

Inflectional morphology in Ukrainian-Russian code-mixing—On endings and stems of main lexical word classes in Suržyk

Abstract

This paper presents an empirical study of inflectional patterns in Suržyk, the mixed Ukrainian-Russian speech form, based on a large corpus of transcribed oral texts. It considers the main lexical word classes of nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The analysis demonstrates that an adequate description must first distinguish between Ukrainian and Russian stems and, secondarily, include the group of common stems shared by both languages.

In contrast to previous research based on informal observation, the results show that Ukrainian stems exhibit only limited variation, largely retaining Ukrainian inflectional endings. Where this is not the case, there is evidence that, in specific inflectional forms, the corresponding Russian endings can be identified as structurally advantageous.

Russian stems, in contrast, display greater variability. Nevertheless, a first group of inflectional forms exhibits stable adaption to Ukrainian patterns. A small second group, on the other hand, shows strong resistance to adaptation to Ukrainian: these are the same inflectional forms that show a considerable impact of Russian on the inflection of Ukrainian stems. The third, largest group of inflectional forms, is characterized by noticeable variation in its combination with Ukrainian or Russian endings. Here, tendencies of structural preference also play a role.

Common stems generally follow the same pattern as Ukrainian stems, except in cases where Russian endings are strongly preferred with Russian stems and also readily combine with Ukrainian stems, in which case common stems behave almost like Russian stems.

Overall, the findings support the generally accepted view that the borrowing of inflectional endings is dispreferred, even in situations involving contact between highly convergent inflectional systems of closely related languages. Furthermore, in the case of Suržyk, inflectional morphology does not obviously play a role in maintaining language differentiation. In other words, the distribution of Ukrainian and Russian endings, as a rule, cannot be seen as “marked choices”, although such choices are not completely ruled out, e.g., either as an epiphenomenon of marked choices between a Ukrainian or Russian lexical item or as a conscious, mocking way to use mixed speech.

1 Introduction: scope and aims

This study on *Suržyk* in Ukraine examines the most relevant regular contrasts between Ukrainian and Russian inflectional morphology, as reflected in *Suržyk*, with relevance determined by token frequency. It focuses on the inflectional morphology of nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The quantitative analysis presented here is restricted to intralinguistic criteria. In this respect, the study provides the analytical basis for the central paper in this special issue of *Russian Linguistics* (Hentschel, forthcoming), which offers a sociolinguistic interpretation of the findings discussed below. Together with three additional contributions in this special issue (Zeller, forthcoming; Hentschel, Zeller, & Palinska, forthcoming; Palinska & Zeller, forthcoming), these two studies present the main results of the research project *Hybridization from Two Sides: Ukrainian-Russian and Russian-Ukrainian Code-*

Mixing in the Context of the (Socio)linguistic Situation in Southern Ukraine along the Black Sea Coast. The project's background, aims, and data are outlined in the *Introduction* to this special issue (Hentschel, Palinska, & Zeller, forthcoming b).

As the project title indicates, a distinction is drawn between Ukrainian–Russian and Russian–Ukrainian code-mixing, corresponding to two discussed variants of Suržyk. The first is a Ukrainian-based variety with roots in the late nineteenth century, whose existence is widely acknowledged in the literature. The second is a Russian-based variety that may have begun to emerge in independent Ukraine after 1991. At present, however, this much more recent variety remains hypothetical. The underlying assumption is that speakers of the older, Ukrainian-based variety have gradually, though not completely, shifted toward Russian from a (dialectal) Ukrainian base, including Russian more and more elements (expressions, constructions) into their basically Ukrainian speech. Conversely, speakers of the hypothesized newer variety are assumed to have moved in the opposite direction, in the same sense partially shifting toward Ukrainian from a Russian base. The *Introduction* (Hentschel, Palinska, & Zeller, forthcoming) and, in greater detail, the central paper of this special issue (Hentschel, forthcoming) outline the historical and social background of these two variants, as well as the current state of research.

All five contributions mentioned above are corpus-based. The corpus itself (OCUS—the *Oldenburg Corpus of Ukrainian Suržyk*) is briefly introduced in the *Introduction* and described in detail in OCUS-Doc: Hentschel et alii (2026). With regard to the distinction between Ukrainian-based Suržyk and its possible Russian-based counterpart, the sociobiographical profiles of the respondents already suggest that the latter may be difficult to capture empirically. Only a small number of respondents reported that Russian was spoken at home during their childhood, let alone as the sole code. At the same time, the sociobiographical data for a substantial proportion of respondents indicate that Russian played a more prominent role in their linguistic biographies than Ukrainian, at least in adulthood.

The central paper (Hentschel, forthcoming) develops hypotheses as to how the two variants may be distinguished in the mixed speech of respondents, which is in all cases composed of Ukrainian and Russian ingredients, and how these distinctions correlate with sociobiographical variables, including differences in linguistic background. These hypotheses are then tested primarily, though not exclusively, on the basis of the findings presented here on inflectional morphology.

As noted above, sociolinguistic aspects are not addressed in the present paper. In preparing the analysis, the author was nonetheless aware—given the knowledge of the respondents' linguistic backgrounds—that the data would most likely reflect Ukrainian-based Suržyk to a much greater extent than any potential Russian-based variety.

A further aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the well-established strong influence of Russian on Suržyk at the lexical level (cf. Hentschel, 2024) and its influence on the inflectional morphology of the three word classes under investigation. More specifically, the question is whether, and to what extent, differences can be observed in the distribution of Ukrainian and Russian endings when combined with Ukrainian, Russian, and shared (common) stems.

This contribution does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of all inflectional morphological phenomena in Suržyk, primarily because of its focus on the three lexical word classes mentioned above. Pronouns are therefore

excluded. Prototypical pronouns, such as deictic and anaphoric personal pronouns in both languages, exhibit suppletive or weakly suppletive paradigms. Moreover, for many such forms, the boundary between stem and ending is theory-dependent or cannot be clearly established. These pronoun classes display a range of idiosyncrasies. Other pronouns that can be more readily segmented into stem and ending tend to differ primarily in their stems, in addition, of course, to possible differences in endings. These are typically adjectival pronouns—i.e., pronouns inflected like adjectives—such as demonstrative, interrogative, and relative pronouns. They largely exhibit the same Ukrainian–Russian contrasts and homonymies in endings as adjectives, which are discussed in detail below. Also excluded are analytic formations, such as comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and the future tense of imperfective verbs. The focus thus lies on the synthetic formation of inflectional forms.

Derivational forms (i.e., prefixation and suffixation, e.g., for expressing verbal aspect) are not discussed here. In contrast to traditional Slavic linguistics, where /l/ or /l'/ as markers of the past tense are usually described (based on diachronic considerations) as a derivational suffix preceding a gender-number marker (GN-marker) or just a number marker (N-marker), /l/ or /l'/ are here, from a synchronic point viewed as an ending (T- or tense-marker), forming an agglutinative complex with the GN- / N-marker.

Grammatical categories are abbreviated with capital letters as just demonstrated. Additionally: case—C, for verbs P—person and in some cases also conjugation or inflection class (INFL). Note that the category of person is only distinguished in present-tense forms in both Russian and Ukrainian. Specific *constellations* of values of these categories are represented using rather self-explanatory small caps abbreviations—e.g., GEN.SG.MASC stands for genitive-singular-masculine (cf. the list of abbreviations at the end of the text).. Here and in the whole text, *constellation* denotes any combination of values of grammatical categories.

2 Basic principles of the analysis

The differentiation of Ukrainian, Russian, and common stems¹ is of fundamental importance for this analysis (as for other contributions to this special issue). Only the most general criteria for these distinctions will be addressed here.

Clear-cut examples include the following Ukrainian–Russian translational equivalents: *sxid* vs. *vostok* ‘east’, *uvaha* vs. *vnimanie* ‘attention’, *mova* vs. *jazyk* ‘language’,² among many others. In such cases, the etymologically different Ukrainian and Russian stems are, of course, always different, i.e., across all CN constellations of the respective Ukrainian and Russian paradigms.

Apart from this, such a pair of lexemes will be called a *hyperlexeme*, and notated in the following as *mova=jazyk*,³ i.e., the Ukrainian lexeme first, followed by an equals sign and then the Russian lexeme as its translational equivalent. Cases of polysemy are taken into account: for example, Ukr. *jazyk* and again Russ. *jazyk*, both meaning ‘tongue’, where a common stem is postulated.

¹ Furthermore, there are hybrid stems consisting mostly of a Russian root and Ukrainian affixes (cf. Grečko & Palins'ka, 2019). They account for only about 6% of all potentially relevant stems here and are therefore unsuitable for the analysis of individual CN(G) or TP~GN constellations. They will not be considered in the analyses that follow.

² Ukr. *jazyk* ‘language’ is, according to Bilodid (1970–1980) (s.v.), completely obsolete.

³ For some issues related to identifying hyperlexemes, see Hentschel (2024, pp. 6–7).

When the Ukrainian and Russian stems have the same etymology, be it a Slavic one or a shared loan word, some specific problems arise. The central question is, which phonic⁴ differences between the two languages should be taken into account to differentiate Ukrainian and Russian from common stems and which should be ignored. The general answer is that phonic contrasts between etymologically related Ukrainian and Russian lexemes or stems are only assumed if they can be considered phonological realizations of specific morphemes or groups of morphemes, i.e., phonic differences that are based on the phonological representation of these etymologically related Ukrainian and Russian stems.⁵

Not considered are phonic contrasts between Ukrainian and Russian that arise from phonetic reflexes of neutralized phonological oppositions:

- (i) A prominent example is the phonetic levelling of the Russian opposition of /a/ ≠ /o/ called *akanje* or even (after palatal consonants) /a/ ≠ /o/ ≠ /e/ ≠ /i/ called *ikanje* in unstressed syllables. These forms of vowel reduction are absent in Standard Ukrainian.
- (ii) Another example is the Russian neutralization of oppositions between voiced and voiceless obstruents in word final position (in speech before an absolute pause), also absent in Ukrainian. The same applies to all corresponding neutralizations of the voiced-voiceless opposition resulting from differing assimilation rules within consonant clusters in Ukrainian and Russian.
- (iii) Whereas Russian exhibits the neutralization of the opposition between palatal and non-palatal consonants before /e/ resulting in a palatal (co)articulation, there is a general depalatalization in Ukrainian before /e/—with some exceptions (Žovtobryj et al., 1979, pp. 260–262).
- (iv) Ukrainian exhibits a neutralization of /r/ ≠ /r'/⁶ in word final position, which is not found in Russian: Ukr. *znaxar*, Russ. *znaxar'* 'healer; folk healer', Ukr. *kalendar*, Russ. *kalendar'* 'calendar', all NOM.SG.MASC, with Ukr. [r] vs. Russ [r'], but Ukr. / Russ. *znaxar'a*, *kalendar'a*, GEN.SG.MASC, with [r'] in both languages.

Taken into account for differentiating Ukrainian, Russian, and common stems are phenomena like the following ones:

- (v) In Ukrainian the historical vowels *i* and *y*—reflected in Russian by the Cyrillic letters *и* and *ѣ*, phonetically [i] and [i]—have merged into a vowel represented by Ukrainian Cyrillic *и*, here likewise described as [i]⁷. Instances of [i], /i/ in contemporary Standard Ukrainian result from more recent sound

⁴ The term *phonic* is used (following Weinreich, 1953) to cover both, phonetic and phonological phenomena.

⁵ Note that in the following paragraphs I refer only to the two standard languages. The corresponding phenomena are described in standard grammatical descriptions of the two languages. Ukrainian and Russian dialects partly exhibit differences. These are taken into account where necessary in the analyses.

⁶ Note that I use the symbol ' instead of the IPA-symbol ʲ for secondary palatalization.

⁷ In this context, it should be noted that in the phonetic transcription I use [i] for both Russian *ѣ* and Ukrainian *и*. This corresponds to the academic transliteration (DIN 1460-1) employed here, in which both are rendered by *y*. As a matter of fact, the corresponding Ukrainian vowel is articulated further to the front than its Russian counterpart. For the Ukrainian vowel, sometimes [ɪ] is used instead (e.g., in <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-the-international-phonetic-association/article/ukrainian/D20ECF62B57E4162670BD938A4B8EA33>). This however blurs the difference, that [ɪ], as applied to Ukrainian, does not go together with a palatalization of the preceding consonant, whereas a reduced, unstressed Russ. [ɪ] (or [ɪ]), however, as in *ikanje* does. Furthermore, the Ukrainian vowel sound behind *и* is much less fronted than [ɪ] in German *bitte* 'please'. The reasons for not distinguishing the sounds behind Ukr. *и* and Russ. *ѣ* are pragmatic. (i) All the materials in OCUS (730,000 words) have been transcribed based on ear phonetic impressions by a number of transcribers, all with an academic degree in linguistics, but not

change, apart from some exceptions (cf. Žovtobrjux et al., 1979, pp. 247–261). Thus, we find hyperlexemes such as *pyvo*=*pivo* ‘beer’, *vyno*=*vino* ‘wine’, *kyt*=*kit* ‘whale’, and many others, for which distinct Ukrainian and Russian stems are assumed and not a single common stem.⁸

- (vi) Instances of the new Ukrainian /i/ can be observed in hyperlexemes like *sik*=*sok* ‘juice’, both masculine nouns, the Russian one exhibiting /o/. Here, an allomorphic contrast between a Ukrainian and Russian stem can be found only in NOM.SG. In all other CN constellations, the stem is common—for instance, GEN.SG Ukr. *soku* and Russ. *soka* / *soku* (cf. below, 3.2.2.g). The alternation between /o/ and /i/ has been morphonologized, i.e., is no longer based on an active process.
- (vii) A similar case can be observed in hyperlexemes such as *jazyk*=*jazyk* ‘tongue’ (already mentioned above). Here the stems of *jazyk*=*jazyk* must be differentiated due to a morphonological alternation between /k/ and /ts/, which affects only one form in the Ukrainian paradigm. One of the three forms of the prepositional⁹ singular (PREP.SG.MASC) of Ukr. *jazyk* is *jazyci*, alongside the variants *jazyku* and *jazykovi*, cf. *Hramatyčnyj slovnyk ukraińs’koï literaturnoi movy* (hereafter HSULM: Klymenko, 2011, p. 653), which retain the final /k/. The three Ukrainian forms contrast with the Russian form *jazyke*. In this case, only the Ukrainian stem *jazyc-* would not be classified as common but as Ukrainian: a stem allomorph, alongside the common *jazyk*. The auslaut of the stem in Russian *jazyke* is of course [k’]. This, however, is a case of allomorphy not based on morphonologization of a phonic contrast, but on an active process of palatalization in Russian before /e/. Thus, the stem here is interpreted as common.

The differentiation between non-relevant and relevant phonic phenomena of contrast between Ukrainian and Russian is motivated by the attempt to describe the core characteristics of Suržyk as a fused lect. Considering phonetic surface phenomena, based on active phonic processes would blur the picture, because they would also occur in a Ukrainian phonic accent in otherwise morphologically and syntactically perfect Russian or in a phonic Russian accent in Ukrainian.

