

Man-compound occupational nouns and non-sexist alternatives:  
Cross-linguistic perspectives

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Pro Gradu Thesis

English Language and Culture

School of Humanities

Philosophical Faculty

University of Eastern Finland

October 2019

ITÄ-SUOMEN YLIOPISTO – UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

<b>Faculty</b> Philosophical Faculty		<b>School</b> School of Humanities		
<b>Author</b> Juho Oksanen				
<b>Title</b> Man-compound occupational nouns and non-sexist alternatives: Cross-linguistic perspectives				
<b>Main subject</b>		<b>Level</b>		<b>Date</b>
English Language and Culture		Pro gradu -tutkielma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11/26/2019
		Sivuainetutkielma	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Kandidaatin tutkielma	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Aineopintojen tutkielma	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Number of pages</b> 94 + 23				
<b>Abstract</b>				
<p>The aim of this thesis is to find out how various English speakers in the western world view <i>man</i>-compound occupational nouns and suggested gendered and non-gendered alternatives to these nouns. More specifically, the aim is to see which <i>man</i>-compounds are still found to be useable and which alternatives have become accepted and why, and whether certain demographics view these items differently than others. <i>Man</i>-compounds in the English language exemplify sexism in language, since masculine generic nouns such as the <i>man</i>-compounds present the male gender as the norm and subsequently other genders as deviant.</p> <p>Several alternative terms to <i>man</i>-compounds have been suggested by feminist-driven language planning. The proposed alternative terms may utilize either an engendering approach to language change, where the female gender is given equal visibility to the male gender, or a degendering approach, which aims to eradicate gender in language. For English, the degendering approach is typically encouraged, since it usually results in simpler language and since English does not have grammatical gender which tends to cater well to the engendering approach.</p> <p>The chosen data-collection method for this thesis is an online questionnaire which is targeted at a university-trained population in western countries familiar with English. The questionnaire asks the participant to choose the item they think best fits a given gender-neutral language context. These items include a <i>man</i>-compound and various engendering and degendering alternatives. This quantitative data is statistically supported by chi-square testing. Qualitative data is collected through additional questions which ask the participant to specify their selection of and opinion on various language items.</p> <p>The general findings indicate that degendering alternatives are in many cases viewed as suitable alternatives to <i>man</i>-compounds, whereas engendering alternatives are not. A few <i>man</i>-compounds are still viewed as highly suitable for gender-neutral contexts, usually because they are established and functional and not necessarily viewed as gendered. Inclusiveness of different genders was indicated as the main strength of degendering alternatives, with some being viewed as highly suitable for their occupations, while others as artificial. Engendering alternatives were generally viewed as cumbersome and difficult to use.</p> <p>The language background of the participants proved to have a prominent influence in the survey. Most notably, German speakers consistently viewed <i>man</i>-compounds more positively than other groups and degendering alternatives more negatively. As further research, it would be recommended to study how speakers of different varieties of English view sexist and non-sexist language, with additional emphasis on the plural forms to <i>person</i>-compounds.</p>				
<b>Keywords</b>				
Man-compounds, sexist language, masculine generic, non-sexist language, language planning, alternative terms, engendering, degendering, person-compounds, cross-linguistic perspectives				

