

A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF UKRAINIAN AND GERMAN NOMINAL  
MORPHOLOGY

by

OLENA PELISHENKO

(Under the Direction of Renate Born)

ABSTRACT

Ukrainian and German are two languages which are distantly related and which have a similar grammatical structure. This thesis investigates and analyzes the major similarities and differences in the morphology of nominal categories of the languages: gender, number, and case. Through the detailed analysis of these categories, hypothetical conclusions are made about the possibility of negative transfer during language acquisition due to the differences between the systems of the two languages. The analysis concentrates solely on the categories of the noun in regard to the grammatical forms and structures present in both languages and their equivalents. The approach of this thesis is contrastive in nature.

INDEX WORDS: Ukrainian, German, Nominal Categories, Gender, Number, Case, Nominal Morphology, Morphological Differences, Inflection, Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Negative Transfer, Positive Transfer

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OLENA PELISHENKO

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OLENA PELISHENKO

Major Professor:	Renate Born
Committee:	Brigitte Rossbacher Keith Langston

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
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## DEDICATION

To my mother, the best teacher I know.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 German and Ukrainian: Languages in Contact

The genetic relatedness of the Ukrainian and German languages and their close contact with each other through the centuries certainly makes a comparison of both languages interesting. As our world makes its rapid way to globalization, it is inevitable that people must acquire new languages. After the political developments of the early 90s, Germany and Ukraine redefined their positions in the world. Being a country in its developing stage, Ukraine now more than ever needs to strengthen ties with its not so distant and highly industrialized neighbor Germany. As language is a means of communication, it becomes evident that knowing each other's languages will only contribute to the developing relationships between the two countries.

Ukrainian and German are Indo-European languages belonging to two different subgroups: Slavic (Slavonic) and Germanic respectively. Within their subgroups German is a member of the West Germanic group, together with Anglo-Frisian and Dutch, and Ukrainian is a member of East Slavic (Slavonic), which includes Russian and Belorussian.

Since both languages are of Indo-European descent, they share some common linguistic features: both are very morphologically complex languages. However, it is generally accepted that Ukrainian, being a Slavic language, is of a "highly conservative character."<sup>1</sup> Baldi states that

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<sup>1</sup> Conservative character means that the language retains most of the Indo-European features while many other language families simplified those features. This applies more to the nominal system than to the verb.

“it is safe to say that of all the larger Indo-European stocks with many internal divisions, none is so coherent as the Slavic group.”<sup>2</sup> This means that Ukrainian morphology more closely resembles the ancestor language Indo-European. Although morphologically German is the most conservative of the West-Germanic languages, it has developed more analytic grammatical structures than Ukrainian.

German has had a prominent impact on Slavic in general and Ukrainian in particular since the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the western part of Ukraine became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Austrian government initiated improvements in the educational level of the general population of the area, and Polish, German, and Ukrainian were taught concurrently in the schools. As German was the principal and most prestigious language of the Empire, it had a special status: most of the schools were bilingual Ukrainian-German and one of the largest universities of the area was predominantly German except for a few Ukrainian faculty members.<sup>3</sup> According to Shevelov, “the situation could not but leave its imprint on the very character of the local Ukrainian literary language, vulnerable to borrowings from and patterning on the coteritorial languages.”<sup>4</sup> We see many lexical borrowings from German into Ukrainian during this period of time<sup>5</sup>:

U *djiakuiu* < G *Dank* “thank you”

U *ganok* “porch entrance” < G *Gang* “entrance, way”

U *varta* < G *Wärter* “guard”

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<sup>2</sup> Baldi, Philip, *An Introduction to the Indo-European Languages* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1983) 105.

<sup>3</sup> Shevelov George Y. *The Ukrainian Language in the First Half of the Twentieth Century (1900-1941)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) 23.

<sup>4</sup> Shevelov, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Shevelov, 12.

U *verstat* < G *Werkzeugmaschine* “machine”

U *farba* < G *Farbe* “paint”

U *tsehla* < G *Ziegel* “brick”

U *krejda* < G *Kreide* “chalk”

U *šaxta* < G *Schacht* “coal mine”

U *buterbrot* < G *Butterbrot* “sandwich”

U *landšaft* < G *Landschaft* “landscape, scenery”

Among the grammatical similarities between Ukrainian and German are some of the basic structures inherited from the common Indo-European ancestor. Both Ukrainian and German basic sentence structures exhibit a so-called SVO word order<sup>6</sup> and have a division of nouns according to the grammatical categories of gender (masculine, feminine, neuter) and number (singular and plural). In both languages case government is an important syntactic feature; besides case agreement, there is also a subject-verb, gender, and number agreement within a sentence.

However, it is not the similar grammatical structures that are of great importance when acquiring these languages, but rather their differences. It is precisely in the contrasting of German and Ukrainian that we may gain some insight into the difficulties that may arise when learning such distantly related languages.

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<sup>6</sup> Although on the surface the word order looks similar in both languages, it is more “fixed” in German than it is in Ukrainian as the latter allows the so-called “scrambling”: “...most words in most Slavic languages can appear in a variety of relative orders, depending on complex stylistic, register, and information structure considerations” Franks, Steven, *The Slavic Languages* in *The Oxford Handbook On Comparative Syntax* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005) 401.

## 1.2 Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Linguistics, also known as Contrastive Analysis (CA), is not a recent development. CA is an investigative approach to foreign language teaching which involves the comparison of the distinctive elements of any two languages for the purpose of identifying the areas of difference and similarity between those languages. CA was used as a tool in second language classrooms in the United States until the late 1960s. During the last 50 years, much attention had been paid to CA, both negative and positive.

The innovative idea of contrasting the native and the target languages as an applied subject in second language acquisition began after 1945. The pioneer behind the CA theory is considered to be Charles Fries. After doing research in the area of comparing the learner's native language with the language acquired, Fries came to the conclusion that the forms and structures of one's native language are so pervasive that during the initial stages of language learning, the learner's errors are the result of interference between the native language and the target language. Fries's argument revolutionized the way language teaching was viewed at that time. After publishing such influential textbooks as *American English Grammar* and *The Structure of English*, Fries developed his pedagogical ideas into the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), which claimed that "ignorance of the specific mechanisms of interference would render SLT [second language teaching] ineffectual, because a non-contrastive teaching approach did not take into account the natural learning mode of the typical SL [second language] student."<sup>7</sup> This hypothesis quickly gained popularity within the language teaching community as it promised the unthinkable: to predict the areas of difficulties in foreign language learning based on the

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<sup>7</sup> Danesi, Marcel and Di Pietro, Robert, Contrastive Analysis for the Contemporary Second Language Classroom (Toronto: OISE Press, 1990) 3.

differences between the L1 and L2. Following Fries's initiative, a number of contrastive analyses were conducted, in which two languages were systematically compared. There was a strong belief that more attention should be paid to *language transfer*: where the native language proved to have differences, it was thought to create interference and cause errors (*negative transfer*). If, however, there were no structural differences between L1 and L2, no interference was thought to occur (*positive transfer*). Robert Lado, Fries's colleague and follower, also stressed the importance of the CA as the basis for second language teaching:

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture – both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives.<sup>8</sup>

It is evident that language transfer theory received much attention in second language acquisition: learners' errors were credited to the negative transfer.

However, the initial fascination with CA in the United States did not last long because it was a product of linguistic structuralism, an empirical, descriptive scientific method closely associated with behaviorist learning theory through the Audiolingual Method (ALM) of foreign language teaching developed during WWII by American linguists working for the armed forces. This method was based on the theory that learning occurs through a process of conditioning achieved through imitation, repetition and positive reinforcement of correct, observable responses. In foreign language learning this meant that the emphasis was on memorization of dialogues and endless repetition of sentences, the so-called 'pattern drills.' Contrastive analysis constituted the connection between theoretical linguistics and foreign language pedagogy since it isolated the structural differences between the learner's native language and the foreign or

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<sup>8</sup> Lado, Robert, Linguistics Across Cultures (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966) 2.

second language which were thought to cause errors. When structuralist theory was replaced by generative transformational grammar and behaviorist psychology with cognitive psychology, the ALM lost its theoretical foundation and was abandoned because it had not fulfilled its promise. It became a well-known fact that Fries's enthusiastic idea behind the CAH did not work as planned: the theory was unrealistic because it depended upon the predictability of *all* learning difficulties, which is virtually impossible. Fries's version of CA became to be known as the *stronger* version,<sup>9</sup> which was abandoned because of its overuse. However, the theory did not disappear completely: the *weaker* version of CA was proposed as a result of the criticism of the *stronger* version. The former version became more acceptable as it did not claim to predict all the difficulties in learning, but rather it attempted to explain why the errors were made, after they had already occurred and it attempted to account for only some of the learning difficulties.<sup>10</sup>

After CA faded away in the 70s and 80s, a new diagnostic tool was used: Error Analysis (EA). CA is partly responsible for the emergence of the new technique. If previously the learner's mistakes were claimed to be predictable based on his/her native language; the new method presented research on errors that were not traceable to the native language. Although both CA and EA deal with learners' errors, it is not to say that one may replace the other.<sup>11</sup> While CA tends to emphasize the interference of the native language, EA not only explores the errors produced due to the native language, but also the ones caused by other different reasons. The former errors are usually referred to as *interlinguistic* and the latter – *intralinguistic*. Many studies have been done to test the origin of the learners' errors, in order to determine which method is more accurate in determining errors. For instance, in their article "How Intralingual

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<sup>9</sup> Danesi and Di Pietro, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Renate Born, University of Georgia (personal communication).