For endings, Ukrainian or Russian (i.e., “specific”) as well as common forms are also distinguished. However, the inventories of endings in the two languages differ very little in their *material substance*. This means that their

necessarily a special phonetic expertise. (ii) As Zeller (2015, pp. 123–194) has demonstrated investigating Belarusian *Trasjanka*, especially vowels that contrast in the two donor languages are often realised in mixed speech (in this case Belarusian and Russian) as intermediate qualities, not in the normative quality of either the first or the second donor language. Thus, the attempt to differentiate the sounds behind Ukr. *u* and Russ. *u* in OCUS could be in very many cases impossible or misleading. Therefore, [i] is used for both.

⁸ A second note in this context: It is assumed that the phonetic contrast between [i] and [i] reflects two distinct phonemes in both languages. For Russian, this is rather unusual. In Ukrainian, however, the assumption of two phonemes /i/ vs. /i/, rather than a single /i/ with the positional variants [i] and [i], is the norm; see Rusanovskij (1986, p. 6). As is well known, there is no way to compare superficially corresponding phonemes in two languages directly, because they are defined in terms of their language specific paradigmatic and syntagmatic relation. If we followed the dominant Russian tradition and treated [i] and [i] as positional variants of Russ. /i/, we would have to postulate a common stem in the cases discussed. This, however, would be misleading, because blending the contrast of (historic) *i* and *y* in Ukrainian is no active process in Ukrainian.

⁹ The term “prepositional” is used here for the so-called “sixth case”, a translation more aligned with Russian terminology, motivated by the fact that this case only occurs after prepositions. In Ukrainian terminology (similar to Polish), the term “locative” is used as a corresponding translation. In this study, “locative” is reserved for use of this sixth (potentially seventh, depending on theoretical considerations) case in a truly local meaning. In Russian, for many nouns in specific declension classes, there are distinctive endings for this usage—often referred to as “prepositional-2” (see Zaliznjak, 1973). However, Ukrainian also shows special endings for these semantically locative usages in many nouns (see HSULM, pp. 645–712), although Ukrainian linguistics does not model this as a distinct case in a stricter analysis; for more details, see the analysis below.

classification as Ukrainian or Russian is generally *context-sensitive*, i.e., dependent on their combination with certain stems or stem classes. For example, the GEN.SG of (zero-ending) masculine nouns (a very large inflectional class)¹⁰ has only two endings in both languages: /-a/ and /-u/. The latter is, however, much more widespread in Ukrainian than in Russian. Thus, the ending /-a/ can, depending on the stem it is combined with, be classified as either Russian or common (in very rare cases even as Ukrainian¹¹), and /-u/ as either Ukrainian or common. Endings that regardless of context, i.e., *materially*, can be classified as specific are much rarer. The ending /-ovi/, for example, which appears in the DAT.SG and PREP.SG of masculine nouns in Ukrainian, is foreign to Russian. The past tense verb forms mentioned above also differ between the two languages in the plural: Ukr. /-li/ vs. Russ. /-l'i/, which, as mentioned, are seen here as an agglutinative complex of two endings (-C-V). More details are provided in the respective analyses.¹²

Common endings—and thus word forms with any stem combined with such common endings—are excluded from the quantitative analysis of inflectional constellations, as they provide no insight into the influence of Ukrainian and Russian on the inflectional morphology of Suržyk. This includes cases with no inflectional contrast between Ukrainian and Russian (i.e., strictly common forms), as well as those rendered opaque by (possible) phonetic reduction. Opaque endings are discussed where relevant, particularly when quantitatively significant.

Further details of the differentiation between Ukrainian, Russian, and common expressions, i.e., stems, endings, word forms etc., can be found in OCUS-Doc: Hentschel et alii (2026). Table 1 illustrates the typical combinations of stems and endings discussed in the analytical chapters of this paper:

Table 1 Constellations of Ukrainian, Russian, and common stems and endings

Stem	Ending	Example ^a	Constellation
Ukr.	Ukr.	a) <i>narodženn'-a</i> 'birth' b) <i>maju-t'</i> 'have' c) <i>cikav-i</i> 'interesting'	NOM.SG.NEUTR 3PERS.PRES.PL NOM.PL
Ukr.	Russ.	a) <i>bat'k-ov</i> 'parents' b) <i>ču-l-i</i> 'heard' c) <i>povs'akdenn-oj</i> 'everyday'	GEN.PL PAST.PL GEN.SG.FEM
Ukr.	Common ^b	a) <i>mov-a</i> 'language' b) <i>kaza-l-a</i> 'say' c) <i>ostann-ij</i> 'last'	NOM.SG.FEM PAST.FEM.SG NOM.SG.MASC
Russ.	Russ.	a) <i>stran'-e</i> 'country' b) <i>zavisi-t</i> 'depend' c) <i>obšč-ij</i> 'common / shared'	DAT.SG.FEM 3PERS.PRES.SG NOM.SG.MASC
Russ.	Ukr.	a) <i>stix-y</i> 'poem'	NOM.PL

¹⁰ There is a small group of masculine nouns with a NOM.SG ending in /-a/. These are usually declined like feminine nouns in both languages. They are only marginally addressed in the following analysis, as they are quantitatively negligible (see below).

¹¹ For example, the NOM.SG.MASC of Ukr. *d'ad'k-o* corresponds to the GEN.SG *d'ad'k-a* 'uncle; male adult; coll.' The Russian equivalents are *d'ad'k-a* and *d'ad'k-i*. In this case, all four endings would be classified as specific, Ukrainian for the two former wordforms, Russian for the latter two.

¹² Ukrainian, unlike Russian, shows a synthetic future that results from the agglutinative univertation of a verb infinitive with an auxiliary. This specific morphological category already plays an extremely peripheral role in modern Ukrainian (see Danylenko & Vakulenko, 1995, p. 47). In Ukrainian dialects, the synthetic future is also widely attested in the *Atlas Ukraïns'koï movy* (hereafter AUM: Matvijias et al., 1984–2001, I, map 263, II, map 244). In this study, however, it occurs rather rarely: only 67 instances, 46 of which are found in hybrid sentences. Due to this small number, it is impossible to include this constellation in the detailed analyses to follow.

		b) <i>prepodaje-Ø</i> ‘teach’ c) <i>ũkusn-e</i> ‘delicious’	3PERS.PRES.SG NOM.SG.NEUTR
Russ.	common	a) <i>bol’nic-a</i> ‘hospital’ b) <i>ščita-l-a</i> ‘think’ c) <i>izvestn-yj</i> ‘famous’	NOM.SG.FEM PAST.FEM.SG NOM.SG.MASC
common	common	a) <i>kuxn’-a</i> ‘kitchen’ b) <i>zna-l-a</i> ‘know’ c) <i>dobr-yj</i> ‘good(hearted)’	NOM.SG.FEM PAST.FEM.SG NOM.SG.MASC
common	Ukr.	a) <i>l’ud’-my</i> ‘people’ b) <i>žyve-mo</i> ‘live’ c) <i>molod-e</i> ‘young’	INSTR.PL 1PERS.PRES.PL NOM.SG.NEUTR
common	Russ.	a) <i>mam-oj</i> ‘mom’ b) <i>xoče-t</i> ‘want’ c) <i>nov-oje</i> ‘new’	INSTR.SG.FEM 3PERS.PRES.SG NOM.SG.NEUTR

^a a) noun, b) verb, c) adjective. Note that in the examples for verbs in the 3PERS.PRES forms in Table 1, a simplified notation for stems has been adopted, interpreting the vowel preceding the ending as a part of the stem (cf. below, 3.2.3).

^b Note that, as has been stated, constellations with a common ending are not considered in the analyses.

3 Analyses

3.1 Selecting relevant constellations of inflectional morphological categories

As mentioned above, inflectional constellations that do not show any contrast in endings between Ukrainian and Russian are not taken into account. In addition, a minimum threshold for the quantitative analysis was defined, which had to be exceeded. The corpus had to contain at least 100 instances of Ukrainian or Russian endings on Ukrainian or Russian stems for a single constellation of morphological categories to be considered.¹³ A total of 25 constellations were ascertained, each of which includes several hundred, and often several thousand, Ukrainian and Russian endings. Ultimately, the analysis concerns about 54,000 forms (tokens) of nouns, adjectives, and verbs in which Ukrainian, Russian, and common *stems* combine with Ukrainian or Russian endings. As previously mentioned, the *common endings* generally do not provide any insight into the competition between Ukrainian and Russian inflectional morphology. Nevertheless, they will be discussed where they occur in large numbers alongside Ukrainian and Russian endings. This is the case in 6 of the 25 test cases, where the classification of the corresponding ending as common (rather than Ukrainian or Russian) is based on specific complexities.

Five specific hyperlexemes are also excluded from the general analysis: Among the nouns, the hyperlexemes *mova=jazyk* ‘language’ and the designation of the mixed variety *suržyk=suržik* were excluded, and among the adjectives, *ukraïns’kyj=ukrainskij* ‘Ukrainian’ and *rosijs’kyj=russkij* ‘Russian’. The main reason is that the two adjectival hyperlexemes occur with such high frequency in the corpus that they would have disproportionately influenced this analysis based on token frequencies. The high token frequency of the hyperlexeme *mova=jazyk* ‘language’ as well as of the designation of the mixed variety is due to the fact that in the open, semi-structured interviews conducted to collect the data, “language” was a key topic of conversation (see the *Introduction*, Hentschel, Palinska, & Zeller, forthcoming b). The hyperlexemes *ukraïns’kyj=ukrainskij* ‘Ukrainian’ and

¹³ Test cases that fall below this threshold are, for adjectives, GEN/ACC.ANIM.PL, INSTR.SG.MASC/NEUTR, PREP.PL, and for nouns, PREP.SG.NEUTR. (For verbs, see below in the analytical section.). There are some other potential test cases that are not analyzed in detail due to their low token frequency in the corpus but are marginally addressed in the text because of occasional homonymy of endings with analyzed test cases.

rosijs'kyj=russkij 'Russian' are highly frequent not least because of their collocational use with *mova=jazyk*. Among the verbs, only the highly frequent hyperlexeme *buty=byt* 'to be' is excluded, because in most of its uses it functions rather as a grammatical than a lexical unit (as an auxiliary or copula).

These hyperlexemes comprise a further ca. 14,500 forms (tokens). Since the hyperlexeme *buty=byt* is only to be considered in the past tense because only there Ukrainian and Russian differ, it will be discussed briefly at the margin of the corresponding test items in the past tense. The other highly frequent adjectival and nominal test items that were initially excluded will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.4, for specific reasons outlined there.

3.2 Overview

The proportions of Ukrainian and Russian inflectional endings, each differentiated by stem type, for the 25 test cases are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Proportions of Ukrainian endings for different stem types across individual test cases

no.	test item	share of Ukr. endings in word forms with stems			of N stems			share of com. Endings	cls	
		Ukr.	Russ.	com.	Ukr.	Russ.	com.		5-grd	2-grd
1	ADJ-ACC.SG.FEM	100.0	94.1	97.7	219	204	173	---	1	A
2	ADJ-GEN/ACC.ANIM.SG.MASC	100.0	91.4	91.6	87	139	83	---	1	A
3	ADJ-NOM.SG.FEM.	99.5	90.9	92.7	805	594	640	23.1	1	A
4	NOUN-INSTR.PL	100.0	90.6	96.8	192	267	536	---	1	A
5	ADJ-NOM/ACC.INANIM.PL	99.1	90.2	94.0	633	1074	811	---	1	A
6	VERB-PRES.SG.3PERS_1INFL	99.8	87.1	97.5	3626	873	1686	---	1	A
7	ADJ-INSTR.PL	94.1	86.5	94.4	51	52	36	---	1	A
8	ADJ-NOM/ACC.SG.NEUTR	98.9	86.4	90.8	274	625	336	---	1	A
9	VERB-PAST.SG.MASC	99.9	80.9	95.6	2812	1035	1171	---	1	A
10	VERB-PRES.PL.3PERS_1INFL	98.4	80.2	90.7	1897	728	904	---	1	A
11	VERB-PAST.PL	98.8	78.6	94.0	3834	1320	1677	---	1	A
12	VERB-PRES.PL.3PERS_2INFL	91.5	76.6	86.9	339	128	639	---	1	A
13	NOUN-GEN.SG.FEM	99.3	67.4	84.0	143	340	200	70.8	2	A
14	ADJ-NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC	99.3	65.5	82.8	268	362	203	66.3	2	A
15	ADJ-DAT/REP.SG.FEM	94.8	46.4	72.6	231	138	84	---	3	A
16	VERB-PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL	97.9	43.3	89.8	282	217	914	---	3	A
17	NOUN-DAT/REP.SG.FEM	100.0	41.1	80.8	130	114	214	83.2	3	A
18	NOUN-REP.SG.MASC	96.7	32.3	59.3	151	248	140	77.2	3	A
19	ADJ-INSTR.SG.FEM	95.0	29.6	60.0	220	54	65	---	3	A
20	ADJ-GEN.SG.FEM	87.8	26.4	73.9	90	144	69	---	3	A
21	NOUN-GEN/ACC.ANIM.PL.MASC	94.6	18.1	55.2	351	508	873	---	3	A

22	NOUN-INSTR.SG.FEM	79.8	34.0	51.8	178	206	442	---	4	B
23	NOUN-GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC	69.2	12.1	38.0	201	372	702	35.3	4	B
24	ADJ-PREP.SG.MASC/NEUTR	55.8	11.3	17.0	163	240	200	---	4	B
25	VERB-INF_1/2INFL	27.6	7.0	22.3	7197	2589	3980	---	5	B

Following the sequential number in the far-left column, the next column contains abbreviations for the test cases. The next three columns specify the percentage shares of Ukrainian endings across the three stem types: Ukrainian, Russian, and common. The following three columns illustrate the absolute token frequencies for each respective stem type. The next column to the right, “share of com. endings,” shows the proportion of common endings in the total number of word forms with Ukrainian, Russian, or common endings. By showing the relative frequencies, this column indicates how many word forms that belong to the test case do not provide any information relevant to the inflectional-morphological competition between Ukrainian and Russian. The role and the problem of common endings will only be discussed in the following five test cases for which values are given in this column. Cases with lower values (mostly well below 10%) are of no relevance to the overall results or the individual test cases.

Of particular interest here are the two constellations involving the prepositional case (nos. 17 and 18), where there are indeed morphonological contrasts between Ukrainian and Russian, although these contrasts are primarily obscured (or difficult to discuss) due to Russian vowel reduction, which often makes the difference between Ukr. /-i/ and Russ. /-e/ opaque in unstressed positions. In the other cases, there are real, phonetically definitely unblurred ending homonymies between Ukrainian and Russian. Both types of endings will be addressed in the individual analyses.

A further column, “cls 5-grd,” is based on a cluster analysis,¹⁴ specifically a hierarchical cluster analysis (see Bühl, 2019, pp. 625–648), which computes groupings (similarities) based on purely quantitative criteria. This clustering is based on the two percentage values for word forms with Ukrainian or Russian stems. Five clusters were identified and are indicated in the column with their number.