ITÄ-SUOMEN YLIOPISTO – UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

<b>Tiedekunta</b> Filosofinen tiedekunta		<b>Osasto</b> Humanistinen osasto	
<b>Tekijä</b> Juho Oksanen			
<b>Työn nimi</b> Man-compound occupational nouns and non-sexist alternatives: Cross-linguistic perspectives			
<b>Pääaine</b>	<b>Työn laji</b>	<b>Päivämäärä</b>	<b>Sivumäärä</b>
Englannin kieli ja kulttuuri	Pro gradu -tutkielma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	26.11.2019
	Sivuvainetutkimus	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Kandidaatin tutkielma	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Aineopintojen tutkielma	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Tiivistelmä</b>			
<p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on selvittää länsimaisten englanninpuhujien näkemyksiä <i>man</i>-yhdyssanamuotoisista ammattinimikkeistä ja niiden sukupuolitetuista ja sukupuolettomista vaihtoehdoista. Keskeistä on selvittää, mitä <i>man</i>-yhdyssanoja pidetään edelleen käyttökelpoisina ja mitkä vaihtoehdot on hyväksytty yleiseen kielenkäyttöön ja miksi. Lisäksi tarkastellaan, poikkeavatko eri väestöryhmien näkemykset toisistaan. Englannin kielen <i>man</i>-yhdyssanat ovat yksi kielellisen seksismin muoto, sillä niiden edustamat maskuliiniset yleissubstantiivit esittävät miessukupuolen standardina ja muut sukupuolet tästä poikkeavina.</p> <p>Feministinen kielisuunnittelu on synnyttänyt erilaisia vaihtoehtoja <i>man</i>-yhdyssanoille. Näillä vaihtoehtotermeillä voidaan pyrkiä muuttamaan kieltä joko sukupuolta korostamalla, jolloin naissukupuolelle annetaan yhtä paljon näkyvyyttä kuin miessukupuolelle, tai sukupuolta häivyttämällä, jolloin kielestä tehdään sukupuolineutraali. Sukupuolen häivyttämistä suositetaan tyypillisesti englannin kielessä, koska tällöin kieli yleensä säilyy yksinkertaisempuna. Lisäksi englannissa ei ole kielipillistä sukupuolta, joka tukee useimmiten sukupuolen korostamista.</p> <p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tiedonkeruutapa on Internet-kyselylomake. Se on lähetetty yliopistotaustaisille vastaajille länsimaihin, joissa englantia on tunnettu kieli. Kyselylomakkeella kysytään vastaajilta, mikä vastausvaihtoehto heidän mielestään toimii parhaiten annetussa sukupuolineutraalissa kieliyhteydessä. Vastausvaihtoehtoihin kuuluu <i>man</i>-yhdyssana sekä erilaisia sukupuolta korostavia ja häivyttäviä vaihtoehtoja. Tätä määrällistä tietoa tuetaan khiin neliö -testeillä. Laadullista tietoa kerätään lisäkysymyksillä, joilla joko pyydetään vastaajia perustelemaan valintansa tai kommentoimaan eri termejä.</p> <p>Toisin kuin sukupuolta korostavia vaihtoehtoja, yleisten tulosten perusteella sukupuolta häivyttäviä vaihtoehtotermejä pidetään monissa tapauksissa hyvinä vaihtoehtoina <i>man</i>-yhdyssanoille. Joitakin <i>man</i>-yhdyssanoja pidetään edelleen sopivina sukupuolineutraaleihin kieliyhteyksiin, sillä ne ovat toimivia ja vakiintuneita, eikä niitä välttämättä koeta sukupuolittuneiksi. Sukupuolta häivyttävien vaihtoehtotermien suurimpana vahvuutena pidettiin eri sukupuolten kattavuutta. Joitakin näistä termeistä pidettiin hyvin sopivina tarkoituksiinsa, kun taas toisia pidettiin keinotekoisina. Sukupuolta korostavia vaihtoehtotermejä pidettiin yleisesti kömpelöinä ja hankalina käyttää.</p> <p>Vastaajien kielitausta osoittautui merkittäväksi kyselyn tulosten kannalta. Erityisesti saksanpuhujat suosivat <i>man</i>-yhdyssanoja enemmän ja sukupuolta häivyttäviä vaihtoehtotermejä vähemmän kuin muut kieliryhmät. Jatkotutkimusaiheena olisi suositeltavaa tutkia sitä, miten eri englannin varieteettien puhujat suhtautuvat seksistiseen ja ei-seksistiseen kieleen. Jatkotutkimuksissa voisi painottaa erityisesti <i>person</i>-yhdyssanojen monikkomuotoja.</p>			
<b>Avainsanat</b>			
Man-yhdyssanat, seksistinen kieli, maskuliiniset yleissubstantiivit, ei-seksistinen kieli, kielisuunnittelu, vaihtoehtotermi, sukupuolta korostava, sukupuolta häivyttävä, person-yhdyssanat, kielirajat ylittäviä näkemyksiä			

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**Appendix (I): Online questionnaire**

**Appendix (II): Privacy policy**

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview of the Study

In the English language the male gender is typically treated as the norm in many ways. *Man*-compound occupational nouns, such as *chairman* and *policeman*, are just one example of this. These words are typically used in generic reference to all genders, even though their form indicates the male gender (Curzan 2014: 130–131). Examples 1 and 2 demonstrate how the *man*-compounds (in **bold**) are used in a way that supposedly includes all genders even though the form is masculine.

(1) A **policeman** may be able to help.

(2) What does a typical **businessman** do?

While the masculine form does not outright deny the existence of other genders, the masculine gender remains as the “default”. Since such generic masculine forms can be seen as discriminatory, or sexist, towards other genders, alternatives have been created. Sometimes *woman*-compounds are used, but most of the proposed alternatives are gender-neutral (Curzan 2014: 130–131). Sometimes these alternatives face resistance, as they exemplify prescriptive language change which tends to be labeled as “political correctness” (Curzan 2014: 114–116).

This research attempts to look at the relative popularity of the various *man*-compound occupational nouns and their alternatives as well as perceptions concerning them. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative methodology is included. The study itself comes in the form of a survey by questionnaire, which was aimed at university-level students and other comparable groups from western societies familiar with the English language and associated cultures. This population was chosen in part to ensure a feasible level of comparability between the participants, as participants

from Asian countries, for example, might introduce more radical cultural and linguistic factors into the study, which could expand the scope of the research too much.

The general aim of this study is to find out how individual *man*-compound occupational nouns and their non-sexist alternatives are perceived in relation to each other by different (mostly western) English speakers, both L1 and others. The central research questions of this study are the following:

1. Which *man*-compound occupational nouns remain in popular use and why?
2. Which alternative terms have gained/are gaining acceptance and why?
3. Do different groups (according to gender, language background, age, etc.) perceive some terms differently? Why?

## 1.2 Prior Studies

This paper occasionally refers to prior studies in the field of language and gender. The results of these studies have influenced the formation of this paper in various ways. This section will briefly present an overview of these studies. The actual findings of these studies will be discussed in the following sections where appropriate.