<sup>11</sup> Danesi and Di Pietro, 9.

Are ‘Intralingual Errors’?”, Menachem Dagut and Batia Laufer issued error-provoking tests to a group of students in order to determine what the cause of their errors would be. As a result, they found that only one in 18 items tested were found to produce indisputably intralingual errors by a statistically significant proportion of the students, while all the remaining errors could be naturally explained as interlingual, i.e. as due to L1 interference.<sup>12</sup> Even though CA and EA differ in their approach to second language learning, they both have one thing in common: the notion that students’ errors are not failures, but rather they can be very helpful in determining how the languages are learned and which areas deserve more attention. It is clear that not *all* errors are made as a result of native language interference; however, “very few teachers or researchers will deny that this repertory [of native language habits and categories] acts as a kind of template or filter during initial TL [target language] learning tasks.”<sup>13</sup>

In the last two decades language transfer has regained its popularity: much “research (Odlin 1989, Selinker 1992, James 1998) has re-established transfer as a major – if not the major- factor in SLA [second language acquisition], which in turn led to a progressive –albeit limited – return of contrastive considerations in teaching.”<sup>14</sup> Although CA has a controversial past and many new teaching techniques have been developed over the last half a century, it nevertheless proves to be of considerable pedagogical use when applied properly. It is a general belief that similarities and differences between the native and the target languages should be familiar to a teacher. Danesi and Di Pietro suggest that “CA is a straightforward technique that every teacher can employ in order to gain concrete insights into how the students’ NL [native

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<sup>12</sup> Dagut, Menachem and Laufer, Batia, How Intralingual Are ‘Intralingual Errors’? in *Error Analysis, Contrastive Linguistics and Second Language Learning*, ed.: Nickel, Gerhard and Nehls, Dietrich (Heidelberg: Julius Groos Verlag, 1982) 36.

<sup>13</sup> Danesi and Di Pietro, 12.

<sup>14</sup> Granger, Sylviane, The Corpus Approach: A Common Way Forward for Contrastive Linguistics and Translation Studies in *Corpus-based Approaches to Contrastive Linguistics and Translation Studies*, (Rodopi, 2003) 18-19.

language] can shape their attempts to learn the TL [target language]. Students will typically approach new TL material from the perspective of what they already know about language in general and their native language in particular.”<sup>15</sup> The differences between the native and the target languages may help both the teacher and the student to understand and be aware of the difficulties in learning caused by language transfer. Thus, CA should not be used in its *strong* version, which claims to predict all the difficulties in learning based upon the comparison of two languages, but rather the *weak* version of CA should be used as a tool for second language teaching. If used correctly, CA can give the teacher insights into the way the student acquires the target language. While it may not always account for learners’ errors, CA proves to be useful in foreign language teaching as it gives a better idea of how the two languages are structured. For pedagogical purposes, it is not the teacher’s goal to predict an error, but rather to try to understand the cause of it.

Published works on CA vary from the more traditional, examining two closely related languages, for example German and English,<sup>16</sup> to the more innovative, contrasting two unrelated languages such as Chinese and English.<sup>17</sup> Most scholars would agree that CA is most useful when the parallel structures of the examined languages or their equivalents are compared. Since it is virtually impossible to contrast every aspect of the languages, more concise CAs are more common. In the early development of CA more attention was paid to the phonological differences between given languages because pronunciation errors were considered the most obvious in second language learning.<sup>18</sup> The possibility of grammatical interference between any

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<sup>15</sup> Danesi and Di Pietro, 13.

<sup>16</sup> König, Ekkehard, Gast, Volker, Understanding English-German Contrasts (Berlin: Schmidt, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Wei, Zhicheng, Ying-Hanyu Bijiao Daolun (An Introduction to Comparative Studies of English and Chinese) (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Press, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> Uriel Weinreich demonstrates the problem of phonological interference on hand of the sound systems of Romansch and Schwyzertuetsch in order to show how the speaker perceives and reproduces the sounds of one



two languages was questioned.<sup>19</sup> However, new research has shown that CA can be useful when applied to the other levels of the language, and not only the phonological. Thus contrasting differences between L1 and L2 may also be helpful in second language acquisition.

## Purpose

This thesis will provide a thorough CA of Ukrainian and German nominal categories and pertaining morphology in order to see if any productive results can be obtained from a comparison of such distantly related languages. To my knowledge, as far as Ukrainian and German are concerned, there has never been an adequate contrastive grammar done between the two languages. Numerous textbooks exist, but there has not been an attempt at providing a CA of the languages and their grammatical structures. Although, most textbooks explore the contrastive aspects of Ukrainian and German languages, they do not attempt on giving a thorough contrastive analysis of the grammatical structures. In general, the familiar problem areas for Ukrainian students learning German will be dealt with, which means that in most cases the emphasis will be on the differences between the languages, rather than similarities. This will be done with the purpose of pointing out which rules Ukrainian and German have in common and which rules are language-specific. After the analysis, conclusions will be drawn about whether the differences in the nominal categories of Ukrainian and German are relevant enough to cause negative transfer for the learners. This will show whether this particular CA may be of pedagogical use to the teacher of German having Ukrainian learners.

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language, based on his/her knowledge of the native language (Weinreich, Uriel, Languages in Contact (New York: The Linguistic Circle, 1953) 31.

<sup>19</sup> Weinreich states that “many linguists of repute have questioned the possibility of grammatical, at least morphological, influence altogether” (1953).

In examples, I will use transliterations of Ukrainian words.

**Table 1 Ukrainian and German Alphabets and Transliteration**

<b>Ukrainian Alphabet</b>	<b>Transliteration</b>	<b>German Alphabet</b>
<b>А а</b>	a	A a
<b>Б б</b>	b	B b
<b>В в</b>	v	C c
<b>Г г</b>	h	D d
<b>Ґ ґ</b>	g	E e
<b>Д д</b>	d	F f
<b>Е е</b>	e	G g
<b>Є є</b>	je	H h
<b>Ж ж</b>	ž	I i
<b>З з</b>	z	J j
<b>(И) и</b>	y	K k
<b>І і</b>	i	L l
<b>Ї ї</b>	ji	M m
<b>Й й</b>	j	N n
<b>К к</b>	k	O o
<b>Л л</b>	l	P p
<b>М м</b>	m	Q q
<b>Н н</b>	n	R r
<b>О о</b>	o	S s

<b>П п</b>	p	<b>Т т</b>
<b>Р р</b>	r	<b>У у</b>
<b>С с</b>	s	<b>В в</b>
<b>Т т</b>	t	<b>W w</b>
<b>У у</b>	u	<b>X x</b>
<b>Ф ф</b>	f	<b>Y y</b>
<b>Х х</b>	x	<b>Z z</b>
<b>Ц ц</b>	c	
<b>Ч ч</b>	č	
<b>Ш ш</b>	š	
<b>Щ щ</b>	šč	
<b>(Ь) ь</b>	, <sup>20</sup>	
<b>Ю ю</b>	ju	
<b>Я я</b>	ja	
<b>’</b>	’ <sup>21</sup>	

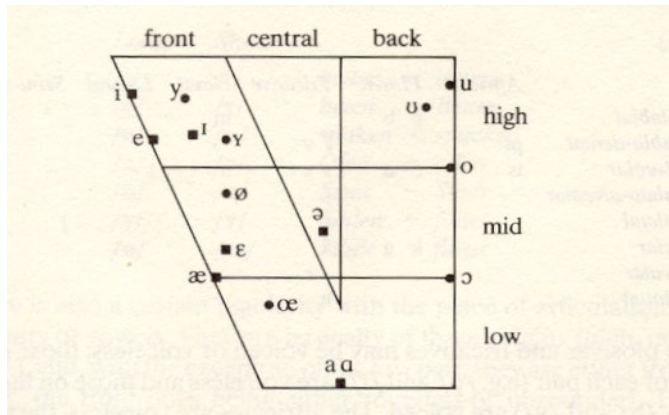
<sup>20</sup> The “soft sign”, which follows consonants and indicates that they are to be pronounced palatalized.

<sup>21</sup> “apostrophe” sign: usually to separate a consonant, which then remains hard, from a following [j].

**Table 2 Phonemes of Modern Standard Ukrainian**

i		u
e		o
	a	

**Table 3 Phonemes of Modern Standard German<sup>22</sup>**



**Table 4 Consonants of Modern Standard Ukrainian<sup>23</sup>**

	Labial		Dental				Palatal		Velar		Laryngeal	
			Plain		Palatalized							
<b>Plosive</b>	p	b	t	d	t'	d'			k	g		
<b>Fricative</b>	f	v/w	s	z	s'	z'	š	ž	x		h	
<b>Affricate</b>			c	ʒ	c'	ʒ'	č	ž				
<b>Nasal</b>	m		n		n'							
<b>Lateral</b>			l		l'							
<b>Trill</b>			r		r'							
<b>Glide</b>							j					

<sup>22</sup> Fox, Anthony, The Structure of German (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) 29.

<sup>23</sup> Reference Dr. Keith Langston, University of Georgia.