The column to the right, “block 2-grd,” highlights the following pattern: Block A comprises the 21 test cases in which the proportion of Ukrainian endings on Ukrainian stems ranges from approximately 90% to 100%. All of these test cases thus exhibit a clear resistance to combinations of Ukrainian stems with Russian endings. The occasional occurrence of Russian endings in these cases can be interpreted as spontaneous insertions of Russian endings into otherwise inflectionally stable constellations. However, four test cases differ from this pattern: Block B, corresponding to Clusters 4 and 5. Cluster 5 is, of course, not a cluster in the strict sense of the word, but a single, isolated outlier that differs far more significantly from the next-closest test case in quantitative terms than the other cluster boundaries do. For Ukrainian stems, notable variation is found only here (nos. 22–25).

Although there are eight test cases in which the share of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems is close to 90% or higher (nos. 1–8), as well as three test cases in which Russian endings are stably present on Russian stems with a

¹⁴ Cluster analysis is primarily a so-called hypothesis-generating method. It is intended to help formulate hypotheses about the qualitative background of the phenomena studied based on quantitative constellations (similarities or differences) between the test cases. Unless otherwise noted, statistical analyses were conducted using the statistical software SPSS 29.

share of roughly 90% (nos. 23–25), the variation between Ukrainian and Russian endings is particularly pronounced with Russian stems (nos. 9–22).

The common stems consistently show values for Ukrainian endings that—with one exception (the already isolated test case 25)—are more similar to those of Ukrainian stems than to those of Russian stems. In Cluster 1, and to a lesser extent in Cluster 2, the differences between Ukrainian and common stems in terms of the proportion of Ukrainian endings are considerably smaller than the ones between Ukrainian and Russian stems, in some cases negligible.

The sequence of test cases listed in Table 2 is organized for clarity: first, by the order of clusters (ascending from 1 to 5) and, second, by the share of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems (descending). The individual analyses will follow by word class.

3.2.1 Adjectives

Of the 25 test cases, eleven concern adjectives. The data from Table 2 for adjectives are repeated in Table 3:

Table 3 *Share of Ukrainian endings on different stem types—adjectives*

no.	test item	share of Ukr. endings in word forms with stems			of N stems			share of com. Endings	cls	
		Ukr.	Russ.	com.	Ukr.	Russ.	com.		5-grd.	2-grd.
1	ADJ-ACC.SG.FEM	100.0	94.1	97.7	219	204	173	---	1	A
2	ADJ-GEN/ACC.ANIM.SG.MASC	100.0	91.4	91.6	87	139	83	---	1	A
3	ADJ-NOM.SG.FEM.	99.5	90.9	92.7	805	594	640	23.1	1	A
5	ADJ-NOM/ACC.INANIM.PL	99.1	90.2	94.0	633	1074	811	---	1	A
7	ADJ-INSTR.PL	94.1	86.5	94.4	51	52	36	---	1	A
8	ADJ-NOM/ACC.SG.NEUTR	98.9	86.4	90.8	274	625	336	---	1	A
14	ADJ-NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC	99.3	65.5	82.8	268	362	203	66.3	2	A
15	ADJ-DAT/PRP.SG.FEM	94.8	46.4	72.6	231	138	84	---	3	A
19	ADJ-INSTR.SG.FEM	95.0	29.6	60.0	220	54	65	---	3	A
20	ADJ-GEN.SG.FEM	87.8	26.4	73.9	90	144	69	---	3	A
24	ADJ-PRP.SG.MASC/NEUTR	55.8	11.3	17.0	163	240	200	---	4	B

Of the eleven analyzed adjectival CNG constellations, six belong to Cluster 1, which otherwise contains only one nominal and one verbal test case, i.e., Cluster 1 consists mainly of adjectival test cases.

As far as the Ukrainian adjective *stems* are concerned, the share of Ukrainian *endings* is well above 90% in nine of the eleven cases, and just slightly below 90% in one more. Ukrainian adjective stems are thus very rarely combined with Russian endings in competitive contexts. There is only one, albeit striking, exception: In the PRP.SG of masculine and neuter adjectives (PRP.SG.MASC/NEUTR—no. 24). Here, Russian endings appear almost as frequently as Ukrainian endings on Ukrainian stems.

In the case of Russian stems, Ukrainian endings reach very high shares ranging from 94% to 86% in six of the eleven test cases (all six from Cluster 1). The degree of adaptation of Russian stems to Ukrainian inflectional

morphology is very high in these cases and thus differs only slightly from that of Ukrainian stems. In the other five cases, which fall into Clusters 2 through 4, the share of Ukrainian endings steadily declines, from two-thirds to one-tenth.

The common adjective stems show values that are much closer to the Ukrainian than to the Russian stems in ten of the eleven test cases. Here too, however, there is an exception: again, PREP.SG.MASC/NEUTR—no. 24, where the common adjective stems—with a share of Ukrainian endings of 17%—more closely resemble the Russian stems (11%) than the Ukrainian ones (56%).

a) Long and short adjective forms in the nominative and accusative (except masculine)

Among the six test cases that belong to the “maximally Ukrainian” Cluster 1, there are four that share a specific structural distinction between Ukrainian and Russian. These are the nominatives of the feminine, neuter, and plural, as well as the corresponding accusatives, though in the plural only when referring to inanimate nouns (ACC.SG.FEM—no. 1, NOM.SG.FEM—no. 3, NOM/ACC.INANIM.PL—no. 5, NOM/ACC.SG.NEUTR—no. 8). In the neuter and in the inanimate plural, the accusative and the nominative coincide, which is why they are each collapsed into one test case. In the feminine, however, the specific forms of the nominative and accusative differ in the singular. These last two observations apply to both languages, independent of the formal differences between them.

The contrasts between the two languages lie in the following: In Ukrainian, there are monosyllabic, vocalic endings {-V} (HSULM, pp. 712–713; Danylenko & Vakulenko, 1995, p. 21), whereas Russian shows—with one widely facultative structural exception¹⁵—disyllabic endings {-VjV}, cf. *Grammatičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka* (hereafter GSRJa: Zaliznjak, 1977, p. 56). Rusanovskij (1986, p. 153), on the other hand, lists long adjectival endings of this structure as rare variants for Ukrainian, while the two previously mentioned sources either do not mention these long forms or regard them as irrelevant for modern Ukrainian.

As reflected in Table 3 above, the long endings defined here as Russian, i.e., NOM.SG.FEM /-aja/, ACC.SG.FEM /-uju/, NOM/ACC.SG.NEUTR /-Vje/,¹⁶ and NOM/ACC.INANIM.PL /-ije, -ije/, occur only sporadically in the corpus, and almost never with Ukrainian stems. This directly contradicts del Gaudio's¹⁷ (2010, p. 75) account, who consistently suggests a coexistence of long and short forms in Suržyk.

¹⁵ Monosyllabic endings of the type {-V} also occur in Russian, but there only in predicative adjective constructions, and usually alongside long forms that may then appear in both the nominative and instrumental. These short forms continue the historical so-called indefinite declension of adjectives, whereas the disyllabic reflexes belong to the historical definite declension. The sequence {jV} in {-VjV} goes back to an agglutinatively attached demonstrative pronoun {jV} (nominative case form). The short endings in Ukrainian, by contrast, despite appearances to the contrary, continue the long endings of the type {-VjV}, which over time were reduced phonetically to {-V}. Ukrainian linguistic scholarship refers to these as “contracted” endings, which are used both in attributive (within noun phrases) and predicative functions. (All of this can be found in any standard historical grammar.) In predicative usage, Ukrainian and Russian word forms of feminine gender thus often coincide. These are then classified as *common*. When the two languages differentiate them by stress, they are classified accordingly as Ukrainian or Russian namely as word forms. This means that, in a pair such as Ukr. *xo'roš-a*, Russ. *xoro'sh-a*, for both word forms stem and ending are classified as common, the two word forms, however, as Ukrainian and Russian, respectively, due to the difference in stress.

¹⁶ The phonetic variation of /V/ in this position between a fronted and non-fronted realization in unstressed environments can here be disregarded.

¹⁷ His data, however, are drawn only from a smaller region in the north of Ukraine.

The high percentage (23%) of common endings for NOM.SG.FEM reported in Table 2 is based on forms used predicatively, where both languages show the ending /-a/.

- b) Masculine nominative and inanimate accusative singular and some other infrequent CNG constellations with contrast between the endings /-iC/ and /-iC/

In both Ukrainian and Russian, in NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC (no. 14), the endings /-ij/ and /-ij/ are relevant (in Russian, more peripherally, also /-oj/, see below), though with largely different distribution patterns in the two languages. Unlike the adjectival nominative and accusative forms just discussed, this test case falls into Cluster 3 of the analysis. That is, here we see a clear reduction in the proportion of Ukrainian endings, but only for Russian stems. However, there are a number of other CNG constellations that show the same competition phenomenon between Ukrainian and Russian distribution patterns of /-iC/ vs. /-iC/. These are each only extremely weakly represented in the corpus, and are therefore not quantitatively analyzed in detail. They will only be briefly commented on.

Regarding the ending for NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC in Standard Ukrainian, there is broad consensus in descriptions of Ukrainian inflectional morphology that the basic form of the ending is {-Vj}, thus forming a long form with the stem—here as in Russian as well. Only the HSULM (pp. 712–713) makes reference to a short form with a so-called zero ending {-Ø} used for a number of adjectives in the nominative masculine. It should be noted that in the analyzed corpus these do not occur attributively (within noun phrases).

For the distribution of the endings /-ij/ and /-ij/, the stem-final /-k-/ is quantitatively relevant, which, for derivational reasons, is very frequent in adjectives in both languages. After other velars as well, only /-ij/ is possible in Ukrainian, while in Russian, as is well known, only /-ij/ occurs. Nevertheless, in this CNG constellation the corpus contains many instances where the Ukrainian and Russian distributional patterns overlap, both languages showing either /-ij/ or /-ij/. These endings (in about 1,700 forms, or 66%) are counted as common, as described above, and are excluded from the quantitative analysis. That leaves just under 900 tokens with specific, i.e., Ukrainian or Russian, endings.

For adjectival forms in NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC, apart from the basic coexistence of /-ij/ and /-ij/, it should be noted that Russian shows a specificity here. Stressed endings of this CNG constellation, which occur in Russian only after so-called hard stem-finals, take the form /-oj/, whereas in Ukrainian the ending is still /-ij/, simply stressed.

It is therefore necessary to analytically distinguish word forms with stressed endings from those with stressed stems, something not illustrated in the above table. The number of relevant stressed endings is not very high: only 40 cases with stressed /-oj/ compared with 202 with stressed /-ij/. The former occur only with Russian or (rarely) common stems, the latter with all three stem types: obligatorily with Ukrainian, and predominantly with Russian and common stems, i.e., in the ratio of 1 to 2 and 1 to 6 for Russ. /-oj/ vs. Ukr. /-ij/. Thus, the quantitative proportions differ little from those for this CNG constellation described in Table 3 (no. 14), where only stem-stressed instances are included.

Returning to the contrasts for /-iC/ vs. /-iC/: The other CNG constellations or ending contrasts not listed in Table 3 are (i) /-im/ vs. /-im/ in the INSTR.SG for masculine and neuter and in the DAT.PL, and (ii) /-ix/ vs. /-ix/ in the GEN.PL and ACC.PL.ANIM as well as in the PREP.PL. The distributional criteria for the latter two pairs of endings,

which apply to a whole series of CNG constellations, are the same as for the first (NOM.SG.MASC). Here, however, the question of stress does not play a role, since no endings with stressed /-o-/ occur. For the cases with /-im/ vs. /-im/ and /-ix/ vs. /-ix/, there are only about 170 analyzable word forms in the corpus across all CNG constellations, compared with almost 600 for the stem-stressed nominative and accusative forms relevant here. It is pointless to conduct a differentiated quantitative analysis of the former constellations with such a low token frequency. However, the distribution of the two respective endings in them is very similar to that in GEN/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC (no. 14). For the latter test case, the proportions of Ukrainian endings on the three stem types are approximately: Ukr. 99.3%, Russ. 66%, com. 83%. For the various other CNG constellations with the problematic /-iC/ vs. /-iC/, the values are: Ukr. 100%, Russ. 60%, com. 80%.

The analogy is obvious: Where the only contrast between Ukrainian and Russian adjectival inflection lies in the distribution of the endings /-iC/ vs. /-iC/, Ukrainian stems almost always follow the Ukrainian distributional pattern, Russian stems also mostly do so, and a strong majority of common stems do so as well.

c) Instrumental plural

This adjectival CNG constellation (INSTR.PL—no. 7), with only about 140 relevant tokens of the structure {-V₁mV₂}, resembles the test cases just discussed under b) in that /V₁/ in both donor languages¹⁸ of Suržyk is realized as /i/ or /i/, according to the same distributional rules. The difference in INSTR.PL is that /V₂/ is always /i/ in Ukrainian, but always /i/ in Russian, then following palatalized /m'/ . This means that the endings, unlike in the cases under b), can consistently be identified as specific, i.e., Ukrainian or Russian, by the final sound of the disyllabic ending; this is just as in the cases under a) and the immediately following d). Here as well there are (virtually) no common endings. The Ukrainian ending strongly dominates with values around 90%, regardless of stem type.

d) Masculine and neuter genitive and masculine animate accusative

In Ukrainian, here (GEN/ACC.ANIM.SG.MASC—no. 2) the ending has the structure {-V₁hV₂}, while in Russian it has the structure {-V₁vV₂}¹⁹. The Ukrainian realization with medial /-h-/²⁰ in the ending aligns with the sound changes in all other Slavic languages in which the intervocalic consonant has a velar or even more posterior articulation (in Ukrainian and, for example, Czech a post-velar fricative, in Polish and Croatian a velar plosive—both voiced). Russian is exotic here, with the intervocalic labiodental fricative.²¹ Both endings are also phonetically distinguished by the fact that both vowels in Ukrainian are mostly pronounced as rather open [ɔ],

¹⁸ The application of the term *donor language* is not unproblematic in cases such as Ukrainian Suržyk. This is discussed below, section 4, and in more detail in Hentschel (forthcoming).

¹⁹ In northern Russian local dialects, {V₁hV₂} is attested as well, alongside the presence of a velar or post-velar voiced fricative instead of the plosive [g] (Avanesov & Bromley, 1986, I, map 44). However, it would be far-fetched to assume a role of these Russian dialects in the stabilization of the Ukrainian ending (cf. also Hentschel, forthcoming).

²⁰ It should be noted that in a simplified transcription system used in Slavic linguistics (at least in phonological, and sometimes even in phonetic transcription—cf. Danylenko & Vakulenko, 1995), the character *h* does not represent the [h] of the International Phonetic Alphabet (a voiceless glottal fricative that can entirely lack supraglottal friction), but rather a voiced (post-)velar fricative glottal sound. At least in the phonological transcription of Ukrainian, this simplified notation /h/ is used here. In the bilabial-vocalic environment on both sides of the Ukrainian ending under discussion, the /h/ is certainly phonetically bilabially accommodated.

