

## INTRODUCTION

Society is defined as “a particular broad group of people who share laws, organisations, customs, etc.” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1985: 1000). Every society is divided and subdivided into many bigger and smaller groups and subgroups that perform roles of different importance. The most important groups assembled in different kinds of institutions exert their power and influence through governmental, state, or other official bodies to affect the views and acts of the other groups and subgroups with the aim of gaining leading positions and a high rank status in it.

*Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society... The fact of the matter is that the “real world” is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same reality.*

(Edward Sapir, 1929:209-210 In Mary Talbot, Language and Gender, 1998:15)

My constant interest in human behaviour in a specific social setting and its reflection in language led me to conduct research into the institutionalised language. I concentrated on the English noun, mainly on one of its categories - the linguistic gender. My concern is to show that social life and social relations are mirrored in language and realised through it, and that the English noun is a carrier of a historical and social message. I attempt to give an insight into:

*“how thoroughly language pervades our reality, how central it is to our lives as individuals and social beings. To remain unaware of it what it is and how it works is to run the risk of being deprived or exploited. Control of language is, to considerable degree, control of power”.*

(Widdowson, 1996: 77)

My attention is directed at two discourses: the forensic discourse and the academic discourse. The aim of the first part of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of legislative and legal language. I suppose that language of the law is fruitful soil providing not only a great number of invaluable linguistic data but also some historical and social information that is hidden behind linguistic forms. The law is defined as “a rule supported by the power of government that controls the behaviour of members of society” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1985: 590). Unquestionably, the field of forensic

discourse is also interesting from legal and moral points of view, but these issues do not lie within the framework of the present research. The second part of the study is devoted to the analysis of promotional language in the academic discourse. Promotional culture "can be understood in discursive terms as the generalization of promotion as a communicative function" and "discourse as a vehicle for selling goods, services, organizations, ideas or people across orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 1993: 143). Universities are disseminators of institutional ideologies. I have conducted research into university programmes as they are products of tertiary educational institutions where both the content and the form of language have to be in accordance with the university ideology and strategies. I understand that in both discourses (an) author/s of the texts does/ do not express their own personal stances. They represent certain institutions; hence, the content and the form of their statements have to be in accordance with their institutional ideology, philosophy, and strategy.

My intention is to combine linguistic information with my personal pragmatic visualisation. The major subject of my interest is to examine:

- a/ whether language of the law – the means that is primarily used for constructing legislative and legal messages – conveys also some other information; whether it pragmatically expresses some issues of social concern;
- b/ the relationship between the form and the content of the nouns (found in the analysed texts) with a feminine gender inflection, with the zero gender inflection, and dual nouns in order to show their explicit and implicit meanings and some other conditions under which institutional communication takes place;
- c/ how nouns without any gender mark (morphological or semantic) express their gender orientation;
- d/ how our gender ( and other) roles are defined through this language;
- e/ what are the most frequent suffixes used in the forensic discourse to form dual nouns;
- f/ the ways of addressing in the institutionalised discourse. I examine the dual nouns used in contracts and agreements that refer to these individuals, companies, businesses, and organisations that may become active agents or passive objects in legal processes and actions. To find out this, I focus on these word-formative suffixes that have ability to show the role of contractual parties, and to state a relation between them.

- g/ whether communication in institutionalised discourse is completely constrained by ‘forces’ of institutions within which we (ordinary citizens) live, ‘operate’, and communicate.
- h/ whether linguistic conventions in the institutionalised discourse are absolutely frozen and static, and prevent the language to reflect some transformations in society.

Thus, this study is not concerned only with the investigation of linguistic aspects of institutionalised discourse. It also focuses on its pragmatic aspects. One of the areas of pragmatics ‘operation’ is the analysing of addressers’ intentions that are sometimes hidden behind the linguistic forms. The study offers a closer insight into how institutionalised discourse organises and influences the form and content of its message and the way of its ‘operation’.

The method I use in this study research is method of discourse analysis. I use it in two ways: for the description of linguistic aspects of text construction and as well as for its contextual interpretation and explanation.