**Table 5 Consonants of Modern Standard German<sup>24</sup>**

	<b>Bilabial</b>		<b>Labio-dental</b>	<b>Alveolar</b>		<b>Palato-alveolar</b>	<b>Palatal</b>	<b>Velar</b>	<b>Uvular</b>	<b>Glottal</b>
<b>Plosive</b>	p	b		t	d		k	g		
<b>Fricative</b>			f	v	s	z	ʃ	x	r	h
<b>Affricate</b>			pf		ts					
<b>Nasal</b>	m				n			ŋ		
<b>Lateral</b>					l					
<b>Semi-vowel</b>							j			

<sup>24</sup> Fox, 30 (with modifications).

## Chapter 2: Gender

In foreign language learning, the category of gender has important implications. Taking into consideration that native speakers usually know intuitively the gender of the nouns in their language and how difficult it is for many students to acquire the gender of foreign nouns, it may be useful for learners to know how the gender is assigned in a given language. As many other linguists, Greville G. Corbett supports the idea that gender “assignment may depend on two basic types of information about the noun: its meaning (semantics) and its form.”<sup>25</sup> This is precisely the case with Ukrainian and German gender assignment. On the surface, both languages present a very similar way of gender distribution among nouns; however, a closer analysis reveals significant structural differences.

In Ukrainian and German, there are three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. As in most languages that have gender distinctions, the gender assignment of nouns is often grammatical, or formal, rather than natural, or semantic. Nevertheless, semantics can be the basis of the gender as well. Generally speaking, both Ukrainian and German seem to agree on when the semantic rules for gender assignment apply: nouns have natural gender when they refer to biological entities. Thus, in the case of animate entities, the gender is most likely to be assigned semantically in both languages:

Masculine: U *did* – G *Großvater* “grandfather”

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<sup>25</sup> Corbett, Greville G., Gender (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991) 9.

U *brat* – G *Bruder* “brother”

U *čolovik* – G *Mann* “man”

U *byk* – G *Bulle* “bull”

Feminine: U *dočka* - G *Tochter* “daughter”

U *baba* – G *Großmutter* “grandmother”

U *žinka* – G *Frau* “woman”

U *korova* – G *Kuh* “cow”

Names of professions are also divided by gender<sup>26</sup>:

Masculine: U *student* – G *Student* “male student”

Feminine: U *studentka* – G *Studentin* “female student”

Masculine: U *likar* – G *Arzt* “male doctor”

Feminine: U *likarka* – G *Ärztin* “female doctor”

It is not difficult to learn the gender of nouns when the meaning is involved: when a living entity is of male character, the gender is masculine; when, it is of female character – feminine. Such semantic gender assignment rules apply to both languages.

In German, however, the reference to the meaning may be useful to the nouns denoting inanimate entities as well. This may serve as a helpful hint when learning German. Here are

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<sup>26</sup> However, it is more defined in German than it is in Ukrainian: most Ukrainian professions do not have to reflect gender; the masculine form can be used for both male and female.

some groups of German nouns where the gender may be predicted due to their meaning, but not always:

- Masculine:<sup>27</sup>
- a) Seasons, months, and days of the week (*der Fruhling* ‘spring,’ *der Januar* ‘January,’ *der Mittwoch* ‘Wednesday’)
  - b) Points of the compass and words referring to winds and kinds of weather (*der Norden* ‘north,’ *der Passat* ‘tradewind,’ *der Hagel* ‘hail,’ *der Schnee* ‘snow,’ *der Tau* ‘dew,’ *der Wind* ‘wind’)
  - c) Rocks and minerals (*der Diamant* ‘diamond,’ *der Ton* ‘clay’)
  - d) Alcoholic drinks (*der Drink* ‘drink,’ *der Schnaps* ‘schnapps,’ *der Wein* ‘wine,’ *der Wodka* ‘vodka’)
  - e) Makes of car (*der Audi*, *der BMW*, *der Rolls-Royce*)
- Feminine:<sup>28</sup>
- a) Airplanes, motor-bikes and ships (*die Boeing*, *die BMW*, *die “Bremen”*)
  - b) Native German names of rivers (*die Donau*, *die Elbe*, *die Spree*)
  - c) Names of numerals (*die Eins* ‘one,’ *die Vier* ‘four,’ *die Tausend* ‘thousand’)
- Neuter:<sup>29</sup>
- a) Young persons and animals (*das Baby* ‘baby,’ *das Ferkel* ‘piglet’)
  - b) Metals and chemical elements (*das Aluminium* ‘aluminum,’ *das Gold* ‘gold,’ *das Kupfer* ‘copper,’ *das Zinn* ‘pewter’)
  - c) Letters of the alphabet (*das A* ‘A,’ *ein grosses D* ‘a capitalized D’)
  - d) Other parts of speech used as nouns; this includes verb infinites, colors, languages (*das Kommen* ‘coming,’ *das Blau* ‘blue,’ *das Spanisch* ‘Spanish’)
  - e) Hotels, Cafes, Restaurants, and Cinemas (*das Hilton*, *das “Roxy”*)

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<sup>27</sup> Not all nouns in those semantic groups are masculine and exceptions exist: words referring to weather – *das Eis* ‘ice,’ *das Gewitter* ‘storm,’ rocks and minerals – *das Erz* ‘ore,’ *die Kreide* ‘chalk,’ alcoholic drinks – *das Bier* ‘beer’ (Durrell, Martin, Hammer’s German Grammar and Usage (London: Edward Arnold, 1991) 1-2).

<sup>28</sup> Exceptions: airplanes, motor-bikes and ships – *der Airbus*, *das “Moewchen”*, native German names of rivers – *der Lech*, *der Main*, *der Neckar*, *der Rhein*; names of numerals – (as quantity expressions) *das Dutzend* ‘dozen’ (Durrell, 2).

<sup>29</sup> Exceptions: metals and chemical elements – *der Stahl* ‘steel,’ *die Bronze* ‘bronze’ (Durrell, 2-3).



The listed rules, however, are language-specific: while they may be helpful with the German nouns, such rules do not exist in Ukrainian. The semantic gender assignment of Ukrainian nouns is limited to the biological entities, professions, and young age. The gender assignment of all the other Ukrainian nouns depends on non-semantic rules.

Masculine:    *bat'ko* 'father'

Neuter:        *dytja* 'baby'

Feminine:    *matir* 'mother'

The second type of gender assignment in Ukrainian and German is grammatical, where the gender of the noun depends on its form rather than on its meaning. In the case of Ukrainian and German, the formal assignment rules are responsible for the majority of gender assignment of nouns. The formal assignment rules may be morphological or phonological.<sup>30</sup> In Ukrainian and German, they are mostly morphological: the gender assignment depends on the form of the noun,<sup>31</sup> but it may also require additional information. As a rule, the morphological systems are closely connected to the semantic systems mentioned above: the morphological rules of gender assignment are required where the semantic rules fail.<sup>32</sup>

Although, the majority of Ukrainian and German nouns have morphologically assigned gender, it is not to say that their systems are identical. First of all, it is important to mention how each language marks the gender on nouns. Ukrainian gender marking is 'overt': the nouns carry a gender marker, which is the last sound (not necessarily a letter) of a noun in the nominative

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<sup>30</sup> Corbett suggests that "whereas the distinction between semantic and formal assignment rules is clear (though their effects may overlap), the distinction between morphological and phonological rules is not always clear-cut" (Corbett, 33).

<sup>31</sup> This applies more to Ukrainian than to German because all Ukrainian nouns have suffix as a gender marker; in German, gender of most nouns is expressed by determiners (articles), although certain suffixes may be associated with certain genders, such as *-heit* [f] and *-er* [m].

<sup>32</sup> Corbett, 34.

case; thus nouns are formally marked for gender. German nouns have ‘covert’ marking of gender: the gender of nouns is indicated by modifiers.<sup>33</sup>

It is interesting to note that neither language has an absolute overt or covert gender system. While Ukrainian uses the word form itself to assign gender to most nouns, there is a group of nouns that require more information. In addition to masculine, feminine, and neuter genders, Ukrainian has a category referred to as common gender.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the word form alone is not enough to predict the gender of the noun. German, on the other hand, relies mostly on modifiers for gender assignment; however, there is a number of nouns that exhibit their gender through the word form (i.e. suffixes).

Ukrainian nouns may be divided into two groups when describing morphologically assigned gender: nouns ending in consonants and in vowels. Nouns ending in hard<sup>35</sup> consonants are all generally masculine (*budynok* ‘building’), nouns ending in final hard labials [b, p, v, m, f] or palato-alveolars [č, š, ž] (all hard<sup>36</sup>) can be masculine or feminine (*krov* [f] ‘blood’ vs. *rukav* [m] ‘sleeve’; *nič* [f] ‘night’ vs. *plač* [m] ‘cry’), and nouns ending in soft consonants can be either masculine or feminine (*myslytel* [m] ‘thinker’; *molodist* [f] ‘youth’).<sup>37</sup> Nouns ending in a vowel -a / -ja are all essentially feminine (*ruka* ‘hand, arm’) with some exceptions that are neuter

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<sup>33</sup> Corbett describes ‘overt’ gender as gender of a noun being evident from its form and ‘covert’ gender – not shown by the form of the noun (62).

<sup>34</sup> A noun is said to be in common gender if it refers to a member of species which can be male or female. In Ukrainian, there are two kinds of common gender. The first group consists of nouns ending in a hard consonant, most of which refer to people and are borrowed from other European languages. These nouns are grammatically masculine, but agreement with the actual gender of the referent is possible with verbs (*Advokat* ‘lawyer,’ *dyplommat* ‘diplomat’). The second group consists of nouns ending in -a / -ja, which are grammatically either masculine or feminine (*nevdaxa* ‘unlucky person’).