²¹ Its genesis is disputed, which is irrelevant in this context.

without vowel reduction.²² In Russian, only V₁ can be (a rather closed) [o], but only in the not very frequent case of a stressed ending; the unstressed V₂ is always a reduced [ə].²³ V₁ also always takes this reduced quality [ə] when unstressed and following a hard stem-final. After a soft stem-final, either this [ə] or a reduced front vowel [ɪ]²⁴ occurs (Gabka, 1975, p. 167). A qualitative determination of these so-called “short” or “over-short” reduced vowels of the second reduction stage by ear is very difficult. Acoustic measurements by Zeller (2015, pp. 123–194) of comparable phenomena in Belarusian *Trasjanka* show that fine gradual variations usually occur, both between speakers and within the speech of single speakers. When [ə] and [ɪ] are stated for unstressed endings in Russian after a soft stem-final, it should always be considered that gradually shaded realizations between them occur, and in unstressed endings of Ukrainian, /i/ may shift from [i] to [ɪ] and /i/ from [ɪ] to [ɛ]. There is thus a considerable degree of diffusivity in the quality of non-low front vowels in unstressed endings of both languages. In what follows, where relevant, this problem will briefly be referred to as the [ə~ɪ] phenomenon.

The clear distinctiveness already due to the contrast /h/ vs. /v/, and thus the absence of common endings, is evidently a factor in the Russian influence tending toward zero.²⁵ That is, Ukrainian stems show Ukrainian endings in well over 90% of instances, while with Russian stems the proportion is also around 90%. The clear dominance of the Ukrainian ending may also be supported by the fact that the Ukrainian variant corresponds to that of Church Slavonic, for centuries the language of liturgy in the Orthodox Church, both the Ukrainian and the Russian.²⁶ In the long run, this fact has at least protected the Ukrainian ending from stigmatization by speakers of Russian as a feature of “peasant language”. (A direct influence of Church Slavonic on Surżyk can be ruled out.) According to Thomason (2008), in cases of competition between forms, structures, or constructions—whether arising from historical development or language contact (e.g., in borrowing, in the formation of *fused lects*, or in dialect leveling)—the sociolinguistically supported variants usually prevail.

e) Dative and homonymous prepositional case of feminine adjectives in the singular

This test case (DAT/PREP.SG.FEM—no. 15), like all those discussed so far, shows a very high proportion of Ukrainian endings on Ukrainian stems: approximately 95%, thus falling into the large Block A in Table 2. In contrast, the share of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems drops to less than half, almost 45% (therefore, this test case falls into Cluster 3). Ukrainian shows an ending /-ij/ in both of these constellations, while Russian has /-oj/. In the latter, when the ending is stressed, the vowel is phonetically a relatively closed [o]; when the stem is stressed, it becomes [ə]. In cases of soft stem-final consonants, the always unstressed ending again displays the [ə~ɪ] phenomenon (Gabka, 1975, p. 165), being written as *ej*. In this latter case, it is phonetically unclear whether the form was Ukrainian /-ij/ or Russian /-oj/ and these unclear instances were excluded from the analysis. In Russian, feminine adjectives never have the ending /-ij/ in any case of the singular. Moreover, /-oj/

²² In unstressed position directly preceding a syllable with a stressed [u] or [i] the articulation approaches [u] (Rusanovskij, 1986, p. 14), which is not relevant for the analyses to follow.

²³ In pronominal forms like *to 'go* in the same CNG constellation the V₂ is, of course, pronounced as [o], while V₁ after the stem *t-* is realized as [ʌ] under *akanje*. This is not relevant here, since pronouns are not included in this study.

²⁴ Note, that [ɪ] will be used for the unstressed vowel under *ikanje*, although the articulation may vary to a certain degree in the unstressed syllable.

²⁵ Menzel and Hentschel (2015, pp. 142–143, 152) show that in this CNG constellation, the Belarusian *Trasjanka* is also highly stable against Russian influence—unlike in a number of other constellations. The Belarusian form of the ending with intervocalic /h/ corresponds to the Ukrainian one.

²⁶ In recent years, however, Church Slavonic has at least partly been replaced by Ukrainian.

occurs in four cases of Russian feminine adjectives²⁷—but not the two “direct” cases (nominative and accusative) as defined by Jakobson (1936). The high type frequency of /-oj/ in the Russian paradigm apparently protects Russian stems from being combined with a Ukrainian /-ij/; alternatively, it can be argued that /-ij/ would disturb the stem uniformity, as it basically entails palatalization (see Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, pp. 319–325). Furthermore, in none of the previously discussed cases was the phonetic contrast between competing Ukrainian and Russian endings as great as in this one.

f) Genitive and instrumental of feminine adjectives in the singular

These two CNG constellations (INSTR.SG.FEM and GEN.SG.FEM—nos. 19 and 20, respectively) are discussed together because they share several features, although they are not homonymous in Ukrainian—whereas they are in Russian. In Ukrainian, both endings are disyllabic and follow a {-VjV} structure; in Russian, both are monosyllabic /-Vj/. Phonologically, Ukrainian uses /-oji/ for the GEN.SG.FEM and /-oju/ for the INSTR.SG.FEM, while Russian uses /-oj/ for both, just as in the cases discussed in section e) on DAT.SG.FEM and PREP.SG.FEM. Admittedly, Russian does also have a form /-oju/ in this constellation, which is homonymous with the Ukrainian standard ending. However, this form is extremely rare in Russian and is typically used as a stylistic high-register marker, e.g., in poetry for metrical purposes (see GSRJa, p. 56). It would be far-fetched to assume that such a poetic Russian ending could influence the highly colloquial variety of Suržyk. Therefore, the /-oju/ ending is always classified as Ukrainian.

Both test cases discussed here still fall into Block A, with Ukrainian endings making up about 90% of forms with Ukrainian stems. However, for Russian stems, the share of Ukrainian endings drops sharply to below 30%, which places them in Cluster 3. It is clear that Russian stems only adopt the disyllabic Ukrainian endings rather than the monosyllabic Russian ones to a limited extent. Menzel and Hentschel (2017, pp. 325 f.) hypothesize that Russian endings may be favored when they are segmentally shorter than Ukrainian ones. Interestingly, the few short endings (from Russian) with Ukrainian stems found here in Suržyk utterances tend to occur at the end of an utterance unit: possibly an instance of articulatorily motivated shortening before a speech pause.

One further note on GEN.SG.FEM compared to INSTR.SG.FEM, which is limited to Ukrainian stems: for GEN.SG.FEM of adjectives, the share of Ukrainian endings falls below 90% for the first time, albeit only slightly; in contrast, for INSTR.SG.FEM it remains at 95%. This small drop in the genitive may be an artifact of the analysis, especially when the unstressed final palatal Ukr. [i] may be reduced through a kind of apocope and is not clearly audible: instead of [-ji], [j] might be realized, or this may be how the transcriber perceived it. The difference between [i] and [j] is primarily a matter of the former’s syllabicity. This issue does not apply to /-oju/, of course.

g) Prepositional singular of masculine and neuter adjectives

This CNG constellation (PREP.SG.MASC/NEUTR—no. 24) is one of only two among all 25 test cases in which a very strong influence of Russian inflectional morphology can be observed—an influence that significantly affects the choice of endings even for Ukrainian stems. In Ukrainian, there are two endings: /-omu/ and /-im/. Both the HSULM (pp. 712–714) and Rusanovskij (1986, pp. 153–154) describe these as free variants. The latter prescriptively and laconically remarks that the ending /-omu/ is to be preferred in stylistically neutral contexts. Russian, in contrast, has the ending /-om/, which—when following a palatal stem-final—shows the [ə~ɪ]

²⁷ For the ending Russ. /-oju/ in the INSTR.SG.FEM, see under f).

phenomenon. In certain cases, this may also obscure the distinction from Ukrainian /-im/. There were 13 unclear cases that were not included in the analysis. That leaves six unambiguous cases of Ukrainian /-im/—out of roughly 600. Thus, the Ukrainian /-im/ plays virtually no role in Suržyk here.

The main issue is therefore the competition between the disyllabic Ukrainian /-omu/ and the monosyllabic Russian /-om/. Even for Ukrainian stems, the share of Ukrainian endings amounts to only a little more than half; for Russian stems, it is only about 10 percent.

This sharp decline in the share of Ukrainian endings can be clearly attributed to the influence of Russian. Although some Ukrainian dialects (such as Polissian) do show an /-om/ ending (Bevzenko, 1980, p. 111), it would be mistaken to assume that this smaller and peripheral group of local dialects found in the Ukrainian border region near Belarus and Russia has influenced the entire Ukrainian-speaking area. Nevertheless, an intra-Ukrainian factor may have played at least a supportive role.

The importance of paradigmatic distinction patterns in inflectional morphology paradigms (or conversely, of paradigm-internal cases of ending homonymy) has been highlighted by Natural Morphology (Wurzel, 1984, pp. 205–213; Hentschel, 1991, on Russian). The disyllabic ending /-omu/ in Ukrainian is a historical extension of the dative ending to the prepositional of adjectives in the masculine and neuter singular, with partial equivalents in masculine nouns (see below). This syncretism is only typical in the Slavic languages in the feminine gender, for both adjectives and nouns. The (so far only partial, not complete) adoption of the ending /-om/ from Russian resolves this atypical syncretism of endings for masculine and neuter adjectives.²⁸ A further disadvantage of /-omu/ compared with /-om/ in the singular may be seen in the fact that the former is longer than the corresponding plural endings /-ix/ or /-ix/ (cf. the discussion of nouns in 3.2.2.c).

3.2.2 Nouns

Of the 25 test cases, seven CNG constellations involve nouns²⁹. Only one of them (INSTR.PL—no. 4) falls into Cluster 1, where both Ukrainian and Russian stems show a share of Ukrainian endings above 90%. In the other 6 cases (from Clusters 2, 3, and 4), the share of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems steadily decreases to a minimum of around 12%. Broadly speaking, Russian noun stems in five of the seven test cases exhibit a more or less pronounced resistance to adaptation to Ukrainian, with shares of Ukrainian endings ranging between 12% and 34%. However, even here only a few—more precisely, two—cases show a noticeable Russian influence on Ukrainian stems as well (INSTR.SG.FEM and GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC—nos. 22 and 23); cf. Table 4:

²⁸ One might question the claim that if this syncretism were problematic, such an innovation—namely the syncretism of the prepositional and dative case in the masculine and neuter genders—would not have arisen in the history of Ukrainian. This objection, however, is not convincing. Analogical processes of change are by no means always attributable to universal preferences, such as those emphasized in Natural Morphology. Rather, they must be considered in their temporal and spatial contexts, taking into account all structural and sociolinguistic complexities. The emergence and establishment of this syncretism PREP=DAT are in fact old phenomena, although Ukrainian historical grammars do not provide precise information about their dating and further circumstances. Moreover, the statement in question is, first and foremost, a descriptive observation, albeit one with a certain explanatory potential for present-day Suržyk. It may be noted that Hentschel (2008, p. 461, 2013, p. 65) describes a similarly strong tendency to establish a morphologically independent form for the PREP.SG of masculine and neuter adjectives in Belarusian *Trasjanka*, following the Russian pattern. Here, however, adopting Russ. /-om/ eliminates a syncretism between PREP.SG and INSTR.SG, which is likewise atypical for masculine and neuter gender.

²⁹ Note that proper names are excluded from the analyses.

Table 4 Shares of Ukrainian endings across different stem types—nouns

no.	test item	share of Ukr. endings in word forms with stems			of N stems			share of com. endings	cls		Block
		Ukr.	Russ.	com.	Ukr.	Russ.	com.		5-grd.	2-grd.	
4	NOUN-INSTR.PL	100.0	90.6	96.8	192	267	536	---	1		A
13	NOUN-GEN.SG.FEM	99.3	67.4	84.0	143	340	200	70.8	2		A
17	NOUN-DAT/PREP.SG.FEM	100.0	41.1	80.8	130	114	214	83.2	3		A
18	NOUN-PREP.SG.MASC	96.7	32.3	59.3	151	248	140	77.2	3		A
21	NOUN-GEN/ACC.ANIM.PL.MASC	94.6	18.1	55.2	351	508	873	---	3		A
22	NOUN-INSTR.SG.FEM	79.8	34.0	51.8	178	206	442	---	4		B
23	NOUN-GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC	69.2	12.1	38.0	201	372	702	35.3	4		B

a) Instrumental plural

This (INSTR.PL—no. 4) is the only case among the nouns where the influence of Russian can at most be discerned slightly and sporadically for Russian stems. The situation is very similar to the INSTR.PL of adjectives (no. 7), not only in quantitative terms. For nouns, Ukr. /-ami/ contrasts with Russ. /-am'i/, i.e., the contrast is always marked by the second, final vowel of the endings, as in the case of adjectives. In the analyzed corpus, the Ukrainian ending appears with Ukrainian stems exclusively and with Russian stems in 90% of the cases. Additionally, both languages feature a small number of monosyllabic endings in some high-token-frequency nouns: Ukr. /-mi/ vs. Russ. /-m'i/, both with stressed vowels. So again, the contrast lies in the opposition of /i/ and /i/. The Suržyk corpus only contains instances of the former ending for these nouns, with over 150 occurrences: *dit'my* 'children', *l'ud'my* 'people'. Only a handful of nominal word forms in the corpus show a pattern known in Ukrainian (and e.g., also in Polish, but not in Russian) as a continuation of the historical instrumental dual: *očyma* 'eyes', *dveryma* 'door(s)', the latter a plural tantum. In Ukrainian, this ending is no longer productive. In the corpus, it is restricted to Ukrainian stems.

b) Genitive singular feminine

Ukrainian and Russian principally both have the same endings /-i/ or /-i/ here (GEN.SG.FEM—no. 13). What differs partially, once again, is their distribution, as in ADJ-NOM/ACC.INANIM.SG.MASC—no. 14, where in both languages a final /j/ follows the vowel. The distribution in Ukrainian and Russian shows considerable overlap: there are about 1,800 common endings (about 70%) in which either /-i/ or /-i/ would occur in both languages. The analysis encompasses nearly 700 unambiguously Ukrainian or Russian instances (see Table 4). The distributional differences are again associated with stem-final consonants. Particularly relevant here are stem-final velars, especially frequently /k/, after which (as with adjectives) Russian admits only /i/, but Ukrainian only /i/. Quantitatively as well, the situation for nouns and adjectives is very similar. The ending Ukr. /-i/ appears after almost all Ukrainian stems and after only two-thirds of the Russian stems, meaning that in one-third of cases, the inflectional adaptation of Russian stems to Ukrainian does not occur.

c) Prepositional singular masculine and (marginally) the corresponding dative

In the PREP.SG.MASC³⁰ (no. 18), Ukrainian has three endings: /-i/, /-u/, and /-ovi/ or /-evi/³¹. Except for the first, /-i/, these endings are homonymous with those of DAT.SG.MASC. Rusanovskij (1986, p. 140) notes that it is virtually impossible to establish fixed rules for the distribution of the three endings in Ukrainian. However, he describes some tendencies, more like rules of thumb. The HSULM (pp. 645–683) illustrates the complex relationships with a three-digit number of exemplar nouns. It is difficult to tell to what extent the representation in the HSULM is descriptive or normatively motivated. A distinction is made throughout between prepositional-1 and a prepositional-2. The prepositional-2 refers exclusively to the position after the semantically elusive preposition *po*.³² In this context, the HSULM almost universally lists the ending /-u/, which is homonymous with one of the alternative dative endings. For a few (type-frequent) cases, /-i/ is given as prepositional-2 (e.g., HSULM, pp. 677–679).