Two studies by Suzanne Romaine and Janet Holmes are particularly important throughout this paper. Suzanne Romaine compared the British National Corpus (BNC, written and spoken British English from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century) with the Brown Corpus of American English (roughly one million words from 1960s texts), with the purpose of comparing gendered language, such as suffixed titles like *manageress*, in British and American English (Romaine 2001). She also

compared the aforementioned corpora with the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen corpus (LOB: 1961 corpus of British English, roughly a million words) in order to analyze change in the use of gendered language over time, including the use of *man*-compounds (ibid.). Similar to Romaine (2001), Janet Holmes looked at gendered language in two languages over time, but she focused on New Zealand and British English (Holmes 2001). In practice, she compared the Wellington Written and Spoken Corpora of New Zealand English (WCWNZE (written) and WCSNZE (spoken): late 20<sup>th</sup> century New Zealand English, roughly two million words in total) with the aforementioned LOB and Brown -corpora (Holmes 2001).

Older research from the 1980s and 70s is also taken into account, because the ideas presented in them concerning sexism in language are still relevant on a theoretical basis, even if they do not accurately represent the current state of affairs. Robert L. Cooper carried out a corpus study in 1980, looking at change in the use of masculine generic forms, including *man*-compounds, over time (Cooper 1984, as cited in Cooper 1989). The corpus in question contained 525,000 words of selected American published texts (newspapers, magazines etc.), of which the odd-numbered years between 1971 and 1979 were analyzed (ibid.). Meanwhile, Alma Graham sampled 100,000 words from American children's schoolbooks in the 1970s with specific focus on the use of *he* in relation to gender, demonstrating a male bias in the use of *he* at the time (Graham 1975: 58).

More current additional data is provided by Anne Pauwels, who examined the effect of social gender in practice in Australian public speech: she compared the use of the singular *they* and *he or she* to the masculine generic *he* over time; the potential effects of associated generic nouns on the choice of pronoun were also taken into account (Pauwels 2001: 109–110). The data is sourced from an approximately 488,000-word corpus of Australian radio and television speech from the

periods of 1960s to late 1970s, and the 1990s, allowing for the assessment of linguistic change over time (ibid.).

Finally, analysis on the effects of social gender specifically on occupational titles can be found in the 2012 pro-gradu thesis by Veera Vallenius. The aim of this study was to find out how generic masculine and gender-neutral occupational nouns are interpreted in relation to gender in Canada and Finland; that is, whether the masculine form of these nouns affects the gender associations of these occupations (Vallenius 2012). The concept of the study is similar to my research: Vallenius (2012) is concerned with the perceptions concerning the generic nouns. However, the thesis is as much concerned with the perceptions of the occupations themselves as it is with the form of the nouns (Vallenius 2012). Consequently, social factors play an important role in the study, whereas my study is mostly concerned with the form of the nouns, though certain social factors may affect these results.

Vallenius (2012) used questionnaires to gather the data from both Finnish and Canadian participants: there were over 300 participants, most in their early twenties. It is somewhat unclear who the participants were, but judging from the age of most participants, many of them were likely students. Finns were asked about their perceptions on Finnish occupational terms, whereas Canadians were asked about English terms (Vallenius 2012). Like the present study, the terms included various *man*-compounds and their gender-neutral alternatives (mostly *person*-nouns)—Finns received equivalent Finnish terms (Vallenius 2012).

In addition to the aforementioned studies, two prior unpublished original research studies by the author are occasionally referenced in this paper: a pilot study and a small-scale corpus study. Both had slightly different aims and methodology to the present study, but their findings are comparable

and have provided valuable data for the formation and execution of the present study. The general findings of both the pilot study and the corpus study will be referred to in appropriate sections throughout this paper, similarly to the findings of all the other prior studies. However, the background and methodology of each study will be briefly presented below for future reference.

**The pilot study** was conducted in 2015. The methods and goals were largely the same as those of the present study, but the scope was broader: an online questionnaire was used to gather information on the use of various sexist language items and their non-sexist alternatives, as well as people's perceptions of the non-sexist language reform (see section 3) as a whole. Like the present study, the pilot was aimed at university-level students or people from comparable backgrounds from around the western world. The subject, however, included not only *man*-compounds but also other sexist language items such as female-marked forms (*actress*, *woman doctor*) and pronouns (generic *he*) and, of course, their non-sexist alternatives.

The survey received 171 participants in total. A large portion of them (69%) were female, with the rest identified as male (there were no other gender options). The distribution of nationalities was very uneven, as most participants (53%) were Finnish. This framed the general results as Finnish-centric, which was not the intention. Furthermore, over 70% of all Finns were female. Other nationalities were negligible in comparison. In addition to the vast Finnish majority, only 19% of the participants considered themselves as native speakers of English, most of whom were 30 years old or older, as opposed to the generally younger Finns. I believe this age difference of the native English speakers as opposed to the rest may have skewed the comparability of this group with the rest of the participants, since it is difficult to tell which has more effect on their generally slightly different answers: the language background or the age.

The present study aims to not only receive more non-Finnish participants, but also to take more thoroughly into account the language background of the participants to better utilize the potential diversity of the population. Because of the overwhelming Finnish majority and the lack of proper tools for analyzing language background, the diverse language background of the participants went largely underutilized in the pilot. For example, by gaining more people from related language backgrounds (such as from German-speaking countries), as well as by finding more about which languages are familiar to the participants, more extensive comparisons between groups might be possible. Overall, the pilot study provided some valuable preliminary information on the use of certain *man*-compounds and their alternatives, many of which I have re-introduced in the present study (see section 4.2 for a detailed list of the terms chosen for this study).

