne.media>, September 19, 2023). We conditionally consider the call sign Venus within this group, e.g.: “Пам’яті військового медика Юлії Пастернак (позивний «Венера») (headline)” (“In memory of military medic Yulia Pasternak (call sign “Venus”) (headline)”) (<https://www.ukrinform.ua>, July 3, 2023). It is difficult to outline the associative connection of this unofficial name, since the indicated nomination not only denotes the ancient Roman goddess of love and beauty, but also serves as the proper name of the planet;
- 5) Parts of various types of weapons, e.g.: “Бойова медицина добровольчого батальйону медичної евакуації «Госпітальєри» Ірина Цибух, позивний «Чека» загинула під час ротації на Харківському напрямку в середу” (“Combat medic of the volunteer medical evacuation battalion “Hospitaliery” Iryna Tsybukh, call sign “Чека” (“Pin”) died during a rotation in the Kharkiv direction on Wednesday”) (<https://umoloda.kyiv.ua>, May 30, 2024). In the dictionary, the lexeme pin has several meanings, but the most relevant for creating a call sign, as we consider, is its interpretation as a detail “that secures the detonator of a hand grenade, preventing an untimely explosion” [2].

The lexeme call sign is actively included in the proper names of projects, books, etc., e.g.: “На каналі СТБ вийшов проєкт «Позивний Надія» із ведучою Надією Матвєєвою. Він розповідає про незламних українських жінок, які працюють на благо України в медицині, культурі, освіті, волонтерять і служать у ЗСУ” (“The STB channel released the project “Call sign Hope” with host Nadiia Matvieieva. It is about indomitable Ukrainian women who work for the benefit of Ukraine in medicine, culture, education, volunteer and serve in the Armed Forces of Ukraine”) (<https://detector.media>, June 10, 2023); “Олександр Михед пояснив, чому «Позивний для Йова» відмовились публікувати кілька іноземних видавництв” (“Oleksandr Mykhed explained why several foreign publishers refused to publish “Call Sign for Job”)”) (<https://suspilne.media>, January 18, 2024).

Call signs during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war are assigned not only to men and women participating in active military operations, but also to animals, cf.: “Цей поважний француз з позивним «Марс» служить в ЗСУ. Чотирилапого побратима артилеристи назвали на честь давньоримського бога війни й сподіваються, що він ще братиме участь в Параді Перемоги” (“This respectable Frenchman with the call sign “Mars” serves in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The artillerymen named the four-legged brother in honor of the ancient Roman god of war and hope that he will still participate in the Victory Parade”) (<https://www.pravda.com.ua>, December 3, 2024).

4. Conclusion

Thus, during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war, the tendency to create military call signs continues. Lexemes of this variety form the following thematic groups: designation of persons by profession, type of activity, occupation, position (24,3%); names that characterize the bearer by external signs and character traits (4,14%); nominations that express ethnicity, place of birth, residence, and other geographical concepts (5,9%); anthroponyms, the basis of which is formed by zoolexemes (12,6%) and botanical names (6,45%); nominations formed from mythonyms (33,9%); lexemes that mark tools, objects, and parts of various structures (4,76%); anthroponyms formed from names and toponyms (4,76%); nominations of literary characters and film heroes (1,4%); lexemes assigned to the expression of sweets, desserts (1,7%), etc. It is difficult to establish the motivation of 0.39% of call signs. In the corpus of collected material, the most numerous is the group that unites unofficial names formed from mythonyms and biblical names. Focusing on previous developments made it possible to state that call signs for female soldiers have been added, among which there are attested lexemes for various types of snakes (32,73% of the total number of female unofficial names), objects of the solar system (8,23%), representatives of flora and fauna (20,18%), mythological images (32,81%), parts of various types of weapons (6,05%). In addition, call signs are assigned to animals. In the media space, unofficial anthroponyms are attested, built based on polysemantic words, which complicates the determination of motivational connections and the

derivational basis of call signs. Lexemes with opaque semantics include digital names. The motivation for those call signs that the military explains in interviews is easy to establish. However, such nominations are insignificant. The majority are unofficial names, which can be motivated by reading the content of the entire publication. The corpus of factual material is formed not only by Ukrainian but also by borrowed words. The expression of Ukrainian military call signs is associated with both neutral nouns and marked ones that have distinct emotive features. The dynamics of informal lexemes towards an increase in the number of factographically substantiated and non-standard models of creation indicate the great promising potential of these language units.

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