Usages of nouns following *po* are excluded from the analysis. Even in Standard Ukrainian, the issue of case government by *po* seems to be more a matter of linguistic modeling than of empirical observation. Should the formal patterns following this preposition be modeled as a morphological or a morphosyntactic phenomenon?³³ Ukrainian linguistics has no unified stance here: in the 2012 *German–Ukrainian and Ukrainian–German Dictionary* (Busel, 2012) published in Kyiv, the dative is consistently given for all uses of *po* relevant here, and not a word is said about a prepositional case or a prepositional-2. The discussion of whether a morphological or morphosyntactic modeling is preferable for the case government of *po* cannot be undertaken here, hence the exclusion of instances following *po* (but cf. Palinska & Zeller, forthcoming).

The HSULM presents /-ovi, -evi/ as unmarked endings of the locative, in my terms, prepositional singular masculine. The use of /-i/ for most nouns is largely restricted to occurrences after certain prepositions (other than *po*), especially semantically locative ones. For a smaller set of nouns, /-u/ is also noted. The ending /-u/ appears in the prepositional case of masculine and neuter nouns with suffixes of the type {-(V)k-}, e.g.: *na mistku* ‘on the little bridge’, *na stolyku* ‘on the little table’. It also occurs in those groups of masculine nouns where the genitive case likewise takes the ending /-u/, e.g.: *na l’odu* ‘on the ice’, *u stroju* ‘in the (military) formation’, cf. the genitive forms *l’odu*, *stroju* (although with a different accent), but: *na dyvani* ‘on the sofa’, *na stil’ci* ‘on the chair’—cf. *dyvana*, *stil’c’a* in genitive (Pljušč, 2005, p. 164). Furthermore, the ending /-u/ is still considered in some cases as an alternative to the disyllabic endings. So even aside from the *po* context, the situation remains opaque.

³⁰ Neuter nouns, which show very similar inflectional patterns in the PREP.SG to masculine nouns, were not taken into account here. In this CNG constellation, only very few Ukrainian and Russian stems are present (N = 30) which are of interest here and where endings may be formally different (due to the possibility of Ukr. /-Vvi/), as compared to six times that number of common stems (token count, of course). It is therefore only noted in passing that the few Russian stems always show Russian endings, the Ukrainian ones mostly Ukrainian endings, and the common ones overwhelmingly Ukrainian endings. These findings are compatible with those observed in the CN constellation among masculine nouns, as detailed below.

³¹ The phoneme corresponding to the Ukrainian Cyrillic letter *в*, transliterated *v*, is transcribed here as /v/. Due to its widespread bilabial pronunciation [w] / [ʋ], it is frequently also rendered as /w/ in the literature, e.g., in Danylenko & Vakulenko (1995, p. 6).

³² Uses of *po* with accusative government are, of course, not at issue here.

³³ The fundamental meta-metalinguistic question of whether morphological contrasts should be posited within the paradigm for a single case, or alternatively more complex syntactic rules of case assignment (Case A in context X, Case B in context Y), is discussed in detail, e.g., by Zaliznjak (1973).

In Russian, the ending /-u/ appears only in very few³⁴ masculine nouns, is always stressed and semantically locative. (This Russian prepositional-2 has nothing to do with the Ukrainian one, called locative-2 in Ukrainian linguistics.) The default ending in Russian is thus /-e/. Preceding this /e/, phonetic accommodation causes a shift from a hard stem-final consonant /C/ to a soft /C'—a phonologically conditioned allomorphy.³⁵ When, in addition, the stem is stressed, the already frequently discussed vowel reduction occurs: the [ə~ɪ] issue.

In the corpus, distinguishing between Russ. /-e/ and Ukr. /-i/, in an unstressed position after a soft stem-final consonant, is very often difficult to impossible. Since the transcription was carried out by ear by a number of transcribers,³⁶ we did not distinguish between them when, in the relevant contexts (soft stem-final consonant, lack of stress), the (possible) Russian vowel reduction made this differentiation problematic. For this CNG constellation, a total of approx. 2,500 tokens are available. Slightly more than three-quarters of these were classified as opaque-common, owing to the Russian [ə~ɪ] issue.

The quantitative analysis of the remaining approx. 550 instances yields relevant findings: The disyllabic ending Ukr. /-Vvi/, described in all of the cited descriptions of Ukrainian inflectional morphology as unmarked, appears in the prepositional case only twice, that is, practically not at all. This corresponds to the finding of del Gaudio (2010, p. 106). Contrary to del Gaudio (2010), however, who ignores the ending /u/ for this CNG constellation, suggesting only a variation between /-i/ and /-e/, this /u/ is indeed widespread in the prepositional: nearly 300 instances occur, of which approx. 60% are to be considered Ukrainian (almost all following a stem ending in /-k-/), approx. 40% Russian. 300 out of 550 endings that can be reliably classified is a clear majority. Additionally, there are approx. 110 further endings with /-u/, all semantic locatives, that are morphologically common. The ending /-u/ is thus clearly present in Surżyk (cf. Flier, 1998, p. 121). It should be underlined that the context which the HSULM identifies as the domain of the ending /-u/, namely the context following the preposition *po*, is not included in the analysis.

The following can be stated for the endings Ukr. /-i/ and Russ. /-e/: Of the approx. 250 (out of 550) remaining cases in which a front vowel occurs as the ending, again approx. 60% can be classified as Ukr. /-i/. These are either stressed occurrences or ones in which the stem-final shows a reflex of the so-called 2nd palatalization (cf. Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, pp. 239–242): cf. *bereh*=*bereg* ‘shore’, here then as Ukr. *'berezi* (cf. Russ. *bere'gu*) with identical stem etymology, or *rik*=*god* ‘year’ as Ukr. *roci* (vs. Russ. *godu*) with different stem etymology. Only endings with stressed /-e/ were classified as Russian, accounting for approx. 40% of the 250 cases. In all other approx. 1,900 instances with an unstressed front vowel as the ending, the ending was considered opaque-common, i.e., neither clearly Ukrainian nor clearly Russian. This is a conditional but not arbitrary solution for handling vowel reduction. It is not implausible, as it aligns with the dominant pattern: Ukrainian stems appear almost exclusively with Ukrainian endings, Russian stems show varying degrees of adaptation to Ukrainian inflection.

³⁴ Zaliznjak (1973, p. 77) gives approximately 150.

³⁵ Excluded here are stems ending in phonemes that are always phonetically hard in Russian (/f, ʒ, tʃ/), whereas their Ukrainian equivalents can (partially) be soft, i.e., realized with a slightly palatal coarticulation (the palate as the place of the secondary constriction).

³⁶ This entails the risk that the transcribers, when unsure about the perceived quality of the unstressed vowel (/i/ vs. /e/), may rely on the spelling in Ukrainian or Russian when assigning the stem to one of the two languages (if they can assign it at all).

For the DAT.SG of masculine nouns, the Ukrainian endings are /-ovi, -evi/ and /-u/, as in the prepositional case. An /-i/, as in the prepositional, does not occur here. A largely free variation is assumed for /-ovi, -evi/ and /-u/ (cf. HSULM, pp. 645–683). Rusanovskij (1986, p. 136) describes the disyllabic endings as preferred for animate nouns.³⁷ In Russian, /-u/ is the only ending in this CGN constellation. In the analyzed corpus, the relations are similar to those in the prepositional in that the disyllabic endings /-Vvi/ occur only peripherally. The approx. 280 instances with /-u/ as the common ending in the dative are opposed by only eight with the disyllabic form, all indeed found with animate nouns.³⁸ In the sparsely attested DAT.SG of neuter nouns, only /-u/ occurs. The disyllabic endings thus clearly tend to disappear in Suržyk: /-u/ prevails (see also del Gaudio, 2010 regarding the dative), with Russian evidently playing an accelerating role in spreading an ending that also exists in Ukrainian.

d) Genitive plural and animate accusative plural of masculine nouns

Although the traditional three genders of Slavic languages are considered neutralized in the plural of East Slavic languages,³⁹ the reflexes of the three genders—clearly distinguishable in the singular—show different preferences for the three relevant endings {-Vv}, {-ej}, and {-Ø} in both Ukrainian and Russian.

The default or at least most frequent ending of the GEN.PL for Ukrainian masculine nouns is /-iv/, and for Russian /-ov/. The Ukr. /-iv/ occasionally also appears with certain neuter and feminine nouns, whereas Russ. /-ov/ does not occur with feminine nouns, but with a couple of neuter ones. In both languages, the ending {-Ø} strongly dominates with neuter nouns. It is also widespread for feminine nouns in both languages, but rare with masculine nouns. The ending /-ej/ is extremely rare with Ukrainian masculine nouns and is, moreover, restricted across all genders to specific (soft) stem-finals or morphological suffixes (cf. Rusanovskij, 1986, pp. 142–150; HSULM, pp. 645–720; GSRJa, pp. 39–55). In Russian, /-ej/ also occurs with nouns of all three genders, again restricted to specific (soft) stem-finals or morphological suffixes.

Neuter and feminine nouns are not useful for this analysis (cf. Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, pp. 218–221). There are just over 500 instances of GEN.PL of neuter nouns, 90% of which show a common ending, almost always {-Ø}. Among the specific endings, both Ukrainian and Russian forms occur. Here, it can only be stated that Ukrainian endings do not appear with Russian stems, nor Russian endings with Ukrainian stems. A similar but even clearer picture is found in the GEN.PL of feminine nouns: of the nearly 1,000 instances, only 30 can be classified as specifically Ukrainian or Russian. Here, too, the commonalities of both languages regarding the ending {-Ø} and, less frequently, /-ej/ are noteworthy.

In the masculine (GEN./ACC.ANIM.PL.MASC—no. 21), which is the focus of this analysis, the competition is primarily between Ukr. /-iv/ and Russ. /-ov/, i.e., between the two standard endings of Ukrainian and Russian in

³⁷ The same work notes that the disyllabic ending also occurs in some (then inanimate) neuter nouns, which the HSULM also describes for a few nouns.

³⁸ In the corpus, the endings /-ovi, -evi/ are somewhat more common with male proper names, which, as has been said above, are generally not included in the analysis.

³⁹ This is due to the fact that the morphological category of gender is conceived in modern linguistics as agreement classes (cf. Zaliznjak, 1967, pp. 62–82). Morphologically agreeing parts of speech such as adjectives, adjectival pronouns, and others show no formal differences between masculine, feminine, and neuter in the plural, in contrast to the singular. What is reflected instead are distinctions regarding the animacy category, which is sometimes described as a subgender; cf. any descriptive grammar of Russian. This means that so-called “overt” reflexes of gender distinctions in the endings, which already have a rather tendential character, play no role in a strict differentiation of genders in the plural.

the masculine gender. These endings of the {-Vv} type make up the vast majority of analyzable cases: just under 1,500 out of a little over 1,700 instances, compared to just over 200 with the more peripheral endings {-Ø} or /-ej/.

The following detailed observations can be made:

(i) Ukrainian stems appear almost exclusively with endings of the {-Vv} type, approximately 97% with the Ukrainian /-iv/. (ii) Russian stems also mostly appear with one of the two {-Vv} variants, but the Ukrainian form /-iv/ is significantly less frequent (approx. 28%) than /-ov/ (72%). (iii) The instances of /-ej/ or {-Ø} (a little over 200) can be classified predominantly as Russian (less commonly as non-classifiable common), but they very rarely occur with Ukrainian stems.⁴⁰ This corresponds to the peripheral role of both endings in the Ukrainian inflectional system. (iv) The share of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems—18% as shown in Tables 2 and 4—corresponds to the average of the instances of the /-iv/ vs. /-ov/ competition (28%) and that of {-Ø} or /-ej/⁴¹ (less than 5%).

The overall tendency here is also clearly that Ukrainian stems, with regard to their combination with endings, show virtually no influence from Russian. Russian stems, however, predominantly retain Russian endings (cf. Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, pp. 222–225).

e) Dative and prepositional singular of feminine nouns

This section (DAT/PREP.SG.FEM—no. 17) deals only with feminine nouns that show the ending /-a/ in the base form, i.e., in the NOM.SG. Feminine nouns that show a zero ending in the NOM.SG (e.g., Ukr. *tin'* / Russ. *ten'*, both 'shadow') are not analyzed here, since Ukrainian and Russian show no differences in inflection.

As already mentioned above, the two cases show a historical ending homonymy. Ukrainian shows the ending /-i/, while Russian has /-e/. When the stem is stressed, the phonetically reduced realization of Russian /-e/ again reveals the [ə~ɪ] phenomenon. With stressed stems, /-e/ and /-i/ are thus often not distinguishable by ear.

Classification was made according to the rules described above for masculine nouns in the PREP.SG: an ending is classified as Ukrainian if a reflex of the so-called second palatalization appears in the stem-final position, or if it is realized as stressed /-i/; a stressed /-e/ is classified as Russian, and all other realizations as common-opaque.

Among the approx. 2,500 relevant instances, just under one-fifth can be classified as specific, i.e., Ukrainian (approx. 340) or Russian (approx. 100). The picture is very similar to that of the PREP.SG of masculine nouns.

The (stressed) Russ. /-e/ is clearly less frequent (just under one-quarter) than the forms that can clearly be classified as Ukr. /i/ (more than three-quarters). Stressed Russ. /-e/ appears only with Russian stems. Contrary to del Gaudio (2010, p. 108), who postulates only /-i/ for the dative and apparently predominantly /-i/ for the

⁴⁰ According to Rusanovskij (1986, p. 144), this only occurs in Ukrainian with two masculine nouns (cf. the genitives *konej* / *hostej* 'horse / guest'), where due to the overlap with the corresponding Russian forms, it would be classified as *common* in this analysis.

⁴¹ Since genitive forms frequently occur in a kind of case government by numerals in numeral-noun combinations (possibly with adjectives), and since Russian is known to show a specific morphosyntactic behavior in such constructions (cf. Palinska & Zeller, forthcoming), a more detailed case study would be desirable here.

prepositional (explicitly declaring /-e/ to be doubtful in the latter case), the /-e/ is indeed present.⁴² However, the majority of forms here are likewise not clearly interpretable.

f) Instrumental singular feminine

The situation here (INSTR.SG.FEM—no. 22) is very similar to that of the same CNG constellation of adjectives (no. 19). In Ukrainian, the disyllabic ending /-oju/ occurs (with a variant /-eju/ in nouns); in Russian, the monosyllabic ending /-oj/,⁴³ which under stem stress and after a soft stem-final consonant shows the [ə~ɪ] phenomenon before [j], i.e., [əj~ɪj]. It should be noted here that in some dialects of Ukrainian, which are also represented in the area covered by the corpus evaluated here, the monosyllabic endings also appear, as in Standard Russian (Bevzenko, 1980, p. 94). The maps in AUM (I, maps 183–186, III/1, maps 38–39), however, suggest that this is a rather limited phenomenon and that the vast majority of local dialects, like the standard language, show the disyllabic endings.