<sup>35</sup> For all future reference, ‘hard’ indicates non-palatalized consonants and ‘soft’ – palatalized consonants,

<sup>36</sup> Historically, the palato-alveolar consonants were all soft, but now they are declined as hard.

<sup>37</sup> Most of the time nouns in this category must be learned with their gender; however, certain suffixes may indicate one gender or another: common male suffixes include -ec’ and -tel’ (*anhliec* ‘Englishman’; *myslytel* ‘thinker’) and the most common feminine suffix is -ist’ (*svižist* ‘freshness’).

nouns, which have a doubled consonant preceding the ending (*vesillja* ‘wedding’) and most nouns ending in a vowel *-o* / *-e* are neuter (*vikno* ‘window’) with the exception of some common masculine words denoting people (*bat’ko* ‘father’).

It is evident that gender assignment in Ukrainian depends on the morphological and phonological properties of the nouns: the suffixes and the stem-final consonants. However, there is also a close relationship between a noun’s gender and its inflection (declension).<sup>38</sup> Therefore, Ukrainian is said to have gender assignment based on *inflectional* morphology. The inflectional characteristics of the gender assignment in Ukrainian nouns are manifested in the distinction between animate and inanimate nouns. Aside from the three-gender division system of nouns, Ukrainian nouns are also distinguished grammatically according to animacy, which is usually treated as a subgender category. In the singular it affects only the masculine nouns: if a noun denotes an animate being, its accusative ending is the same as the genitive, while for inanimate nouns the accusative is the same as the nominative. In the plural, all animate nouns (regardless of gender) have the same syncretism. The distinction between animate and inanimate nouns is seen less consistently in the genitive and dative singular masculine: animate nouns typically have endings Gen *-a* and Dat *-ovi* / *-evi*, while inanimate nouns typically have endings Gen *-u* and Dat *-u*, but there is a great deal of variation and both endings can occur with the same nouns. For example, when two nouns in the same case stand in apposition to one another, two different endings are preferred: Dat *djad’k-ovi Serhij-u* ‘to uncle Sergii.’<sup>39</sup>

As mentioned above, German nouns use modifiers to mark gender. The definite articles *der*, *die*, and *das* and the indefinite articles *ein* and *eine* are assigned to nouns according to the

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<sup>38</sup> The close relationship between gender and declensions in Ukrainian nouns will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

<sup>39</sup> Danyenko, Andrii, *Ukrainian* (Munich: Lincom Europa, 1995) 16.

gender, - masculine, feminine, and neuter, respectively. Although, it is often assumed that gender assignment in German is completely arbitrary, it is, in fact, an overgeneralization. Corbett claims that “it is quite clear that gender can be predicted for a large proportion of German nouns and that there is a complex interplay of overlapping semantic, morphological and phonological factors.”<sup>40</sup> While Ukrainian gender assignment is said to be based on inflectional morphological rules, German gender assignment in part may be explained by the *derivational* history of the noun; thus, the gender of some German nouns is based on derivational morphology.<sup>41</sup> Since compounding of nouns is common in German, the derivational history of nouns becomes important when determining gender. It is the last element of the compound that determines gender. A good example would be the diminutive suffixes *-lein* and *-chen*, which are normally neuter. For instance, a noun *Mann* ‘man’ is masculine, but when the suffix *-chen* is added, the new noun has neuter gender: *Männchen* ‘little man.’ A list of derivational suffixes typical to masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns may become useful when learning German nouns:

Nouns with the following endings are masculine:<sup>42</sup>

<b>-ant</b> <i>der Passant</i> ‘passerby’	<b>-ast</b> <i>der Kontrast</i> ‘contrast’
<b>-ig</b> <i>der Honig</i> ‘honey’	<b>-ismus</b> <i>der Idealismus</i> ‘idealism’
<b>-or</b> <i>der Motor</i> ‘motor’	<b>-us</b> <i>der Rhythmus</i> ‘rhythm’
<b>-ich</b> <i>der Teppich</i> ‘carpet’	<b>-ling</b> <i>der Liebling</i> ‘darling’

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<sup>40</sup> Corbett, 49.

<sup>41</sup> That is not to say that the gender of all nouns may be determined this way. Usually learners are advised to memorize nouns with their corresponding gender, which is expressed through modifiers (articles).

<sup>42</sup> As in the semantic groups, exceptions are also found here: *das Labor* ‘laboratory,’ *das Genus* ‘gender (ling.),’ *das Tempus* ‘tense’ (Durrell, 4).

Nouns with the following endings are feminine:<sup>43</sup>

<b>-a</b> <i>die Villa</i> ‘mansion’	<b>-enz</b> <i>die Existenz</i> ‘existence’
<b>-ik</b> <i>die Panik</i> ‘panic’	<b>-schaft</b> <i>die Botschaft</i> ‘message’
<b>-tion</b> <i>die Revolution</i> ‘revolution’	<b>-ur</b> <i>die Natur</i> ‘nature’
<b>-anz</b> <i>die Eleganz</i> ‘elegance’	<b>-heit</b> <i>die Gesundheit</i> ‘health’
<b>-in</b> <i>die Freundin</i> ‘female friend’	<b>-sion</b> <i>die Explosion</i> ‘explosion’
<b>-tät</b> <i>die Universität</i> ‘university’	<b>-ei</b> <i>die Bücherei</i> ‘library’
<b>-ie</b> <i>die Biologie</i> ‘biology’	<b>-keit</b> <i>die Heiterkeit</i> ‘amusement’
<b>-sis</b> <i>die Basis</i> ‘basis’	<b>-ung</b> <i>die Bedeutung</i> ‘meaning’

Nouns with the following endings are neuter:<sup>44</sup>

<b>-chen</b> <i>das Mädchen</i> ‘girl’	<b>-it</b> <i>das Dynamit</i> ‘dynamite’
<b>-ment</b> <i>das Appartement</i> ‘suite’	<b>-um</b> <i>das Album</i> ‘album’
<b>-icht</b> <i>das Dickicht</i> ‘thicket’	<b>-lein</b> <i>das Büchlein</i> ‘a little book’
<b>-tel</b> <i>das Viertel</i> ‘quarter’	<b>-il</b> <i>das Ventil</i> ‘device’
<b>-ma</b> <i>das Schema</i> ‘diagram’	<b>-tum</b> <i>das Eigentum</i> ‘property’

The above list is an adequate example that sometimes the gender of German nouns may be predicted depending on the word form; however, this list is not a comprehensive list of all the possible suffixes associated with gender. There are other endings, which may give some clues to the gender; although, it is a matter of tendencies rather than rules.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Exceptions: *das Sofa* ‘sofa,’ *der Papagei* ‘parrot,’ *das Genie* ‘genius,’ *der Atlantik* ‘Atlantic,’ *der Katholik* ‘Catholic,’ *das Mosaik* ‘mosaic,’ *der Pazifik* ‘Pacific,’ *das Abitur* ‘Abitur,’ *das Futur* ‘future tense,’ *das Purpur* ‘crimson’ (Durrell, 5).

<sup>44</sup> Exceptions: *der Kontinent* ‘continent,’ *der Profit* ‘profit,’ *der Granit* ‘granite,’ *die Firma* ‘firm,’ *der Zement* ‘cement,’ *der Irrtum* ‘error,’ *der Reichtum* ‘fortune,’ *der Konsum* ‘consumption’ (Durrell, 5).

<sup>45</sup> For a comprehensive list of all other endings referring to gender see Durrell, 5-7.

After examining gender assignment in Ukrainian and German nouns, it has been established that both languages use two systems of gender assignment rules: semantic and morphological. It is quite clear that the German semantic systems allow more predictability of gender, whereas Ukrainian gender assignment based on the meaning of the words is limited compared to German. As far as the morphological rules are concerned, both languages apply them to gender assignment: in order to establish the gender of a noun, in some cases we need to refer to more than one form, whether to different inflectional forms as it is in Ukrainian, or to the noun and the elements from which it is derived in the German nouns. However, it is easy to see how information about the inflection of nouns may become a major factor in gender assignment, while derivational information may not. The inflectional morphology of gender assignment covers *all* nouns in Ukrainian because all nouns inflect for case;<sup>46</sup> however, not all German nouns are morphologically derived, which means that there are nouns whose gender is not marked formally. Thus the German category of gender is less predictable than Ukrainian.

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<sup>46</sup> Some Ukrainian nouns, however, do not show inflection on their form. These nouns are of foreign origin. They always end in a vowel. As a general rule, nouns denoting inanimate objects are neuter and those denoting people or animals will be common gender (*pjura* 'puree,' *flamingo* 'flamingo'). Even though these nouns are technically indeclinable, their small number in the Ukrainian lexicon does not affect the whole system.

### Chapter 3: Number

This section is concerned with the ways in which number is expressed in Ukrainian and German nouns. In both languages, number has the semantic significance of distinguishing between one and more than one. However, this distinction is not as clear-cut as it might seem: not all nouns have both singular and plural forms.

Nouns can be classified in the same way in Ukrainian and German. Both languages have nouns that can be divided into count nouns and non-count nouns. Count nouns exhibit some variety: they have two forms, one for the singular (U *stil* / G *der Tisch* ‘table’) and one for the plural (U *stoly* / G *die Tische* ‘tables’). Non-count nouns, on the other hand, are limited: they have only one form, which is either singular or plural. Some nouns are count nouns in one meaning and non-count nouns in another. Sometimes, a noun may have one form (singular or plural) in Ukrainian and another form in German.