In addition to the pilot study, I conducted a small-scale **corpus study**. This study was conducted with the long-term aim of gathering additional data for the present study. The corpus study aimed to compare the use of *man*-compound occupational nouns, as well as their alternatives, in American and British English. Two corpora were used: American English 2006 (Ame06) and British English 2006 (Be06). Each consists of roughly 1 million words of general modern written American and British English, respectively. Considering the size of the corpora, the findings were certainly scarce (a few dozen hits per item at best) and should therefore only be taken as approximations. Logistic likelihood was used as a statistic tool to determine the value of any differences between the corpora (calculated with the effect size calculator found in <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>). Many of the *man*-compounds and alternatives included in the corpus study are also included in the present study. The corpus data offers some interesting insight into the use of some of these words and may help the analysis of different English speakers' linguistic choices.

This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 discusses the central terminology and concepts of sexist language used in this study, including *man*-compounds. Section 3 offers a look into suggested non-sexist language reforms, along with discussion of the various issues concerning such language reforms and sexist language in general. Following that, section 4 includes an overview of the methodology of the present research and section 5 presents the general findings of the research. Finally, the paper concludes in discussion about the central findings and potential further research in section 6.

## 2 Sexist language

### 2.1 Defining sexism and sexist language

*Man*-compound occupational nouns are an example of **sexist language**. Talbot (2010: 224) defines sexism as “discrimination on the grounds of sex, based on assumptions that women are both different and inferior to men” and further describes it as the systematic derogation of women, a term similar in nature and use to racism. Subsequently, Mills (2008: 1–2) describes ‘sexist language’ not only as language that seems to “excessively focus on gender when it is not relevant” but also as language that relies on stereotypical beliefs about genders and treats the female gender as secondary in relation to the male gender. Sexist language is, therefore, language that systematically discriminates against people, usually women, on the grounds of gender.

Sunderland (2006: 34) identifies four effects of sexist language: ‘invisibility’, ‘defining’, ‘trivializing’ and ‘degrading’. These effects represent early feminist challenges in their language reform (Sunderland 2006: 34). In the context of this study, the effect of ‘invisibility’ is of note, since it is exemplified in various ways by the subject of this study, the *man*-compound occupational nouns and their alternatives. *Man*-compounds tend to render the female gender invisible by solely promoting the male gender, as in example 3.

(3) Businessmen tend to be busy.

The effect of ‘trivializing’ does not directly concern *man*-compounds, but it is worth discussing in this study due to its influence on the non-sexist language reform (discussed later in section 3). By contrast, ‘defining’ and ‘degrading’ concern older types of sexist language not necessarily noteworthy today nor relevant for this study. All of these effects do, however, represent the various

ways sexism can manifest itself in language and are an important part of research into sexist language, which is why they will be briefly discussed here.

Defining language generally highlights certain aspects of women as central and definitive to them. It effectively stereotypes women and limits what can be expected of them. This effect is particularly visible in the unequal social titles of *Miss* and *Mrs*, which reveal a woman's marital status, as opposed to *Mr*, which does not do the same for a man (Sunderland 2006: 34). This highlights marital status as a defining factor of a woman's life (for research on this topic, see Romaine 2001: 157–160 and Holmes 2001: 119).

Degrading language refers to a tendency of feminine words to contain negative connotations, as opposed to masculine words that contain fewer of them. Degrading language is generally not a notable subject in the study of sexist language today, but it is an interesting example of how sexism can manifest itself in the English language. The degrading effect can be seen in asymmetrical pairs such as *Sir/Madam* and *boy/girl*, where the female terms have double meaning with often sexual connotations (Lakoff 1975: 56; Sunderland 2006: 34).

Trivializing language is about marking female language items as different from the (male) norm. Typically, female-marked forms such as *woman pilot* or *mistress* are considered sexist by feminists because they reveal the gender of the referent even when the gender is not relevant. Talbot (2010: 225) argues that this kind of marking effectively downgrades the words it is used in, making the female versions less prestigious or deviant, and hence trivial. Talbot (2010: 225) adds that similar marking is rare for the male gender (there is, for example, *male nurse*).

When comparing the British National Corpus (BNC) with the Brown Corpus of American English, Romaine (2001: 157–160) found that British English contains more gender-marked titles such as

*manageress* and some gender-marked forms that are archaic in American English, such as the derogatory *spinster* (156 occurrences of *spinster* in the BNC versus none in the Brown corpus). By contrast, Holmes' (2001: 126–128) findings from New Zealand English illustrate that many suffixed forms are in decline, particularly in spoken language. She found, for example, that the range of different suffixed female forms (*actress, heroine, executrix* etc.) was much narrower in the New Zealand data with a smaller set of these words, as opposed to British data (Holmes 2001: 127–128). These findings by Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001) are relevant for the present study in indicating that British English may be comparatively more conservative concerning gendered language than American and other varieties, though this may depend on the specific language items.

Finally, there is the **invisibility** effect, most notably caused by masculine generics, such as *he* and *man* used for both men and women. According to Sunderland (2006: 34), this causes masculine bias which renders women invisible in language. Mills (2008: 2) argues that this kind of language takes only male experience as representative of human experience while excluding everyone else. The artificial example 4 below contains *man* as representative of all humans.

(4) In the last few thousand years, man has rapidly taken his place as the ruler of nature.

In this case, *man* is supposed to include all humans, but the form only shows the male gender. The use of the word *mankind* has the same effect, as do *policeman* and other *man*-compound occupational nouns for their respective contexts.