The corpus analysis shows that only one-third of the Russian stems and only half of the common ones exhibit the disyllabic Ukrainian ending. Even for Ukrainian stems, the proportion of Ukrainian endings decreases noticeably, though it remains relatively high at just under four-fifths. For adjectives, as described above, their proportion remains clearly above 90 percent. For the INSTR.SG of adjectives discussed above, the AUM maps for the corpus collection area do not show a monosyllabic alternative to the disyllabic one. Bevzenko (1980, p. 112) mentions sporadic instances, mostly outside the collection area.

g) Genitive singular of masculine inanimate nouns

The relevant endings of the genitive for masculine nouns (GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC—no. 23) in both languages are fundamentally /-a/ and /-u/. For animate nouns, /a/ is obligatory in both Ukrainian and Russian, which is why they are excluded from the analysis. In Russian, the ending /-u/ for inanimate nouns is very restricted in use. On the one hand, it must accompany an expression of quantity (some speak of a partitive meaning),⁴⁴ e.g., Russ. *stakan čaj-u / ona popila čaj-u* ‘a glass of tea / she drank some tea’. This is often referred to as genitive-2 (e.g., Zaliznjak, 1973). For a qualitative meaning, the unmarked genitive-1 with /-a/ must be used, cf. Russ. *vkus kitajskogo čaj-a* ‘the taste of Chinese tea’. On the other hand, Zaliznjak (1973) describes genitive-2 as an optional case.

In contrast, the /-u/ ending in the GEN.SG of Ukrainian masculine nouns is much more widespread than with Russian ones. Here it is not tied to a quantifying meaning but is lexeme-specific or fixed for certain lexeme groups. The ending /-a/, however, is present, too.⁴⁵ It is difficult to clearly delineate these groups. Rusanovskij

⁴² This is also acknowledged by Menzel and Hentschel (2017, pp. 241 f.) in their investigation of feminine nouns with velar stems, where they interpret the use of the Russian ending as a substitution strategy to avoid stem allomorphy after the second palatalization.

⁴³ On the disyllabic ending in Russian, see above, 3.2.1 f.

⁴⁴ In Russian, there are some further, rather phraseological or idiosyncratic usages of /-u/ that were taken into account in the analysis but are sufficiently rare and therefore not discussed in detail here (cf. Rozental', 1997). Where these endings coincide with a Ukrainian usage of /-u/, they have been classified as common. The composition *iz domu*, with an accent on the (etymologically) preposition *iz*, is treated as an adverb: *Vyšel iz domu* ‘He went outside’, literally, ‘out of the house’. There was no specifically Russian instance of the ending /-u/, only common or Ukrainian ones.

⁴⁵ The ending /-a/ for inanimate masculine nouns is more widespread in some Ukrainian dialects than in the standard language (cf. Bevzenko, 1980, pp. 95–96), which certainly supports the spreading of /-a/.

(1986, pp. 134–137) provides ten semantically-based lexeme groups for each ending, often giving counterexamples or variations of the two endings. It should also be noted that the (etymologically) Ukrainian equivalents of the few Russian nouns that may take the /u/ ending under the above-mentioned conditions also exhibit the /-u/ ending in Ukrainian—without the restrictive conditions, which are only identifiable in the syntactic context.

In the corpus, there are approximately 640 endings with /-a/ and around 70 with /-u/ that are to be classified as common. These are not taken into account in the analysis. Since the mentioned cases of common endings are excluded, the ending /-a/ in the analysis of the contrastive cases stands for a Russian ending, /-u/ for a Ukrainian one. If Ukrainian stems show the Ukrainian ending /-u/ in just over two-thirds of the remaining ca. 1,400 occurrences (cf. no. 23 in Table 2 and 4), it must indeed be stated that the Russian ending /-a/ is spreading. However, del Gaudio's (2010, p. 106) claim that /-a/ is the sole ending in Suržyk, with /-u/ having been completely displaced, must be rejected. This is not even the case for Russian stems, which likewise occur with the Ukrainian ending /-u/, though only in about one-eighth of occurrences. For Ukrainian stems, /-u/ clearly dominates; for Russian stems, /-a/ dominates even more clearly.

Menzel and Hentschel (2017, p. 271) consider the retreat of the ending /-u/ in the GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC of nouns with Ukrainian stems in Suržyk to be a relatively clear case of regularization through the reduction of homonymous endings, as it is accompanied by the establishment of /-u/ (and the retreat of /-ovi/, -evi/) in the DAT.SG.MASC (cf. 3.2.2c above). Furthermore, the degree of uniformity between the masculine and the neuter paradigms is increased, since for the latter GEN.SG is always /-a/ and DAT.SG always /-u/, as in Russian.

3.2.3 Verbs

The analysis of the verbs⁴⁶ shows that—with one exception—they all fall into the low-variability clusters (see Table 5), i.e., they are strongly oriented toward Ukrainian inflectional morphology. Apart from the outlier of the infinitive (no. 25), only Russian stems exhibit traces of Russian inflectional morphology—and even these are rather weak. In other words, verbs exhibit a strong adaptation to Ukrainian inflectional patterns.

Table 5 *Proportion of Ukrainian endings on different stem types—verbs*

no.	test item	share of Ukr. endings in word forms with stems			of N stems			share of com. endings	cls	
		Ukr.	Russ.	com.	Ukr.	Russ.	com.		5-grd.	2-grd.
6	VERB-PRES.SG.3PERS_1INFL	99.8	87.1	97.5	3626	873	1686	---	1	A
9	VERB-PAST.SG.MASC	99.9	80.9	95.6	2812	1035	1171	---	1	A
10	VERB-PRES.PL.3PERS_1INFL	98.4	80.2	90.7	1897	728	904	---	1	A

⁴⁶ Reflexive verb forms, in which—in the case of East Slavic languages—the (formal) reflexivity is synthetically marked in the verb form by means of postfixes (i.e., after the inflectional ending), are excluded from the analysis. These postfixes are reflexes of incorporated enclitic reflexive pronouns. The reason for this exclusion is that, especially in third-person present-tense forms, assimilation phenomena often render the boundary between ending and postfix opaque. In such cases, the ending cannot be determined. Similarly, “irregular,” “isolated,” or “athematic” verbs are not included. While these are few in number within the system, they are highly frequent in actual usage. In both Ukrainian and Russian, they display certain idiosyncrasies (cf. Rusanovskij, 1986, pp. 163–167; RuGra-I: Švedova, 1982, pp. 662–663), which makes them fundamentally unsuitable for this analysis aimed at identifying general inflectional tendencies in Suržyk.

11	VERB-PAST.PL	98.8	78.6	94.0	3834	1320	1677	---	1	A
12	VERB-PRES.PL.3PERS_2INFL	91.5	76.6	86.9	339	128	639	---	1	A
16	VERB-PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL	97.9	43.3	89.8	282	217	914	---	3	A
25	VERB-INF_1/2INFL	27.6	7.0	22.3	7197	2589	3980	---	5	B

Verbs in general show only minor differences in their endings between Ukrainian and Russian. The four constellations of grammatical person, number, and inflectional class in the present tense, the two constellations involving masculine singular and plural forms, as well as the infinitive, will be discussed below.

For present-tense forms, the criterion of inflectional class is relevant. The allocation of inflected elements to inflectional classes is always dependent on underlying theoretical models. In the case of verbs in Ukrainian and Russian, there are enormous differences in postulating such classes in grammatical descriptions. Here, a crucial question is where to assume the boundary between stems and endings. In my analyses, at issue are the 3rd person forms in singular and plural, each differentiated according to the traditional, rather rough division of Ukrainian—and also Russian—verbs into a 1st or *e*-conjugation and a 2nd or *i*-conjugation. The key criterion for differentiation is whether the vowel preceding the ending in the 3rd person singular is an /e/ (occasionally also /o/⁴⁷ in Russian) in the 1st class or either a /i/ or a /i/ in the 2nd class. For Ukrainian, this binary division of verbal inflectional classes corresponds to the approach of Rusanovskij (1986, pp. 161–162), for Russian basically to that of *Russkaja grammatika* (thereafter RuGra-I: Švedova, 1982, p. 647).⁴⁸ For illustrative purposes compare the infinitive forms and the 3rd person singular forms of Ukr. vs. Russ.: 1INFL—*pysaty* vs. *pisat'*: *pyše* vs. *pišet*, ‘to write’; *znaty* vs. *znat'*: *znaje* vs. *znaet*, ‘to know’; *žyty* vs. *žit'*: *žyve* vs. *živět*, ‘to live’; 2INFL *sydyty* vs. *sidet'*: *sydyt'* vs. *sidit*; *l'ubyt'* vs. *l'ubyt'*: *l'ubyt'* vs. *l'ubit*.

The inflectional classes are not relevant for a fifth constellation in the present tense, which does exhibit a formal difference between Ukrainian and Russian: The 1st person plural, which, for specific reasons, is not included in the general quantitative analysis but will at least be mentioned below in passing.

For the past tense or the infinitive, inflectional classes are irrelevant. As has been mentioned above, there is no differentiation of grammatical persons in the past tense. The distinctions in number and, in the singular, gender are relevant.

Since, apart from the infinitive, it is Russian stems (and not Ukrainian) that show somewhat more clear traces of Russian inflection, only these will be discussed below. Ukrainian stems combine with Ukrainian endings in (usually well over) 90% of the instances.

a) Present tense

⁴⁷ These are cases such as the form *živět* with /o/ from Russ. *žit'* (see below), where the letter *ě* still reflects the phonological change from /e/ to /o/ that is specific to Russian and relevant in this context.

⁴⁸ For a detailed description, this binary classification is, of course, under-specified. Typically, subordinate classes are identified. For Ukrainian, the HSULM (pp. 722–741) proposes 22 classes; for Russian, RuGra-I (pp. 647–662) proposes 10 classes, and GSRJa (pp. 91–133) proposes 16 “types”. For the purposes of this analysis, the simple Ukrainian binary division is not only sufficient but also expedient for general comparison. As a side note: Danylenko and Vakulenko (1995, p. 40) take an even more radical generalizing stance for Ukrainian, advocating for the assumption of just one inflectional class of verbs.

The term *present tense* is used here in a formal sense. Readers without a background in Slavic linguistics should be aware that present-tense forms of aspectually perfective verbs in Russian and Ukrainian (as well as other Slavic languages, except for the South Slavic ones) usually have a future-oriented meaning, which, however, plays no role in inflectional morphology.

In the 3rd person singular of the 1st inflectional class (PRES.SG.3PERS_1INFL), Ukr. {-Ø} and Russ. /-t/ (each preceded by a vowel) contrast with each other, while in the 2nd inflectional class (PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL), Ukr. /-t'/ and again Russ. /-t/ contrast — that is, only a soft-hard distinction. For the 3rd person plural, the latter contrast, Ukr. /-t'/ vs. Russ. /-t/, is also relevant and applies to both inflectional classes. In other words, Russian shows /-t/ throughout, while Ukrainian features either {-Ø} (PRES.SG.3PERS_1INFL — no. 6) or /-t'/ (PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL — no. 16, PRES.PL.3PERS_1INFL — no. 10, PRES.PL.3PERS_2INFL — no. 12). In the plural of both languages, a /u/ occurs before the final consonant (Ukr. /-t'/, Russ. /-t/) in the 1st class and an /a/ in the 2nd.

While in Table 5 all four relevant TPN constellations with Ukrainian stems show very low to extremely low occurrences of Russian endings, one of the four constellations clearly stands out in the case of Russian stems: PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL, no. 16; in the other three, the proportion of Ukrainian endings ranges between 77% and 87%.⁴⁹ In the case of no. 16, however, it drops well below 50%. In other words, Russian verb stems of the 1st conjugation (1INFL) easily adopt the Ukrainian endings: in the singular -Ø instead of Russian /-t/, in the plural /-t'/ instead of /-t/. Verb stems of the 2nd conjugation (2INFL), however, adopt /-t'/ instead of /-t/ only in the plural, but in the singular show the latter substitution only reluctantly. A slight majority of the attested verb forms retain Russian /-t/. This calls for further explanation.

At this point, the possible role of Ukrainian dialects needs to be considered. The distribution described in the penultimate paragraph holds for the two standard languages. It might seem problematic, however, if, as suggested above, all endings in a hard /-t/ in the PRES.SG.3PERS are classified as Russian. In fact, Bevzenko (1980, pp. 133–134) and the maps in AUM (I, map 256, II, map 240) clearly show that, in the area where the OCUS data were collected, local Ukrainian dialects occur that exhibit the ending /-t/ instead of standard /-t'/, for example in the constellation PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL. This is precisely the constellation for which Table 5 shows the lowest proportion of Ukrainian /-t'/, at less than 50%. The question, then, is whether this pattern can be explained by the influence of Ukrainian dialects rather than Russian.

To assess this possibility, the oblasts Xmel'nyč'kyj⁵⁰, Vinnyčja, Čerkasy, and Žytomyr are particularly relevant. In these regions, the maps cited in AUM show a concentration of locations in which local dialects exhibit PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL in /-t/ instead of /-t'/, although the latter is also attested. If the frequent occurrence of /-t/ in OCUS were to a large extent due to the influence of this dialectal /-t/, one would expect a higher frequency of /-t/ and, correspondingly, a lower frequency of /-t'/ on Russian stems in these oblasts compared to the figures for

⁴⁹ This highest frequency is found in PRES.SG.3PERS_1INFL, that is, in the *e*-conjugation, where the value for Ukrainian stems is 99.8%. This *e*-conjugation also includes future forms of *buty*=*byt* 'to be', which were excluded from the general quantitative analysis. Formally, these function like present-tense forms. Here, Ukr. *bude* accounts for 98% of the approximately 870 instances, Russ. *budet* for only 2%. For the former, the stem-final consonant is [-d-], for the latter [-dʲ-].

⁵⁰ Names of Ukrainian oblasts take adjectival forms. In this paper, oblasts are generally referred to by the names of their capitals, with the exception of *Dnipropetrovs'ka* and *Kirovohrads'ka*. The capitals of these two oblasts were renamed from *Dnipropetrovs'k* and *Kirovohrad* to *Dnipro* and *Kropyvnyč'kyj*, respectively.

other regions. However, in the four oblasts mentioned, the share of /-t'/ amounts to 60%, which is clearly higher than the average of 43% given in Table 5.

A particularly revealing comparison is that between these four relatively western oblasts and the neighbouring oblasts of Kyïv, Černihiv, Poltava, and Kirovohrads'ka to the east. In the local dialects of the latter four, the soft /-t'/ is almost exclusively dominant. In the corpus analysed, however, its frequency drops (from 60%) to 48%. This indicates that the distribution of /-t/ and /-t'/ in PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL in local dialects does not play a significant role in the results presented in Table 5.

According to Hentschel and Taranenko (2021), the main difference between the two groups of four oblasts each lies in the fact that the position of Russian in everyday life is weaker in the (more) western group than in the (more) eastern one. The higher frequency of /-t/ on Russian stems in the latter oblasts can only be explained by a stronger influence of Russian, since at the level of local dialects /-t'/ is almost exclusively found. This interpretation is further supported by the frequency values for the two competing endings in the oblasts of Sumy, Xarkiv, Dnipropetrovs'ka, Xerson, Mykolaïv, and Odesa in the east and south, where, according to Hentschel and Taranenko (2021), the communicative importance of Ukrainian in everyday life—compared to Suržyk and Russian—is even lower. Here, the share of /-t'/ on Russian stems falls to below 40%.