Non-count nouns in Ukrainian as in German can either have plural or singular forms. Nouns that have no plural and are used most often in the singular (*singularia tantum*), in Ukrainian are abstract nouns (*mudrist* ‘wisdom’), collective nouns (*xudoba* ‘live-stock’), mass nouns (*Smetana* ‘sour cream’), and proper names or geographical locations (*Kyiv*). In German, this group of nouns is mostly limited to the abstract nouns (*Erde* ‘earth’).<sup>47</sup> The characteristic feature of these nouns in both languages is their grammatical ability to have plural forms;

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<sup>47</sup> Anthony Fox calls these nouns ‘mass-nouns’, but only because they come in uncountable quantities as opposed to count nouns, which can be quantified numerically (171-172). However, this should not be confused with the mass nouns that denote measurement. That is why the term ‘abstract nouns’ is used here.

however, in practice there is no need to use them in plural.<sup>48</sup> That is why they are considered to be singular nouns.

Another group of non-count nouns are the nouns with no singular. In Ukrainian as in German, these nouns are used mostly and predominantly in the plural (pluralia tantum). These nouns refer to one entity. In Ukrainian, some of these nouns are the residual forms of dual number (*oči* ‘eyes’). In both languages, the pluralia tantum nouns include the collectives<sup>49</sup> (U *hroši* ‘money’ / G *die Leute* ‘people’), geographical locations (U *Sumy* ‘a city in Ukraine’ / G *die Niederlande* ‘Netherlands’) and some other nouns (U *šaxy* ‘chess’ / G *die Ferien* ‘holidays’).

When comparing the non-count nouns in Ukrainian and German, it is interesting to see whether both languages share the singulalia tantum and the pluralia tantum nouns equally. Here is where the contrast lies. One particular point of expressing measurement in German deserves learners’ attention. German masculine and neuter nouns denoting weight, measurement or value, preceded by a cardinal number or by an adjective indicating number, do not take the form of the plural.<sup>50</sup> In Ukrainian, however, it is required that the nouns in this situation have their plural forms.

<i>zwei Glas Wasser</i>	<i>dvi skljan- vody</i>	‘two glasses of water’
SG	PL –y	
<i>vier Sack Mehl</i>	<i>čotyry mišk- borošna</i>	‘four sacks of flour’
SG	PL –y	

<sup>48</sup> In both languages, the plural forms of singulalia tantum nouns may be found in literary language: U *dvi žurby* ‘two sadnesses’ / G *zwei Erden* ‘two worlds.’

<sup>49</sup> As the example shows, not all collective nouns have the same equivalents in both languages.

<sup>50</sup> When the indication of measurement or mass is not the focal point of the sentence, these nouns have regular plural forms: *Jedes der Kinder trank drei Gläser Apfelsaft*. ‘Each child drank three glasses of apple juice.’ (Gallmann. Peter et al., Schülerduden Grammatik Fifth Ed.(Mannheim: Dudenverlag, 2006) 149.



<i>drei Stück Brot</i>	<i>try šmatk- xliba</i>	‘three pieces of bread’
SG	PL -y	

<i>zwei <b>Paar</b> Schuhe</i>	<i>dvi par- vzuttja</i>	‘two pairs of shoes’
SG	PL -y	

Feminine nouns denoting measurement have plural forms in German and in Ukrainian:

<i>drei <b>Tassen</b> Kaffee</i>	<i>try čašk- kavy</i>	‘three cups of coffee’
SG	PL -y	

Ukrainian has a group of nouns that are used only in the plural, but have singular German equivalents: U PL *štany* / G SG *die Hose* ‘pants,’ U PL *okuljary* / G SG *die Brille* ‘eye glasses,’ U PL *nožyci* / G SG *die Schere* ‘scissors.’ On the other hand, there are some nouns in German that do not have a singular form, but their Ukrainian equivalents do: G PL *die Eltern* / U PL *bat’ky* and SG *bat’ko* ‘parents/parent,’ G PL *die Geschwister* / U SG *brat* / SG *sestra* (Ukrainian does not have a collective word for that) ‘brother/sister.’

It is interesting to notice how strikingly similar Ukrainian and German non-count nouns are classified. However, there is some variation between them as well. In some cases the languages disagree on the classification of the objects as ‘singular’ or ‘plural.’ These differences must be taken into consideration when learning Ukrainian or German.

The formation of the plural

The majority of Ukrainian and German nouns are count nouns, nouns that have a singular form and a plural form. Most nouns in both languages are morphologically marked for number. The plural is usually characterized by a range of different morphs.

Ukrainian nouns form their plural by means of suffixes. These plural morphemes are morphologically conditioned: they depend on the grammatical gender of the nouns. Within each

gender group, the plural marker is conditioned by palatalization or non-palatalization of the stem or final consonant. Feminine and masculine nouns take the Nom PL ending */-i/*, which is realized as *[-i]* and *[-y]* depending on the quality of the stem-final consonant, soft or hard. Most neuter nouns have the ending */-a/*, although there are some lexical exceptions which require the ending */-i/*.

**Table 6 Ukrainian Plural Formation: Feminine Nouns with Nom SG ending */-a/***

	Nom SG	Nom PL
hard stems	<i>voda</i> / <i>vod-a/</i> ‘water’	<i>vody</i> / <i>vod-i/</i> ‘waters’
soft stems	<i>zemlja</i> / <i>zeml’-a/</i> ‘land’	<i>zemli</i> / <i>zeml’-i/</i> ‘lands’
mixed stems <sup>51</sup>	<i>plošča</i> / <i>plošč-a/</i> ‘square’	<i>plošči</i> / <i>plošč-i/</i> ‘squares’

**Table 7 Ukrainian Plural Formation: Feminine Nouns with Nom SG ending */-ø/***

	Nom SG	Nom PL
hard stems <sup>52</sup>	-	-
soft stems	<i>povist’</i> / <i>povist’-ø/</i> ‘story’	<i>povisti</i> / <i>povist’-i/</i> ‘stories’
mixed stems	<i>nič</i> / <i>nič-ø/</i> ‘night’	<i>noči</i> / <i>noč-i/</i> ‘nights’

**Table 8 Ukrainian Plural Formation: Masculine Nouns with Nom SG ending */-a/* and */-o/***

	Nom SG	Nom PL
<i>/-a/</i>	<i>starosta</i> / <i>starost-a/</i> ‘elder’ <i>sudja</i> / <i>sud’-a/</i> ‘judge’	<i>starosty</i> / <i>starost-i/</i> ‘elders’ <i>sudji</i> / <i>sud’-i/</i> ‘judges’
<i>/-o/</i>	<i>bat’ko</i> / <i>bat’k-o/</i> ‘father’	<i>bat’ky</i> / <i>bat’k-i/</i> ‘fathers/parents’

**Table 9 Ukrainian Plural Formation: Masculine Nouns with Nom SG ending */-ø/***

	Nom SG	Nom PL
hard stems	<i>did</i> / <i>did-ø/</i> ‘grandfather’	<i>didy</i> / <i>did-i/</i> ‘grandfathers’
soft stems	<i>včytel’</i> / <i>včytel’-ø/</i> ‘teacher’	<i>včyteli</i> / <i>včytel-i/</i> ‘teachers’
mixed stems	<i>niž</i> / <i>niž-ø/</i> ‘knife’	<i>noži</i> / <i>nož-i/</i> ‘knives’

<sup>51</sup> “The nominal type is called ‘mixed’ because the paradigm consists of case endings of the hard declension as well as of the soft declension. Historically, these consonants were originally ‘soft’, but now phonetically ‘hard’” (Pugh, Stefan, Press, Ian, *Ukrainian. A Comprehensive Grammar* (London: Routledge, 1999) 64).

<sup>52</sup> There are no feminine nouns in Ukrainian that end in a hard consonant.

**Table 10 Ukrainian Plural Formation: Neuter Nouns**

	Nom SG	Nom PL
hard stems	<i>misto</i> /mist-o/ ‘town’	<i>mista</i> /mist-a/ ‘towns’
soft stems	<i>more</i> /mor-e/ <sup>53</sup> ‘sea’	<i>morja</i> /mor’-a/ ‘seas’
mixed stems	<i>prizvyšče</i> /prizvyšč-e/ ‘surname’	<i>prizvyšča</i> /prizvyšč-a/ ‘surnames’

Most German nouns also use suffixes to form the plural. However, suffixes are not the only morphs employed in German plural formation. Sometimes the plural suffix is accompanied by Umlaut of the stressed vowels [a], [o], [u], [au]. In some cases the suffix is absent, but the Umlaut is kept. There is also a group of nouns whose plural forms do not differ from the singular forms, but the article indicates the number. Hence, there are seven plural formations for German nouns:<sup>54</sup>

**Table 11 German Plural Formation**

Plural Marker	Nom SG	Nom PL
I      ∅ (no ending)	<i>das Fenster</i> ‘window’	<i>die Fenster</i> ‘windows’
II     ∅ + Umlaut	<i>der Vater</i> ‘father’	<i>die Väter</i> ‘fathers’
III    -e + Umlaut	<i>der Wald</i> ‘forest’	<i>die Wälder</i> ‘forests’
IV     -e	<i>der Arm</i> ‘arm’	<i>die Arme</i> ‘arms’
V     -e + Umlaut	<i>der Stuhl</i> ‘chair’	<i>die Stühle</i> ‘chairs’
VI    -(e)n	<i>die Frau</i> ‘woman’	<i>die Frauen</i> ‘women’
VII   -s	<i>das Baby</i> ‘baby’	<i>die Babys</i> ‘babies’

Even though the German plural morphemes are also morphologically conditioned, they are more arbitrary than the Ukrainian forms. Ukrainian plural morphemes rely almost absolutely

<sup>53</sup> Historically *o>e* after palatal consonants, but all consonants later dispalatalized before *-e* in Ukrainian.