Invisibility can also be illustrated on the discourse level: Graham (1975: 58) sampled 100,000 words from American children's schoolbooks: the pronoun *he* was used 940 times, of which only 32 referred to an unspecified gender—the rest referred to the male gender in one way or another.

In addition, a different, larger sampling (700,000 citations) of the schoolbooks revealed that the ratio of *he* to *she* (including their variants *his*, *her*, etc.) was almost four to one (Graham 1975: 58). These examples illustrate the massive male-bias that existed in the 70s. Not only did the language allow the male gender to include the female gender, but also the actual referent tended to be male most of the time. Consequently, the female gender was rendered invisible on both the word level and the discourse level.

Similarly, Romaine (2001: 161) found in the Brown Corpus that men are referred to three times more often than women, which supports the previous example, whereas the more modern BNC contains twice as much *he* to *she*. Romaine's findings hint at a more current male-bias. The 'invisibility' effect of sexist language is noteworthy for this study, because it is in part caused by *man*-compound occupational nouns and diminished to varying effect by alternative terms (for an overview of alternative terms, see section 3.2.2).

## 2.2 The generic masculine and man-compound occupational nouns

The generic masculine, such as *he* or *man* used for all genders, is a prime example of the effect of invisibility of Sunderland's (2006: 34) four effects of sexist language (see the previous section (2.1)), meaning that it treats the male gender as the norm and consequently renders the female gender invisible in language. The generic masculine is used in general reference to all genders, even though the form explicitly refers to the male gender (Henley 1987: 5). According to Mills (2008: 47), this type of generic language is not truly generic, since it is often difficult to tell whether the referent is supposed to be generic or specifically male. In addition, Mills (2008: 47) argues that

such generic usage marks the female form as different from the norm, since *she* and other feminine forms (for example *chairwoman* or *actress*) are typically associated with women only, whereas in general language use the male terms may refer to all genders. According to Pauwels (1998: 196–197), anti-discriminatory legislation has helped to eliminate some generic masculine forms at least in official occupational contexts by forcing non-discriminatory language in workplaces. For example, *chairperson* may be used in place of *chairman* to increase female inclusiveness.

*Man*-compounds are a form of generic masculine. According to Pauwels (1998: 45), words such as *chairman* and *spokesman* often refer to males specifically or conjure up male images, even though they are supposed to be used generically. Feminist linguistic reforms have encouraged the use of substitute terms for many *man*-compounds. Typically, the substitute term is an unmarked generic form which contains no gender markers, such as *businessperson* for *businessman* or *chair* for *chairman*. Sometimes *woman* is used instead of *man* to promote the female gender, but several guidelines for gender-neutral language in English, such as the UNESCO guidelines of 1999, encourage using truly generic genderless forms instead to promote gender-neutrality (Hellinger 2001: 109). These alternative terms will be discussed more closely in section 3.2.

My pilot study indicated that *mailman*, *businessman*, *chairman* and *freshman* are currently some of the more popular occupational *man*-compounds. At least for *mailman*, it seems like a suitable replacement has not been found (the study included *mailperson* and *mail carrier*). As for the corpus study, the below Table 1 shows the percentages of each *man*-compound relative to its alternatives in both corpora, except for those with less than five appearances. Similarly to the pilot study, *businessman*, *chairman* and *freshman* were prominent in the corpora, along with *spokesman*, which was not included in the pilot. *Freshman* and *congressman* only appeared in the American corpus, suggesting that they are largely American terms.

Table 1: Portions of each *man*-compound relative to its alternatives in Ame06 and Be06.

	<b>Ame06</b>	<b>Be06</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	86%	87%
<b>Alternatives to chairman</b>	14% (12% chair, 2% presiding officer)	13% (chair)
<b>Spokesman</b>	57%	83%
<b>Alternatives to spokesman</b>	43% (35% spokeswoman, 8% spokesperson)	17% (10% spokeswoman, 7% spokesperson)
<b>Policeman</b>	14%	60%
<b>Alternatives to policeman</b>	86% ((police) officer)	40% (36% (police) officer, 4% policewoman)
<b>Businessman</b>	92%	92%
<b>Alternatives to businessman</b>	8% (businesswoman)	8% (businesswoman)
<b>Salesman</b>	44%	50%
<b>Alternatives to salesman</b>	56% (39% (sales) clerk, 11% (sales) representative, 6% salesperson)	50% (saleswoman)
<b>Freshman</b>	89%	-
<b>Alternatives to freshman</b>	11% (first-year student)	-
<b>Congressman</b>	47%	-
<b>Alternatives to congressman</b>	53% ((congressional) representative)	-
<b>Fireman</b>	50%	100%
<b>Alternatives to fireman</b>	50% (firefighter)	-
<b>Ombudsman</b>	100%	100%
<b>Alternatives to ombudsman</b>	-	-

The pilot study included other types of *man*-compounds and their alternatives in addition to occupational or agent nouns. These words, *mankind*, *manpower*, *unmanned* and *man-made*, were found to be rather contextual, with the context dictating which form was most suitable. *Manpower*, for example, gained some acceptance in an army-related context but not in a workforce-related scenario. Most of these types of *man*-compounds seem to be falling out of fashion, though the use of *mankind* was more mixed. Because of their apparent fading popularity and incompatibility with the occupational compounds, these types of *man*-compounds are not included in the present study.