Since the specific low frequency of Ukrainian /-t'/ on Russian stems in PRES.SG.3PERS_2INFL cannot readily be explained on the basis of the dialectal background of Suržyk speakers, the following structural explanation may be proposed: The adoption of the Ukrainian endings encounters fewer obstacles when the phonological contrast remains comparatively clear (as with -Ø vs. /-t/ in 1INFL). If the contrast is weakened, as it would be if both 3PERS.SG and 3PERS.PL show /-Vt'/, adoption is at least partially impeded. The fact that, in this case, plural forms with a Russian stem more readily adopt the Ukrainian ending than the corresponding singular forms follows the general pattern that more frequent forms (here the singular ones) are generally more conservative than corresponding less frequent ones (here the plural forms).⁵¹

Among the present-tense verb forms, a brief note should be made regarding the 1st person plural. It was not included in the analysis and thus does not appear in the tables. According to the HSULM, Ukrainian consistently uses /-mo/, while Russian uses /-m/. Rusanovskij (1986, pp. 161–162) and Danylenko and Vakulenko (1995, pp. 39) list such an /-m/ as a variant alongside /-mo/. It is regarded as a widely used variant, at least in colloquial registers (Žovtobriux & Kulyk, 1965, p. 340; see also Šyrovok, 2001–). Dialectally, both endings are widespread and coexist without clear separation by isoglosses (AUM, I, map 260, II, map 241). This is why this constellation was not included in the general quantitative analysis; for regional variation, see Menzel (2014, pp. 261–262). Still, of the approximately 2,300 instances in the corpus, only around 300 are /-mo/ and just under 2,000 are /-m/. The undoubtedly Ukrainian /-mo/ has a share of 28% for Ukrainian stems, 8% for Russian stems, and 12% for common stems. This reflects the tendency observed repeatedly in both Suržyk and Belarusian Trasjanka: when contrasting a specific (here: Ukrainian) ending with a common (here: Ukrainian-Russian) one, the latter, the

⁵¹ The clearest example in the history of change in Slavic inflection is the fact that the inflectional patterns of noun plural paradigms in all Slavic languages have been much more simplified or unified than those of the corresponding singular paradigms (cf. Shapiro, 1985). Haspelmath (2008, 2021) provides a theoretical account. Of course, there are exceptions, under specific conditions (cf. Hentschel, 1990; Hentschel & Menzel, 2002).

common ending is more widely represented (see Menzel, 2014; Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, pp. 237–238, 308–319).

Finally, a brief mention should be made of the uninflected (apparently, see below) present-tense forms of Ukr. *buty* and Russ. *byt'* 'to be', which in both languages are subject to specific syntactic or semantic-syntactic restrictions: the Ukrainian variant *je* accounts for only one-third of the ca. 2,200 instances, while the Russian *jest'* accounts for two-thirds. However, due to the strong usage restrictions (in comparison with other forms), these forms should rather be considered lexical contrasts that lie outside inflectional morphology and are thus not synchronically to be considered as inflectional forms of *buty=byt'*—unlike other forms (for a regional analysis see Menzel, 2014, pp. 262–264).⁵²

b) On the past tense

In the past tense masculine singular (PAST.SG.MASC—no. 9) the endings Ukr. /-v/ or, phonetically, [ʊ] / [w] and Russ. /-l/ or [l']⁵³ stand in contrast to each other, and in the plural (PAST.PL), as a second test case, Ukr. /-ly/ or [li] and Russ. /-l'i/ or [l'i] / [li]. The quantitative values are almost identical for both test cases. While Ukrainian stems almost exclusively take Ukrainian endings, Russian stems take the latter (Ukrainian endings) in about 80% of the cases—a high value. Russian stems are thus largely adapted to Ukrainian inflection, whereas Ukrainian stems prove highly resistant to Russian influence. In the hyperlexeme *buty=byt'* 'to be', the approximately 1,250 instances with the Ukrainian stem onset /bu-/ show a Russian ending in only four cases, while the roughly 80 instances with the Russian onset /bi-/ display a quantitatively balanced distribution between Ukrainian and Russian endings.

c) The infinitive

The striking case of the infinitive⁵⁴ still remains to be discussed. Striking in the sense that even with Ukrainian and common stems the (clearly) Ukrainian ending /-(V)ti/ occurs significantly less often than /-t'/ which standard language norms consider to be obviously Russian /t'/. The ratio is 1 to 3, and for Russian stems about 1 to 12. The dominance of /-t'/ in Suržyk has been noted in the literature several times: Flier (1998) speaks of a Russicism in Suržyk, with /-t'/ referring to the infinitive marker of the Russian standard language. Dolešal' et al. (2016) and Moser (2016), on the other hand, describe it as the proliferation of a Ukrainian dialectal feature. The latter perspective emphasizes the wide distribution of the Russian-like ending /-t'/ in Ukrainian dialects.

Hentschel and Palinska (2022) devote a comprehensive analysis to precisely this phenomenon, focusing in particular on areal aspects. First, they divide the Ukrainian dialect area into five subregions based on the maps of the infinitive in the AUM: (i) almost exclusively /-ti/, (ii) more /-ti/ than /-t'/, (iii) balance between /-ti/ and /-t'/, (iv) less /-ti/ than /-t'/, (v) almost exclusively /-t'/. With regard to the occurrence of /-ti/ and /-t'/ in Suržyk, the

⁵² Hentschel, Zeller, & Palinska (forthcoming) discuss these forms when used after Ukr. / Russ. *to* as discourse markers. Here Russ. *to jest'* dominates heavily over standard Ukr. *tobto* (both 'namely / i.e.'). It is significant that there is no hybrid construction following the Russian pattern *to je* in this function. The sequence *to je* occurs only twice in OCUS: e.g., *Da, to je tak*. 'Yes, this is so.'

⁵³ Ukr. /-v/, [ʊ] is historically known to be partly the result of labialization of /l/, [l'], which merged with Common Slavic /v/, which may have also been bilabial in prehistory. The alternation between Ukr. /-v/, [ʊ] in the final position of the masculine past tense and Ukr. /l/ [l'] intervocalically in other forms of this past-tense marker has been morphonologized (cf. Zeller, forthcoming).

⁵⁴ It may be noted in passing that the infinitive markers are described in traditional Slavic linguistic terminology as (derivational) suffixes, which is however irrelevant here.

corpus survey area is split into two zones: region (i) vs. regions (ii)–(v). In Suržyk, /-ti/ dominates exclusively and strongly in region (i), while /-t'/ dominates in regions (ii) to (v), quite consistently at a ratio of about 3 to 1—even in region (ii), where /-ti/ is more prominent dialectally, and in region (iii), where both endings are dialectally balanced.

The authors conclude that a sharp distinction between the influence of Russian and of local Ukrainian dialects is impossible. Ultimately, this is also due to the fact that regions (iv) and (v), where /-t'/ is very strong or even exclusive in Ukrainian dialects, also belong to those in which, according to Hentschel and Taranenko (2015, 2021), Russian is widely used in everyday life. Hentschel and Palinska (2022) argue that, broadly speaking, the influence of the standard languages plays a greater role—not only Russian but also Ukrainian. First, without postulating an influence from the latter, the clear, albeit non-dominant, presence of /-ti/ in the regions where dialectally /-t'/ is very widespread *and* Russian is prevalent in daily use would be inexplicable. Whether the /-t'/ that dominates Suržyk in these areas arises from the corresponding Ukrainian dialects with /-t'/ or from Russian could only be determined if the dialect competence of Suržyk speakers were known. Assuming an influence from geographically distant Ukrainian dialects in which /-ti/ is dominant would be implausible. Similarly, and secondly, it would be implausible to explain the high frequency of /-t'/ in Suržyk in region (ii) by reference to a dominance of /-t'/ in distant Ukrainian dialects, since dialectally /-ti/ clearly dominates in region (ii). Here, only Russian influence is plausible. Since /-ti/ only clearly dominates in Suržyk in areas where this ending is nearly exclusive dialectally *and* Ukrainian dominates in everyday use, the dominance of /-t'/ in the much larger part of the surveyed territory points more clearly to the Russian standard language than to eastern Ukrainian dialects with /-t'/ as infinitive ending. When /-t'/ is therefore classified as Russian in my analysis, this reflects a high degree of probability: it is much more likely Russian than dialectal Ukrainian.

However, Hentschel and Palinska (2022) do not differentiate between the three stem types. As Table 5 shows, the share of the clearly Ukrainian ending /-ti/ is not higher than about one-quarter even for Ukrainian stems; for common stems, it is just over one-fifth. Only for Russian stems does the figure drop below 10%. Nevertheless, the (rather) Russ. /-t'/ is by no means exclusive, as del Gaudio (2010, pp. 97–98) suggests, especially since Ukrainian and common stems make up about 80% of all recorded instances.

3.2.4 Excursus on the highly frequent hyperlexemes excluded so far

High or extremely high-frequency hyperlexemes were not included in the general quantitative analysis and discussion in the sections above. These are the hyperlexemes *ukraïns'kyj*=*ukrainskij* 'Ukrainian' ($N = 5,756$) and *rosijs'kyj*=*ruskij* 'Russian' ($N = 3,293$), which frequently occur in combination with *mova*=*jazyk* 'language' ($N = 5,958$). Informally, there was a prevailing impression that Ukr. *mova* was more often used to refer to Ukrainian, while *jazyk* was used more often for Russian. The designation for the mixed code *suržyk*=*suržik* ($N = 2,129$) has also not been considered so far.

The fact that these hyperlexemes—particularly the two adjectival ones, which are also used without the corresponding noun as elliptical designations for the two languages—occur with such high frequency is due to the fact that the semi-structured interviews in which they were recorded revolved around linguistic issues in the broadest sense, such as language use in the speakers' biographical background, language attitudes, the presence of both languages in the country and region, in schools, universities, public offices, and other institutions, etc. Of

course, other, non-linguistic issues (history, mentality, state, and the like) were also addressed, which can be subsumed under the categories “Ukrainian” and “Russian.”

First, it was established for the stems that Ukr. *ukraïns’kyj* is used five times more frequently than Russ. *ukrainskij* to denote ‘Ukrainian’. To denote ‘Russian’, Ukr. *rosijs’kyj* and Russ. *rususkij* occur with about the same frequency. Strong collocational patterns are indicated by the following numbers: the meaning ‘Ukrainian language’ is realized in 95% of approximately 630 instances as *ukraïns’ka mova*, and the meaning ‘Russian language’ in nearly 97% of 285 instances as *rususkij jazyk*. These two collocations, so to speak, attain the status of proper names to denote the two languages. Ukr. *mov*, in general (not just in the collocations), takes Ukrainian endings in 95% of cases, while Russ. *jazyk* (as a stem) does so in only 40% of cases. This once again demonstrates, on the one hand, the general resistance of Ukrainian (noun) stems to Russian influence, and on the other hand, the partial resistance of Russian stems to adaptation to Ukrainian inflection, as frequently observed above. The same applies to the Ukrainian stems of the two adjectival hyperlexemes: the Ukrainian variants occur with Ukrainian endings in more than 9 out of 10 cases, while the Russian ones do so only in about 40%. Thus, in all three cases the ratio corresponds to the quantitative relations of Cluster 3 in the general analysis.

The findings on the highly frequent hyperlexemes are therefore, by and large, compatible with the general results presented in the rest of Section 3. However, the large number of instances could have significantly influenced the results in certain test cases. Nevertheless, they are included in the comprehensive analysis of the parameters of variation, which in addition to inflectional morphology also considers lexis and phonology, since in multivariate statistical methods the influence of individual hyperlexemes can be controlled for (cf. Hentschel, forthcoming).

4 Some generalizations or explanations—a tentative attempt

Descriptively, two key general observations are relevant. As to *Ukrainian stems*, in 20 of the 25 test cases there is little to no influence from Russian, as Figure 1 illustrates. In the corresponding constellations, more than 90% of the tokens occur with a Ukrainian ending.⁵⁵ In three other constellations, Ukrainian endings still show a clear quantitative dominance (though below the 90% threshold). In one instance, Ukrainian and Russian endings occur in approximately equal proportions, while in the remaining one, Russian endings even outnumber Ukrainian ones.

Russian stems, however, yield an entirely different picture. In 14 of the 25 test cases, Russian stems are combined predominantly with Ukrainian rather than Russian endings: in five cases in more than 90% of the tokens, in another five in more than 80%, and in four in more than 65%. In only nine cases do Russian endings predominate with Russian stems: in five constellations their share exceeds 65%, in three it exceeds 80%, and in one it exceeds 90%. In the remaining two constellations, Russian and Ukrainian endings occur in approximately equal proportions.

⁵⁵ There are two minor deviations here: in the case of PRES.PL.3PERS_2INFL (no. 12 in Table 2), the proportion is only slightly above 90%, while for GEN.SG.FEM (no. 20) it is even slightly below 90%. This does not contradict the general tendency described here.

stem	Ukrainian (blue) vs. Russian endings (brown)																								
Ukr.																									
Russ.																									
constellations*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	20	1	2	3	4	5

U	R	min. 90%	U	R	80-89%	U	R	65-79%	U~R	about 50%
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Figure 1 Relation of endings and stems in the 25 test cases

* Please note that the numbers in row N do not indicate the (identification) numbers of the test cases, but merely serve as a transparent counter.

These quantitative proportions point to the following interpretation: The inflectional morphology of Suržyk primarily involves adapting Russian stems to Ukrainian inflectional patterns. This indicates that at least the vast majority of the respondents, who contributed to the materials in the corpus examined here, exhibit a Ukrainian-based variant of Suržyk. Furthermore, this would mean that the patterns of inflectional morphology in Suržyk are first and foremost based on processes of inflectional adaptation of Russian stems to Ukrainian. The fact that lexical transfers, i.e., transfers of stems, are a mass phenomenon in Ukrainian Suržyk is demonstrated in detail by Hentschel (2024).

A further point indicating a clear dominance of a Ukrainian-based variant in the corpus is that common stems exhibit frequencies of combinations with Ukrainian and Russian endings that are rather similar to those of Ukrainian stems. For speakers of a Russian-based Suržyk, it would be plausible that they perceive common stems as Russian ones and, by and large, combine them rather with Russian endings.

Of course, it cannot be ruled out that there is a smaller number of respondents with a Russian-based Suržyk who might be responsible for the phenomenon that, to a smaller extent, even Ukrainian stems combine with Russian endings. All this will be analyzed in this special issue by Hentschel (forthcoming), who incorporates sociobiographical characteristics of the respondents into the discussion.

What remains to be done here is to discuss whether linguistic-structural reasons can be identified—even hypothetical ones—for those constellations that are characterized by noticeable variation between Ukrainian and Russian endings, disregarding social or areal factors, which will be taken into account by Hentschel (forthcoming).