<sup>54</sup> Some grammars treat them as only four or five formations.

on the gender of nouns; In German, however, the relationship between the gender of nouns and their plural morphemes is not as unified. At the same time, some German textbooks<sup>55</sup> explore the correlation between gender and plural forms in order to help learners. Despite this untraditional method in the German classroom, it may trigger a high percentage of predictability of plural forms in German nouns according to their gender. The following table illustrates the relationship between gender and plural forms in German using noun suffixes:<sup>56</sup>

**Table 12 Gender and Plural in Modern Standard German<sup>57</sup>**

Plural	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
(-)	most in <i>-el, -en, -er</i>	NONE	nearly all those in <i>-el, -en, -er</i> and all in <i>Ge – e, -chen</i> and <i>-lein</i>
(¨) <sup>58</sup>	about 20 in <i>-el, -en, -er</i>	2: <i>Mutter, Tochter</i>	2: <i>Kloster, Wasser</i>
(¨er)	about 12	NONE	about 25% of those not in other groups
(-e)	about 50% of those not in other groups	only those in <i>-nis</i> and <i>-sal</i>	about 75% of those not in other groups
(¨e)	about 50% of those not in other groups	about 30 monosyllables	1: <i>Floß</i>
(-e)n)	ALL those in <i>-e</i> and some others, mainly denoting male living beings	over 90%	about 12

Without a doubt, both Ukrainian and German exhibit a close relationship between gender and the formation of the plural in nouns. Gender of German nouns, however, may not always be

<sup>55</sup> Among these are Martin Durrell's *Hammer's German Grammar and Usage* (1991) and S.O. Noskov's *Samovčytel' nimec 'koi movy (How to Teach Yourself German)* (2008).

<sup>56</sup> The table shows the distribution of plural types, with the exception of (-s), which is a rather special case (Durrell, 10).

<sup>57</sup> Durrell, 11.

<sup>58</sup> A sign for Umlaut.

the basis for the plural marking, whereas the relationship between gender and plural in Ukrainian nouns is unavoidable. Thus, it is clear how different is the formation of plural in both languages.

While contrasting the category of number in Ukrainian and German, it is most interesting to compare the plural formations of the loan-words in these languages, the words borrowed and integrated into Ukrainian and German. Both languages exhibit a number of words of foreign origin, many of which are count nouns. Ukrainian has strict rules about borrowings from other languages: these words are integrated into the language through the orthography; however, they are not part of the inflectional system. Therefore, loan-words in Ukrainian are indeclinable, because they cannot take part in the Ukrainian declensional system, they cannot reflect number either. In such nouns it is context alone (an accompanying adjective or verb form) that will indicate whether the given form represents just one or more than one item:

SG *odne interv'ju* 'one interview'

PL *try interv'ju* 'three interviews'

SG *odyn referi* 'one referee'

PL *p'jat' referi* 'five referees'

In German, on the other hand, nouns borrowed from other languages are mostly integrated into the language by adding them to the inflectional system. Hence, all countable loan-words have plural endings to differentiate between singular and plural. The plural morphemes for the loan-words vary. A number of loans, particularly those borrowed into German from the classical languages, have retained unusual plural forms:

SG *das Album* 'album'

PL *die Alben* (or: *Albums*) 'albums'

SG *das Museum* 'museum'

PL *die Museen* 'museums'

SG *das Thema* 'topic'

PL *die Themen* 'topics'<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Also the older form: *die Themata*.

Despite the criticism of the language purists, some recent loan-words from English and French form their plural by means of adding /-s/ ending. This had been increasingly common.<sup>60</sup>

SG *der Balkon* ‘balcony’

PL *die Balkons* ‘balconies’

SG *der Test* ‘test’

PL *die Tests* ‘tests’

After analyzing the category of number in Ukrainian and German, it becomes apparent how close their systems are. Count nouns and non-count nouns may be found in both languages and both Ukrainian and German mark the plural forms of nouns morphologically. However, it is also evident that there are some underlying differences. Ukrainian and German do not quite agree on the classification of count and non-count nouns. As for the formation of the plural, the plural morphemes in Ukrainian are closely tied with the gender of nouns, whereas in German the relationship between gender and number is not as evident.

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<sup>60</sup> Although the use of ending /-s/ is increasingly common, Schülerduden Grammatik (2006) lists both possibilities for these words: PL *die Balkons* and PL *die Balkone*, PL *die Tests* and PL *die Teste* (145).

## Chapter 4: Case

This category is very important in the acquisition of German and Ukrainian since every noun, adjective, and pronoun is marked for case. In Ukrainian, numerals are also marked for case. In comparison to German, which has a case system consisting of only four cases, there are seven cases in Ukrainian.<sup>61</sup> Both Ukrainian and German have the nominative, accusative, genitive, and dative cases. In addition, Ukrainian also has the locative, instrumental, and vocative cases.

Cases in both languages constitute a union between meaning and form.<sup>62</sup> The cases reflect the syntactic roles of the nouns and everything pertaining to the noun in a sentence. As the case system is an inherited category from Indo-European, the basic principles of case government in Ukrainian and German are essentially the same. However, a closer analysis reveals some significant differences between the languages. As has been already mentioned, all Ukrainian and German noun paradigms are organized according to grammatical gender. However, there are two major differences between German and Ukrainian declension paradigms: the first one is an obvious one – the different number of cases - and the second is the markings of cases. We will investigate *how* cases are expressed on nouns in both languages. Case marking will be discussed

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<sup>61</sup> Some state there are only six cases because the vocative case is a form of address rather than a syntactically determined case form and the vocative plural forms are the same as the nominative forms.

<sup>62</sup> Ponomarev, O. D., Suchasna Ukrainska Mova (Modern Ukrainian Language), Fourth Ed. (Kyiv: Lybid', 2008) 151.

in great detail because Ukrainian and German employ quite different systems. German determiners that precede the noun are marked for gender as well as case. Ukrainian on the other hand does not have articles and marks declension morphologically on the nouns themselves.<sup>63</sup>

Ukrainian has four declensional patterns for all nouns which correlate closely with gender;<sup>64</sup> there are internal subdivisions within those patterns as well. Since gender distinctions occur only in the singular, these groups are valid only for the nouns in the singular.<sup>65</sup>

**Table 13 The First Declension of Ukrainian Nouns**

	Hard Stems	Soft Stems	Mixed Stems
Nom	<i>xata</i> / <i>xat-a</i> / “house”	<i>vyšnja</i> / <i>višn’-a</i> / “cherry”	<i>duša</i> / <i>duš-a</i> / “soul”
Gen	<i>xaty</i> / <i>xat-i</i> /	<i>vyšni</i> / <i>višn’-i</i> /	<i>duši</i> / <i>duš’-i</i> /
Dat	<i>xati</i> / <i>xat’-i</i> /	<i>vyšni</i> / <i>višn’-i</i> /	<i>duši</i> / <i>duš’-i</i> /
Acc	<i>xatu</i> / <i>xat-u</i> /	<i>vyšnju</i> / <i>višn’-u</i> /	<i>dušu</i> / <i>duš-u</i> /
Instr	<i>xatoju</i> / <i>xat-oju</i> /	<i>vyšneju</i> / <i>višn’-eju</i> /	<i>dušeju</i> / <i>duš’-eju</i> /
Loc	<i>na xati</i> / <i>xat’-i</i> /	<i>na vyšni</i> / <i>višn’-i</i> /	<i>na duši</i> / <i>duš’-i</i> /
Voc	<i>xato</i> / <i>xat-o</i> /	<i>vyšne</i> / <i>višn-e</i> /	<i>duše</i> / <i>duš-e</i> /

<sup>63</sup> In addition to the grammatical endings, the declension of nouns may also involve alternations in the final consonants of the stems and shifts in stress as additional markers of the different morphological categories (Ponomarev, 153). For example, feminine nouns with stems ending in a velar consonant /k/, /h/, /x/ undergo alternation when in the dative and locative singular, changing to /c/, /z/, /s/ respectively: Nom SG *knyžka* – Dat/Loc SG *knyžci* ‘book.’ Following are the Ukrainian stress patterns: SS ‘stem stress’ in the singular and the plural; SE ‘stem stress’ in the singular and ‘end stress’ in the plural; EE ‘end stress’ in the singular and the plural; ES ‘end stress’ in the singular and ‘stem stress’ in the plural. In addition to the basic ‘stem stress’ and ‘end stress’ patterns, there may be alternating stress in the singular and/or plural (Pugh and Press, 59). For the purpose of this paper, the phonological changes in the declension of the nouns will not be covered beyond this point as they pertain more to the subject of phonology than syntax and morphology. However, the reader should know that the phonological properties of nouns are important when it comes to noun declension.