The aforementioned findings indicate that some *man*-compounds still persist in general use. Cooper (1989) offers possible explanations to their persistence. His 1980 corpus study indicated a decline in the rate of masculine generics: from 12.3 per 5000 words in 1971 to 4.3 in 1979 (Cooper 1984 as cited in Cooper 1989: 19–21). Concerning individual generics, *man* by itself faced the sharpest decline: the 1979 rate was only 16% of the 1971 rate (ibid.). By contrast, the smallest decline concerned *man*-compounds, which were reduced by around half (ibid.). Cooper (1989: 19–21) offers two possible explanations for the slower decline of *man*-compounds:

1. *Man*-compounds cannot be replaced by the same form each time, meaning that some may be replaced more easily while others persist.
2. Using a *man*-compound in reference to a male-dominated field may not seem as harmful as using *man* in reference to all humans.

Both of Cooper's (1989) explanations concerning the persistence of *man*-compounds seem plausible even today. Simply put, some forms are not easily replaceable; finding an alternative that is acceptable to the majority of language users can be a major task. For example, according to the findings of my pilot study and the corpus study, *businessman* seems tricky to replace. Figure 1 shows how *businessman* prevailed over its alternatives in the pilot study. As for the corpus study, *businessman* had very few alternatives in the corpora—only 8% of all occurrences for the *man*-compound and its alternatives.

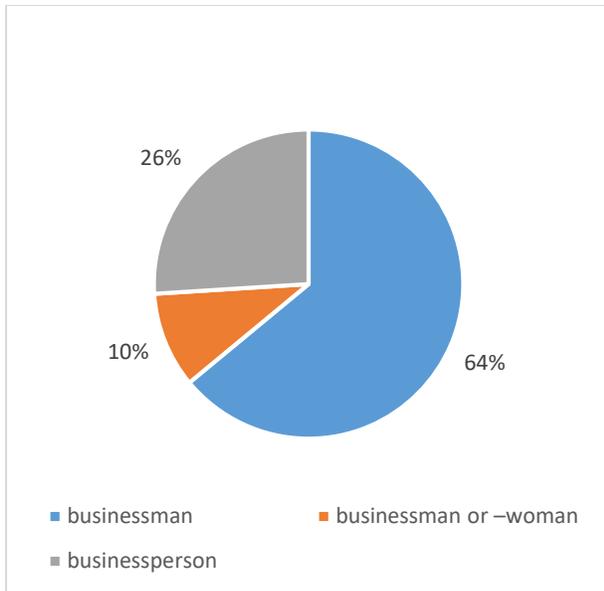


Figure 1: *Businessman* was more popular than its alternatives in the pilot study. The results concern the question “I have never met an honest \_\_\_\_\_”.

Adding to the persistence of some forms is the fact that some occupations are still dominated by men. *Fisherman*, for example, is arguably still a male-centric occupation. Consequently, using *man*-compounds in these situations may seem more natural than forcing everyone to use a gender-neutral term.

*Man*-compound occupational nouns and their proposed alternatives are the subject of this study, in which empirical data will be used to determine the relative popularity and perceptions concerning these words. The next section (section 3) will offer a closer look at the proposed alternatives to sexist language items, including the *man*-compound occupational nouns, as well as the ideas and concept behind the language reform. More information on the *man*-compounds and their alternatives chosen for the study can be found in section 4.2.

## 3 The non-sexist language reform

### 3.1 Introduction to the non-sexist language reform

The non-sexist language reform refers to “the activities and initiatives of feminists to eliminate the discriminatory portrayal and representation of women and men in language” (Pauwels 1998: 8). It is, in essence, a form of language planning (deliberate language change) that attempts to eliminate sexist uses of language, both on a lexical and discourse level, and replace these uses with non-sexist language (Pauwels 1998: 9–11).

In practice, the non-sexist language reform in the English-speaking world works mostly by the promotion of language guidelines for different public and private organizations to use in their language practices (Bettoni 2006: 64). It therefore attempts institutional language change. This process may involve encoding the wanted language in grammars or raising awareness through proposals of a certain type of language (Sunderland 2006: 33). Sunderland (2006: 33) points out that most language change is unplanned, but conscious change can be attempted through institutionalized means. Sunderland (2006: 33) adds that this kind of reform is prescriptive in nature: it suggests that people should speak and write in certain ways, much like early grammarians have done. Mills (2008: 78) argues that this kind of planned change may seem problematic, as some may consider it a breach of their freedom of speech and individual autonomy.

However, the prescriptive nature of the non-sexist language reform is not necessarily negative in itself. Cameron (1995: 3–5) argues that while prescriptive language practices are always ideological, in that prescriptivists have a vision of an ideal language, the same also applies to those who resist prescriptive language change—they too have an ideal view of language in the sense that

language is either already perfect or a natural construct that should not be artificially changed. Furthermore, Cameron (1995: 39) notes that language is already full of socially enforced norms—it is standardized in several ways, for example—so to criticize only prescriptive language practices as artificial and forced is to in a sense deny the social nature of language. Language is constructed by humans; it is not separate from human interaction. All of language use is in a way prescriptive by nature, so to object planned language reforms simply because they are forced is somewhat questionable.