As illustrated in Figure 1, a considerable amount of variation is limited to Russian stems in ten constellations. Only five constellations exhibit such variation for both Ukrainian and Russian stems.

4.1 Ukrainian–Russian competitions and the length of endings

Some general aspects or tendencies can be highlighted, in addition to explanations of preferences in specific constellations proposed above in Chapter 3.

4.1.1 Ukrainian endings shorter than Russian ones

In adjective inflection, shorter Ukrainian endings of the type /-V/ (in historically contracted long forms) compete with longer Russian endings of the type /-VjV/ (in historically genuine long forms) in four CNG constellations within noun phrases: all adjectival, i.e., no. 1—ACC.SG.FEM, no. 3—NOM.SG.FEM, no. 5—NOM/ACC.INANIM.PL, no. 8—NOM/ACC.SG.NEUTR. These four CNG constellations belong to the stable group; the share of Ukrainian

endings is almost 100% for Ukrainian stems in all four, and for Russian stems slightly below or above 90% in three cases.

4.1.2 Russian endings shorter than Ukrainian ones

In four constellations, the Russian endings are shorter; two are adjectival, one is nominal, and one belongs to the forms of the verb. The longer Ukrainian endings have the structure /-VjV/, while the shorter Russian ones have the structure /-Vj/. In the two adjectival constellations (adjectival—no. 20—GEN.SG.FEM, no. 19—INSTR.SG.FEM), the Ukrainian stems show a share of about 90% Ukrainian endings, while the Russian stems only reach slightly under 30%. In other words, Russian endings are clearly dominant for Russian stems with a share of over 70%. The third constellation, from noun inflection, is no. 22—NOUN.INSTR.SG.FEM. Apart from the difference in part of speech, this is not only the same CNG constellation as no. 19 from the adjectives, but also involves essentially the same endings, namely Ukr. /-oju/ vs. Russ. /-oj/. The patterns in no. 22 closely resemble those in no. 19. In no. 20 as well, the shorter Russian endings are clearly dominant. Among the verbal constellations, a particularly relevant case is pres.pl.1pers, where Ukr. /-mo/ contrasts with Russ. /-m/, the latter also occurring in Ukrainian. This constellation was not included in the general quantitative analysis. However, as noted above, among more than 2,000 tokens, the /-mo/ ending, which is considered frequent and normative in Ukrainian, accounted for only about 15%.

There are two other phenomena that could at least partially be affected by this tendency, namely that Russian endings are particularly stable with Russian stems, if they are shorter than the Ukrainian ones.

This includes one of the two constellations which, overall, even for Ukrainian stems, show the highest degree of inflectional approximation to Russian. This is no. 24—ADJ-PREP.SG.MASC/NEUTR—where the relevant contrast attested in the corpus is Ukr. /-omu/ vs. Russ. /-om/. The Ukrainian ending is disyllabic, the Russian one monosyllabic. Among Russian stems, Ukr. /-omu/ occurs in only 10% of tokens, while Russ. /-om/ occurs in 90%. Even among Ukrainian stems, the Ukrainian ending reaches only 55%. The shortness of the Russian ending proves advantageous here. In the dative, however, /-omu/ remains in Suržyk, as here both Ukrainian and Russian exhibit a disyllabic ending.

Lastly, there is a phenomenon that was not analyzed quantitatively, but only mentioned in passing above in Section 3.2.2c. It concerns the DAT.SG.MASC of nouns. In the corpus, the monosyllabic ending /-u/ occurs almost exclusively; this is the standard form in Russian and—alongside the disyllabic /-Vvi/—one of the endings in Ukrainian. As described above, Ukrainian linguistics regards this coexistence as largely free variation, with a slight preference for the disyllabic ending for animate nouns, and for the monosyllabic ending for inanimate nouns. Significantly, the shorter ending is almost exclusive here. Obviously, a process of allomorphy reduction internal to Ukrainian interacts with Russian influence.

4.1.3 Interim conclusion

When Ukrainian endings are shorter than Russian ones, Russian stems are easily and thoroughly adapted to Ukrainian inflectional patterns. Ukrainian stems show no influence of Russian inflection. When Russian endings are shorter, adaptation to Ukrainian inflection is limited—the Russian endings predominate. Ukrainian stems also show a somewhat limited resistance to the influence of Russian inflection (cf. also Menzel, 2014, p. 271).

With regard to the historical morphology of Russian, Shapiro (1985) appears to have been the first to point to a very similar tendency or development, namely that constellations in which singular endings are longer than plural ones within the same CG constellation and inflection class have been largely eliminated—in such a way that the forms in the same CG constellation in both numbers became either equal in length or the singular forms became shorter than the plural ones.⁵⁶ Either way, these cases show a trend toward “shortness” in singular endings. Natural Morphology would interpret this as an instance of the preference principle of structural iconicity (Mayerthaler, 1981, pp. 23–25), although Wurzel (1984, pp. 22–23, 59–60) argues that this is the weakest naturalness principle and, in cases of conflict, is subordinate to other structural preference principles. Haspelmath (2008, 2021) argues in such cases against a role for iconicity based on a universal concept of markedness. And singular noun forms are, overall, more frequent than plural ones.

4.2 Allomorphy

Another principle of Natural Morphology is the preference for the formal reflection of identity or difference of “content”, i.e., of inflectional morphological meaning. Ultimately, this is a reformulation of the potentially or supposedly ideal “one function—one form”, already discussed earlier. For morphology, this ideal has already been questioned in relativizing terms by Werner (1987), since in the final consequence it would mean that all languages with morphology would have to develop toward the ideal of agglutinative constructions. This contradicts cross-linguistic empirical evidence.⁵⁷ In any case, from this perspective, allomorphy presents itself as a fundamental “disadvantage”.

Wurzel (1984) already countered this with a preference principle according to which inflectional morphological classes are linked to non-morphological (phonological, semantic) classes. The division into inflectional classes is ultimately based on ending paradigms. Roughly speaking, this means that allomorphy of endings is at least not a major evil if the distribution of formally different endings aligns with extra-morphological phenomena, e.g., the phonological quality of stem-finals or lexical-semantic features such as animacy, or syntactic-semantic ones such as quantification or partitivity.

The following three constellations deserve a closer look under the aspect of allomorphy, all concern nouns: no. 18—prep.sg.masc, no. 21—gen./acc.anim.pl.masc, no. 23—gen.inanim.sg.masc.

The first striking fact is that in all three cases, the proportion of Ukrainian endings on Russian stems is very low: below one-third in no. 18, and below one-fifth in no. 21 and no. 23, with the latter only showing one-eighth.

The second striking point is that in the last case, i.e., no. 23, the proportion of Ukrainian endings also drops significantly among Ukrainian stems, to almost two-thirds, whereas in the other two cases, no. 18 and no. 21, as in most other test cases, it remains stably above 90%.

Of course, a few other constellations exhibit similar quantitative patterns. The reasons for these patterns vary and have been discussed above for the respective cases.

⁵⁶ For the establishment of iconic inflectional structures in the diachronic development of the Slavic languages, see Menzel (2000, pp. 178–189).

⁵⁷ That this ideal of preferences can be disrupted in other subsystems of language, such as phonetics / phonology or syntax, is of course also acknowledged by Natural Morphology (Wurzel, 1994, pp. 67–71).

4.2.1 NOUN-PREP.SG.MASC—no. 18

As mentioned above, Ukrainian linguistics has often pointed out the difficulty in formulating general, comprehensive, transparent distribution rules, even when—based on the argument above—contexts subsequent to the preposition *po* are excluded. Ukrainian therefore exhibits a very extensive allomorphy here, which is either facultative in large parts or, where this is not the case, the distribution of the endings is not motivated by extra-morphological factors. It is understandable that Russian stems are therefore only adapted to Ukrainian inflection morphology to a relatively low degree. Ukrainian stems, by contrast, can be stably and strongly combined with Ukrainian endings—this can largely be explained by established co-occurrence phenomena between prepositions and Ukrainian lexemes (see the tables in the appendix of the HSULM), in this case stems that are not transferable to Russian stems. This could lead to the establishment of another ending /-e/ in this CNG constellation.

4.2.2 NOUN-GEN./ACC.ANIM.PL.MASC—no. 21

While Ukr. /-iv/ and Russ. /-ov/ are clearly distinguishable, /-ej/ is generally common and can only be described as specifically Ukrainian or Russian in certain contexts with certain stems or stem types. Since /-ej/⁵⁸ occurs in no more than a handful of masculine nouns in Ukrainian, this CNG constellation in Ukrainian can be described as (largely) allomorphy-free in terms of endings. In Russian, however, variation between /-ov/ and /-ej/ is extensive in both type and token frequency. However, this allomorphy in the system is largely transparently motivated by different types of stem-final sounds, with a very low level of free variation. It is therefore, first, more than plausible that Ukrainian stems stably take Ukrainian endings and do not adopt the positional ending morphology of Russian. Second, it is equally plausible that Russian stems remain relatively stably combined with their inherited Russian endings.

4.2.3 NOUN-GEN.INANIM.SG.MASC—no. 23

On the Ukrainian side, we find a very extensive, complex, and non-transparent allomorphy of endings, with a significant proportion of free variation between /-a/ and /-u/, whereas in Russian /-a/ has become almost the “sole ruler,” an ending that has long prevailed for animate masculine (and neuter in general) nouns in both languages. In Russian there is certainly still a “residual presence” of /-u/, which, according to Zaliznjak (1973), is optional for a two- to three-digit number of masculine nouns and is linked mainly to partitive meaning or a “meaning of small quantity.”

It is striking, yet understandable given the background just outlined, that Russian stems retain the almost “omnipresent” Russian /-a/. Even more striking is that here the share of Ukrainian endings on Ukrainian stems amounts to only slightly more than two-thirds, i.e., /-a/ appears frequently where the Ukrainian standard would rather expect /-u/. Regarding the latter, it is not entirely clear whether this should be interpreted as an adoption of the Russian ending (these instances were classified as such in the analysis) or whether in Surżyk there is an intra-Ukrainian spread of /-a/ in this CNG constellation, i.e., a reduction of a relatively opaque ending allomorphy. In

⁵⁸ The ending {-Ø}, which is uncommon for masculine nouns in both languages and appears only very rarely in the corpus, is not considered here. On the zero marker as a variant of the ending for inanimate objects, see Menzel and Hentschel (2015, pp. 146–149).

any case, the result can be described as a regularization of ending use (Menzel & Hentschel, 2017, p. 271). Since no reliable studies exist in historical or dialectal corpora, this question ultimately cannot be answered here. However, the influence of Russian inflectional patterns likely plays at least a catalytic role—this was also the case for the verb infinitive, where, thanks to relatively clear dialectal circumstances, it could be demonstrated (see above and Hentschel & Palinska, 2022).

4.2.4 Interim conclusion

The inflectional endings of the base language, which is by and large Ukrainian, remain unaffected if they exhibit (almost) no ending allomorphy in a given CNG constellation (no. 21) or an extensive but at least extra-morphologically transparently motivated allomorphy (no. 18). However, if Ukrainian shows extensive, barely transparent allomorphy and Russian (virtually) none, an ending from the latter may replace the expected ending in the base language, especially if one of the variant suffixes of the base language is homonymous with the corresponding ending of the donor language (no. 23).

5 Summarizing and concluding remarks

The empirical study presented here primarily demonstrates that an analysis of inflectional patterns in Suržyk must differentiate first and foremost between Ukrainian and Russian stems, and secondarily also consider common stems in contrast to the first two. This has not been taken into account by previous studies on inflectional morphological phenomena in Suržyk, such as del Gaudio (2010), who has made the most extensive observations in this area to date. An analytical approach based on informal observation and thus on superficial appearances does not do justice to the complexity of the situation in social (not necessarily class-specific) subvarieties—just as it would fail to capture the differences and commonalities found in traditional regional, i.e., rural dialects.

Especially the relatively strong and widespread resistance of Ukrainian stems in Suržyk to combine with Russian endings supports the generally accepted view that the borrowing of inflectional endings is dispreferred (cf. Matras, 2015), even in the contact of highly convergent inflectional systems of closely related languages. However, the marked differences between Ukrainian and Russian stems require a different explanation. The high degree of resistance among Ukrainian stems to Russian inflectional influence, and the only partial (though notable) adaptation of Russian stems, suggests that the respondents are individuals who are predominantly shaped by Ukrainian—at least in a historic perspective that includes parents and grandparents. This means that they already inherited their Ukrainian-based Suržyk from two or even three earlier generations, i.e., a Ukrainian-based Suržyk that “developed” further, as a rule with an increasing, but socially and regionally different impact of Russian up to the time of Ukrainian independence (cf. Hentschel, forthcoming).

In the case of Suržyk, inflectional morphology does not obviously play a role in maintaining language differentiation (in the sense of Matras, 2015, p. 66). In other words, the distribution of Ukrainian and Russian endings, as a rule, cannot be seen as “marked choices” (in the sense of Myers-Scotton, 2002), although such choices are not completely ruled out, e.g., either as an epiphenomenon of marked choices between a Ukrainian or Russian lexical item or with Ukrainian or common stems as a conscious, mocking way to use mixed speech (say for the rare instances of the Russian ending /-ovo/ instead of Ukrainian /-oho/ for the genitive singular of masculine or neuter adjectives, especially when stressed). The partial differences and the variation between

Ukrainian and Russian stems mirror obviously mainly a gradual persistence of Russian stems in some inflectional constellations to adaptation to Ukrainian patterns. This gradation can obviously be explained on preference theoretical, regional (among them dialectal) and sociobiographical grounds (as to the latter, cf. Hentschel, forthcoming). This interpretation is supported by the fact, that Russian endings or inflectional patterns may nevertheless occasionally become widely established as unmarked usage norms—under certain conditions—even for Ukrainian stems.

The near-complete persistence of Ukrainian inflectional patterns with Ukrainian stems suggests that at least traditional, old Ukrainian-based Suržyk must be seen, structurally and in grammatical terms, as a variety of Ukrainian, exhibiting inflectional variation with Russian stems mainly in the process of adaptation. Ukrainian stems and, similarly, common stems exhibit a considerable tendency to combine with Russian endings only in strongly motivated cases, where Ukrainian endings entail identifiable structural disadvantages.

How the linguistic situation in Ukraine—and, unfortunately, also the non-linguistic one—has changed since February 2022, when data collection for the corpus examined here had already been completed, and how it will develop further remain entirely unpredictable due to the ongoing brutal Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. This naturally also affects Suržyk, which, in the words of Yurii Andrukhovych (2001, p. 2), has long been viewed by many representatives of Ukraine’s cultural and academic elites as an “incestuous child” of Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism. However, there are signs that this stigmatizing attitude may have been declining since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine (cf. Kuznietsova, forthcoming).

List of abbreviations of morphological categories and their values

ACC	accusative
ADJ	adjective
ANIM	animate
C	case
DAT	dative
FEM	feminine
G	gender
GEN	genitive
INANIM	inanimate
INF	infinitive
INFL	inflection (class)
INSTR	instrumental
MASC	masculine
N	number
NEUTR	neuter
NOM	nominative
P	grammatical person
PERS	grammatical person
PL	plural
PREP	prepositional (case)
PRES	present
SG	singular
T	tense

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