<sup>64</sup> As mentioned already in the category of number, foreign borrowings are not usually integrated into Ukrainian inflectional system. However, most loan-words ending in a final consonant or in *-a* (with the exception of the French-based loans with the very un-Ukrainian final sequence *-ua < -ois*) are assimilated as regular Ukrainian nouns, and are therefore declined as such; nouns in all other vowels (*-e*, *-i*, *-o*, *-u*) are not declined (Nom/Gen/Dat/Acc/Instr/Loc/Voc *poni* ‘pony,’ Nom/Gen/Dat/Acc/Instr/Loc/Voc *taksi* ‘taxi’) (Pugh and Press, 89).

<sup>65</sup> Taking into consideration the limited scope of this thesis, only the nouns in the singular will be considered in the category of case.



To the *First Declension* belong the nouns of feminine, masculine, and common gender ending in *-a / -ja* in the nominative singular (*hruša* [f] ‘pear,’ *livša* [c] ‘lefty’). These nouns are also subdivided into three smaller groups based on the nature of the final consonant of the stem. There are stems ending in a hard consonant (*stina* [f] ‘wall’), stems ending in a soft consonant (*stelja* [f] ‘ceiling’), and mixed stems with a final palato-alveolar fricative/affricate (*duša* [f] ‘soul’) (See footnote 51 above). The endings of the nouns in the mixed stem group are identical to the endings of the soft stem group in the genitive and instrumental singular and to those of the hard stem group in all other remaining cases. As we can see throughout the paradigm of the first declension, all groups basically have the same endings: Gen *-i*, Dat *-i*, Acc *-u*, Instr *-oju / -eju*, Loc *-i*, Voc *-o / -e*. The last hard consonants in the nouns of the hard stems *h*, *g*, *k*, *x* change to *z*, *dz*, *c*, and *s* respectively in the dative and locative singular: Nom *dopomoha* – Dat/Loc *dopomoz* ‘help,’ Nom *dzyga* – Dat/Loc *dzydzi* ‘spinner,’ Nom *rika* – Dat/Loc *rici* ‘river,’ Nom *svekruha* – Dat/Loc *svekrusi* ‘mother-in-law.’

**Table 14 The Second Declension of Ukrainian Nouns: Masculine**

	Hard Stems	Soft Stems	Mixed Stems
Nom	<i>zavod</i> /zavod-ø/ “plant”	<i>kraj</i> /kraj-ø/ “edge”	<i>niž</i> /niž-ø/ “knife”
Gen	<i>zavodu</i> /zavod-u/	<i>kraju</i> /kraj-u/	<i>nožu</i> /nož-u/
Dat	<i>zavodovi, zavodu</i> /zavod-ovi, zavod-u/	<i>krajevi, kraju</i> /kraj-evi, kraj-u/	<i>noževi, nožu</i> /nož-evi, nož-u/
Acc	<i>zavod</i> /zavod-ø/	<i>kraj</i> /kraj-ø/	<i>niž</i> /niž-ø/
Instr	<i>zavodom</i> /zavod-om/	<i>krajem</i> /kraj-em/	<i>nožem</i> /nož-em/
Loc	<i>na zavodovi</i> /zavod-ovi/	<i>na kraju, krajevi</i> /kraj-u, kraj-evi/	<i>na nožu, noževi</i> /nož-u, nož-evi/
Voc	<i>zavode</i> /zavod-e/	<i>kraju</i> /kraj-u/	<i>nože</i> /nož-e/

**Table 15 The Second Declension of Ukrainian Nouns: Neuter**

	Hard Stems	Soft Stems	Mixed Stems
Nom	<i>ozero/ozер-o/</i> “lake”	<i>pole /pol-e/</i> “field”	<i>prizvyšče /pr’izvišč-e/</i> “surname”
Gen	<i>ozera /ozер-a/</i>	<i>polja /pol’-a/</i>	<i>prizvyšča /pr’izvišč-a/</i>
Dat	<i>ozерu /ozер-u/</i>	<i>polju /pol’-u/</i>	<i>prizvyšču /pr’izvišč-u/</i>
Acc	<i>ozero /ozер-o/</i>	<i>pole /pol-e/</i>	<i>prizvyšče /pr’izvišč-e/</i>
Instr	<i>ozерom /ozер-om/</i>	<i>polem /pol-em/</i>	<i>prizvyščem /pr’izvišč-em/</i>
Loc	<i>na ozeri /ozер’-i/</i>	<i>na poli /pol’-i/</i>	<i>na prizvyšči /pr’izvišč’-i/</i>
Voc	<i>ozero /ozер-o/</i>	<i>pole /pol-e/</i>	<i>prizvyšče /pr’izvišč-e/</i>

The *Second Declension* of Ukrainian nouns consists of the masculine and neuter nouns: masculine with a zero ending Nom SG and ending *-o* Nom SG (*šljax* ‘way,’ *bat’ko* ‘father’) and neuter with the endings *-o*, *-e*, *-ja* Nom SG (*boloto* ‘swamp,’ *more* ‘sea,’ *lystja* ‘leaves’). The second group is also divided into three subgroups according to the final consonant of the stem: hard stems (*holub* [m] ‘dove’), soft stems (*palec* [m] ‘finger’), and mixed stems (*pleče* [n] ‘shoulder’). Nouns with hard stems include masculine and neuter nouns ending in a vowel *-o* (*djad’ko* [m] ‘uncle,’ *oko* [n] ‘eye’) and most of masculine nouns ending in *-r* (*myr* ‘peace’). To the nouns with soft stems belong masculine nouns with a zero ending (*xlopec* ‘boy’), masculine nouns ending in *-o* (*didun’o* ‘grandpa’), neuter nouns ending in *-e* and *-ja* (*lyce* ‘face,’ *bažannja* ‘wish’),<sup>66</sup> and a fairly large number of nouns ending in *-ar* and *-yr* (*kalendar* [m] ‘calendar’). Nouns with mixed stems are characterized by masculine nouns with a stem ending in a palato-alveolar consonant and a zero ending (*storož* ‘guard’), neuter nouns with a stem ending in a palato-alveolar consonant and ending *-e* (*pleče* ‘shoulder’), and masculine nouns with a suffix *-jar* denoting professions (*skljар* ‘glazier’).

<sup>66</sup> Besides those that end in a palato-alveolar consonant.

**Table 16 The Third Declension of Ukrainian Nouns**

Nom-Acc	<i>zustrich</i> / <i>zustrich</i> -ø/ “meeting”	<i>nižnist</i> ’ / <i>nižnist</i> ’-ø/ “tenderness”	<i>povin</i> ’ / <i>povin</i> ’-ø/ “flood”
Gen-Dat-Loc	<i>zustrichi</i> / <i>zustrich</i> ’-i/	<i>nižnosti</i> / <i>nižnost</i> ’-i/	<i>poveni</i> / <i>poven</i> ’-i/
Instr	<i>zustrichju</i> / <i>zustrich</i> ’-u/	<i>nižnistju</i> / <i>nižnist</i> ’-u/	<i>povinnju</i> / <i>povinn</i> ’-u/
Voc	<i>zustriche</i> / <i>zustrich</i> ’-e/	<i>nižniste</i> / <i>nižnist</i> ’-e/	<i>povene</i> / <i>poven</i> ’-e/

The *Third Declension* group includes feminine nouns with a zero ending in the nominative singular (*zustrich* ‘meeting’).<sup>67</sup> As we can see, this group is characterized by only one gender and a greater degree of case syncretism than the other declensions.

**Table 17 The Fourth Declension of Ukrainian Nouns**

Nom-Acc-Voc	<i>košenja</i> / <i>košen</i> ’-a/ “kitten”	<i>loša</i> / <i>loš</i> ’-a/ “colt”	<i>imja</i> / <i>im</i> ’a/ “name”
Gen	<i>košenjaty</i> / <i>košen</i> ’-at-i/	<i>lošaty</i> / <i>loš</i> ’-at-i/	<i>imeni</i> / <i>im</i> -en-i/
Dat	<i>košenjati</i> / <i>košen</i> ’-at-i/	<i>lošati</i> / <i>loš</i> ’-at-i/	<i>imeni</i> / <i>im</i> -en-i/
Instr	<i>košenjam</i> / <i>košen</i> ’-am/	<i>lošam</i> / <i>loš</i> ’-am/	<i>imenem, imjam</i> /im-en-em, im’am/
Loc	<i>na košenjati</i> / <i>košen</i> ’-at-i/	<i>na lošati</i> / <i>loš</i> ’-at-i/	<i>na imeni</i> /im-en-i/

To the *Fourth Declension* belong the neuter nouns ending in *-a* / *-ja*, which in genitive, dative, locative, and vocative cases have suffixes *-en*, *-at-*, and *-jat-* (*košenja* ‘kitten’). These nouns mainly refer to young animate entities (*loša* ‘colt’), small inanimate objects (*kolišča* ‘small wheel’), and a small group of other nouns (*imja* ‘name’).

<sup>67</sup> To this group also belongs a very irregular feminine noun *maty* ‘mother,’ which has an ending *-y* in the nominative singular, but in all other cases inflects just like the nouns of the third group with the addition of a suffix *-er* or *-iv* before the grammatical endings: Dat *mat-er-i* ‘(to) mother,’ Instr *mat-ir-ju* ‘(with) mother.’