Cameron (1995: 11) adds that a better way to criticize forced language reforms is to question the actual purpose of the change, as well as who is behind the change. Feminists aim to eradicate sexism in society and one way they try to achieve this is by language reform, so one might question whether the language reform can help achieve this goal or whether it causes too many unwanted effects. Mills (2008: 78) points out, however, that the non-sexist language reform is as much about raising awareness of gender issues in language as it is about changing them. It makes people think about their language use and the language use around them. Therefore, even if they do not agree with the proposed changes, they will at least be aware of the effects of the kind of language they use and may change it to avoid those unwanted effects.

The present study is concerned with people's perceptions of *man*-compound nouns and alternative terms to these nouns as proposed by the non-sexist language reform. Since the suggested reforms exemplify prescriptive language planning, which expects people to change their language use according to certain ideals concerning language, there is bound to be resistance towards the reforms. This resistance and the attitudes influencing it may affect the views of the participants of this study. Therefore, a brief overview of some of the general concepts and ideas behind the resistance to the reforms is presented here.

The concept of non-sexist language is often associated with the idea of ‘political correctness’. This association is often considered negative due to the bad label attached to political correctness, which is often used as an umbrella-term for the different language reforms associated with it. According to Mills (2008: 100), the term political correctness, or PC, refers to practices where excessive attention is given to the treatment of groups that are considered “different from the norm”, such as ethnic and sexual minorities and women. Talbot (2010: 238–240) argues that the term is often used by the political right to ridicule linguistic reforms as absurd. The negative label of PC and its overall message of forced, trivial change is certainly one of the reasons behind the resistance to the non-sexist language reform, since people may not be willing to understand any phenomenon associated with such a concept. My pilot study had some participants mention political correctness and the overall triviality of the reform in the optional open question, as demonstrated in example 5. The example is not particularly negative about the reforms, but it exemplifies how they may seem needlessly inconvenient and generally not needed.

- (5) “I don’t think it is a bad idea in its core, but as the reforms moved forward, I feel that people pay too much attention to being “politically correct” about gender-specific terms. I don’t always see a need for it to happen, for example I could also call myself, a girl, a mailman, in which “man” to me would mean simply human, a person. It’s difficult to suddenly switch to sometimes completely new terms! And then you get bad looks, because you called someone a businessman instead of a businessperson, because it’s discrimination towards women in business. I think some parts of that “reform” are unnecessary and silly.”

Below is a list of arguments made by opponents of the non-sexist language reform as compiled by Pauwels (1998: 170).

1. Language is not sexist and therefore the reform is pointless.
2. The reform has a negative effect on linguistic and literary traditions.
3. The reform restricts individual autonomy and freedom of speech.
4. The reform is too trivial to warrant attention.

These arguments are examples of the different ways people may view an organized large-scale attempted change. The change challenges established tradition which is viewed by many as the ordinary state of affairs—some may never have even thought about potential problems in language. Example 6 from the pilot study demonstrates argument 1 in particular: distinguishing between genders is normal for English and there is not necessarily any reason to change that state of affairs.

- (6) “I can see the point in them, but personally I don’t care much for pushing these types of language reforms. English is a language that fundamentally distinguishes between the sexes with the use of personal pronouns he and she, and I see no reason to try and change that. That being said, I agree that many gendered titles that relate to professions (policeman vs. police officer, etc.) are redundant. What I find irritating is artificially adding in the “-man and -woman” suffix to words in a really crude way of being neutral. On a final note, I would warmly welcome an expression that could replace the awkward “he or she” phrase. I suppose “they” is getting popular as a replacement, but it is grammatically incorrect, and therefore questionable (unless it turn into a grammatical exception).”

Example 7, on the other hand, demonstrates argument 4 in particular, by calling into question the effectiveness of the reform.

- (7) “I do not see how changing words changes the world around them. Saying “Oh my God” doesn’t make me a religious person, nor does saying chairperson instead of chairman/woman make me a conservative or a sexist.”

Mills (2008: 96) notes that “because anti-sexism implies a higher moral position, it can evoke a negative response”. Consequently, when someone tells another that they are using language in a way that harms others, it can easily cause opposition, because people may feel that their autonomy or freedom of speech is under attack and their values are questioned. Cameron (1995: 118–122) calls this the politicizing of language: the use of such terms as sexist language and non-sexist language ultimately forces language users to take a political stance. If one does not accept non-sexist language, they are quickly labeled sexist, anti-feminist and so on (Cameron 1995: 118–122). Not everyone thinks about language itself as anything political, so when one’s values or political

stance are questioned according to their language use alone, conflict and controversy are likely to arise. Subsequently, it becomes easier to label this attempted language change as ridiculous rather than accept the possibility that language, or the people using it, may have issues—hence, political correctness is seen as a negative.

There is, of course, support towards these reforms, as exemplified by several participants to my pilot study (examples 8 and 9). A typical argument supporting the reforms is simply to progress equality of the genders in language. Finding out about which language items are supported and which are not, and especially the reasons why, is one of the goals of the present study.

- (8) “I think it’s great. The need to always know a person’s gender has become rather redundant in modern Western society. Yay for equality.”
- (9) “I think it’s harmful to assume the male default in language and very silly to separate people by their gender with expressions like ‘actress’ or ‘male nurse’. I believe language reforms can contribute to positive changes in attitudes about gender, and I would love to see a gender-neutral third-person singular pronoun in wide use in English one day. For now I mostly tend to lean towards the (admittedly somewhat clumsy) singular ‘they’.”