As mentioned above, German uses determiners to mark the case of nouns. Compared to Ukrainian this is a very analytic feature as most noun forms are not inflected for case at all. However, German also has the remnants of an older noun class system, so that case markings are added to the noun itself. The only regular case endings for the majority of nouns in modern German are masculine and neuter nouns in the genitive singular adding *-(e)s* (*des Bahnhofs* ‘train station’)<sup>68</sup> and plural nouns adding *-n* in the dative if the nominative plural does not end in *-n* or *-s* (*den Kindern* ‘children’). Thus, the typical declensional paradigms for the three genders with the definite articles may be represented in the following chart:

**Table 18 German Declensions Paradigms**

	Masc. Sg	Fem. Sg.	Neut. Sg.
Nom.	<i>der Tisch</i> ‘table’	<i>die Lampe</i> ‘lamp’	<i>das Jahr</i> ‘year’
Gen.	<i>des Tisches</i>	<i>der Lampe</i>	<i>des Jahres</i>
Acc.	<i>den Tisch</i>	<i>die Lampe</i>	<i>das Jahr</i>
Dat.	<i>dem Tisch</i>	<i>der Lampe</i>	<i>dem Jahr</i>

Besides the regular inflectional endings mentioned above, there are also two types of irregular case endings on some German nouns: 1) the so-called ‘weak’ masculine nouns have the ending *-(e)n* in all the cases of the singular except the nominative and 2) the dative ending *-e* on some nouns.

<sup>68</sup> The choice between *-s* and *-es* most often depends on style, rhythm, and ease of pronunciation. The ending *-es* is usually felt to be more formal and tends to be preferred with words of one syllable and those ending in more than one consonant. However, in some cases usage is more fixed: *-es* must be added to nouns ending in *-s*, *-sch*, *-ß*, *-st*, or *-z* (*des Krebses* ‘cancer,’ *des Tisches* ‘table,’ *des Dienstes* ‘service’) (Durrell, 22).

**Table 19 German 'Weak' Masculine Nouns**

	Ending /-e/	Foreign Nouns	Other Endings	Irregular /-ns/	Exception
Nom	<i>der Affe</i> 'monkey'	<i>der Student</i> 'student'	<i>der Bär</i> 'bear'	<i>der Name</i> 'name'	<i>das Herz</i>
Acc	<i>den Affen</i>	<i>den Studenten</i>	<i>den Bären</i>	<i>den Namen</i>	<i>das Herz</i>
Gen	<i>des Affen</i>	<i>des Studenten</i>	<i>des Bären</i>	<i>des Namens</i>	<i>des Herzens</i>
Dat	<i>dem Affen</i>	<i>dem Studenten</i>	<i>dem Bären</i>	<i>dem Namen</i>	<i>dem Herzen</i>

Most of the weak masculine nouns are those denoting living beings.<sup>69</sup> These nouns include the nouns that end in *-e* in the nominative singular (*der Affe* 'monkey,' *der Franzose* 'Frenchman'), a large number of foreign nouns, in particular those ending in stressed *-and*, *-ant*, *-aph*, *-arch*, *-at*, *-ent*, *-et*, *-ist*, *-krat*, *-log*, *-nom* (*der Diamant* 'diamond,' *der Monarch* 'monarch,' *der Automat* 'automat,' *der Student* 'student,' *der Komet* 'comet,' *der Komponist* 'composer,' *der Demokrat* 'democrat,' *der Psycholog(e)* 'psychologist,' *der Astronom* 'astronomer,' *der Dämon* 'demon'), and some native nouns not ending in *-e* in the nominative singular (*der Held* 'hero,' *der Mensch* 'human being,' *der Nachbar* 'neighbor'). In addition to the nouns mentioned above, there are eight weak masculine nouns that have the ending *-n* in the accusative and dative singular, but *-ns* in the genitive singular (*der Name* 'name,' *der Buchstabe* 'letter,' *der Friede* 'peace,' *der Funke* 'spark,' *der Gedanke* 'thought,' *der Glaube* 'belief,' *der Same* 'seed,' and *der Wille* 'will').<sup>70</sup> Although most of the weak nouns are in fact of masculine gender, there is one noun that is not masculine: the neuter *das Herz* 'heart' has the ending *-ens* in the genitive singular and *-en* in the dative singular.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> This does not mean that all weak masculine nouns denote living beings.

<sup>70</sup> *Der Friede*, *der Funke*, and *der Same* have alternative forms with *-n* in the nominative singular as well, i.e.: *der Frieden* (no PL), *der Funken* (no PL), *der Samen* (no PL). These forms are the more common ones in modern German, particularly in the spoken language. Indeed, *der Same* is nowadays rare even in writing (Durrell, 21).

<sup>71</sup> In colloquial German, however, there is no dative ending *-en*: *Er hat es am Herz* 'He has heart disease.'

In older German, masculine and neuter nouns, especially the monosyllabic ones, regularly added *-e* in the dative singular (Dat *dem Manne* ‘man’). This is considered archaic now, but survives in a handful of lexicalized forms (*im Falle* ‘in case,’ *zu Hause* ‘at home,’ *auf dem Lande* ‘in the country,’ *in diesem Sinne* ‘in this sense’ etc).<sup>72</sup>

It is difficult to compare nominal declensions of Ukrainian and German nouns because the two languages use different systems. All Ukrainian nouns are divided into four main groups which are correlated to the gender of nouns: each group is characterized by similar case endings. At the same time, there is a group of nouns in Ukrainian that do not show case declension morphologically. They are all borrowings from other languages and only the context will tell in which case they are. In German, however, the cases are usually not marked morphologically on nouns, but are expressed through the determiners and modifiers. Although this is true for most nouns, some irregular nouns are inflected with suffixes as well.

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<sup>72</sup> Durrell, 22.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to contrast the morphology of Ukrainian and German nominal categories (gender, number, and case) in order to establish whether any substantial differences between the grammatical systems of the two languages exist. According to the contrastive analysis method, the differences between the native and the target languages are the cause of learners' errors when acquiring a language (negative transfer), whereas the similarities are supposed to help during language learning (positive transfer). After contrasting Ukrainian and German in terms of nominal morphology, it is clear that these languages are related as they possess similar grammatical structures and it is also clear that they are distantly related as variation between the two languages exists. The only question here is whether these differences are likely to cause negative transfer during language learning.

The analysis of the gender assignment in Ukrainian and German showed that both languages have similar systems. Nouns may have semantically or morphologically assigned gender. As far as gender derived from meaning is concerned, German has more semantic groups of nouns, which are useful when learning the category of gender. Ukrainian has a more limited number of nouns whose gender may be predicted by meaning. Thus it is easier to recognize the gender of German nouns due to their meaning than of Ukrainian nouns. The morphological system, on the other hand, proves to be more efficient for Ukrainian nouns. Ukrainian gender marking is mostly overt: all nouns have a suffix corresponding to one of the three genders. Even

though morphological rules apply to some German nouns as well (some derivational suffixes may be useful in determining the gender of nouns), gender marking is mostly covert. Therefore German gender assignment is less predictable than Ukrainian when using morphological rules.

The category of number is also similar in both languages. Both Ukrainian and German divide nouns into count and non-count nouns. Even though there is some variation in the way the two languages organize the non-count nouns, the system is generally similar: there are nouns that are mostly used in their singular and nouns used in the plural. Ukrainian and German also have plural formation systems that resemble each other. Most nouns in both languages are morphologically marked for number. The plural is usually characterized by a range of different morphs. It was expected that the plural morphemes would be quite different in Ukrainian and German. A point of interest, however, is in the way the plural morphs are distributed to nouns in both languages. In Ukrainian, the plural formation is based on the gender systems of nouns. Although the correlation of gender and the plural forms exists to some degree in German as well, the gender assignment of most nouns is arbitrary.

The category of case is also an inflectional nominal category in both languages. The case system is comparable in Ukrainian and German: the two languages share four cases (nominative, genitive, accusative, and dative); Ukrainian, however, has three additional cases (instrumental, locative, and vocative). In contrast to the previous two categories (gender and number), where Ukrainian and German seem to have strikingly similar systems, case declension of nouns proves to be more difficult to compare. As in the other nominal categories, Ukrainian declension is marked on a noun itself. There are found declensional patterns which correlate closely with gender and other morphological factors. In German, on the other hand, the declension of most nouns is realized through the determiners and modifiers, rather than morphologically on the



nouns. At the same time, there is a handful of nouns that show case inflection on their word forms. These are a residue from an older noun class system. Therefore, the system of noun declension is more different than similar in Ukrainian and German.

It is evident from this contrastive analysis that the nominal categories of Ukrainian and German have analogous organization with some variation in both languages. The analysis has shown that the major differences between the nominal categories of the two languages lie in the way the categories of gender, number, and case are marked. In other words, the contrastive elements of Ukrainian and German nominal categories are the different morphemes that are used in noun inflection. According to CA theory it is exactly in the area of differing structures that the negative transfer would occur during learning. Although, this may be possible in certain instances, generally, it is widely accepted in the area of contrastive linguistics that the transfer of bound morphemes<sup>73</sup> is extremely rare and even sometimes non-existent.<sup>74</sup> Since bound morphemes constitute the differences between Ukrainian and German nominal categories, it is highly unlikely that negative transfer would occur. Although one could get a deeper understanding of the way Ukrainian and German are structured in a more theoretical perspective, the contrastive analysis of Ukrainian and German nominal morphology does not prove to be a useful pedagogical tool in second language learning.

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<sup>73</sup> Bound morphemes are prefixes, suffixes, and other meaningful forms that are unable to stand alone.

<sup>74</sup> Weinreich, 31.

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