## 3.2 Strategies of reform

### 3.2.1 Engendering and degendering: two approaches to language reform

Bettoni (2006: 64) introduces the two basic principles according to which the non-sexist language reform attempts to improve gender-equality in language: feminization or engendering and neutralization or degendering. I will use ‘engendering’ and ‘degendering’ since these terms are in my opinion more neutral. **Engendering** refers to making the female gender as visible as the male gender in language, whereas **degendering** is about the reduction of the unnecessary visibility of

the male gender—and gender-markers in general (Bettoni 2006: 64). In practice, engendering supports using more female forms than before, such as *waitress* and *chairwoman*, both in singular and plural (ibid.). Here the gender-equal use would be in the form of *waitresses and waiters* or *chairmen and chairwomen*. Degendering, on the other hand, attempts to neutralize gendered forms in language, including the female forms of *waitress* and *chairwoman*, in favor of forms without gender-markers, such as *waiter* and *chairperson* (Bettoni 2006: 64). This is done not only to avoid unnecessary gender-markers but also to reduce overt male visibility. However, Bettoni (2006: 65) argues that neither the engendering or degendering approach can help with linguistic sexism on the level of discourse and rhetoric.

Engendering reforms are encouraged in many languages with grammatical gender, such as German and French (Bussmann & Hellinger 2003: 166; Hellinger 2001: 109; Mills 2008: 83). Since English no longer has morphological elements which would vary according to grammatical gender, grammatical gender does not exist either (Hellinger 2001: 107). Many languages with grammatical gender still have these elements, such as German (Bussmann & Hellinger 2003: 143). These gender markings make gendered language more difficult to avoid. It will be interesting to see whether the speakers of languages with grammatical gender view various English reforms differently.

Hellinger (2001: 109) and Romaine (2001: 156) propose that degendering reforms are prioritized in English with the aim of achieving gender neutrality or symmetry between genders. With a language like English—one without grammatical gender—the engendering approach leaves the marked nature of the female gender intact, which tends to go against the goal of gender neutrality or symmetry (Mills 2008: 84; Bettoni 2006: 64). For example, *actress* and *waitress* would maintain their feminine markers which mark them different from the unmarked *actor* and *waiter* for the

male gender. Bettoni (2006: 64) argues that while degendering reforms have a better chance of success and result in simpler language, this method “runs the risk of making women even more invisible”, since people often tend to think of the male gender when no gender is marked. Mills (2008: 85) adds that the degendering approach is problematic also because some terms that are not gender-marked tend to carry heavy gender-connotations, usually male, such as high-prestige occupational terms like *doctor* or *surgeon*. These kinds of gender connotations are an example of **social gender**, which refers to the gender typically associated with a word or concept.

To illustrate, Pauwels (2001) examined the effect of social gender in Australian public speech over time. Table 2 demonstrates the prevalence of social gender concerning high-status occupational nouns, in this case *doctor* and *surgeon*, which associated with generic *he* more than other nouns, particularly in the newer data (Pauwels 2001: 113). With social gender in play in some occupational nouns, it is possible that degendering reforms by themselves may not be able to effectively neutralize the male-centric nature of certain occupations.

Table 2: Association of *he* and *they* with various nouns in Pauwels' (2001: 113) data of Australian public speech.

Nouns	<i>He</i> in the 1960–1970s	<i>They</i> in the 1960–1970s	<i>He</i> in the 1990s	<i>They</i> in the 1990s
Australian	2	0	1	2
Child	1	0	1	56
Consumer	2	1	0	18
<b>Doctor</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
Individual	15	0	0	3
Member	2	0	0	3
Passenger	5	0	0	1
Patient	13	0	0	11
Person	140	0	3	88
<b>Surgeon</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Victim	1	0	0	2
Worker	15	0	1	1
Total	206	1	13	194

Similar findings concerning the effect of social gender on occupational titles can be found in the pro-gradu thesis by Vallenius (2012), who tested whether the masculine form of these nouns affects the gender associations of the respective occupations in Canada and Finland. The general findings indicate that the social gender associated with the occupations seems to have more importance than the form of the noun; for example, both *fireman* and *firefighter* were considered almost uniformly masculine (Vallenius 2012). However, many of the *man*-compounds received slightly more masculine associations than the neutral terms in Canada—mostly from women, surprisingly, as Canadian men sometimes favored neutral associations more (Vallenius 2012: 36–41). The Finnish terms worked rather differently, as there was rarely correlation with form and gender-association, but men associated most occupations with men more often than women did (Vallenius 2012: 32–35).

The study included some *man*-compounds that are also included in the present study. As such, some central gender-related findings by Vallenius (2012) are compiled in table 3.

Table 3: General gender association for different occupational titles by Canadian participants, men and women unless otherwise specified (Modified from Vallenius 2012: 37–41).

<b>Gender association</b>	
<b>Salesman</b>	Masculine or neutral
<b>Salesperson</b>	Feminine or neutral
<b>Businessman</b>	Masculine or neutral
<b>Businessperson</b>	Generally neutral, but men considered it masculine more often than women
<b>Spokesman</b>	Generally neutral, but women considered it masculine slightly more often than men
<b>Spokesperson</b>	Neutral

Table 3 shows that both *businessman* and *businessperson* tend to be associated more with the masculine gender. The results for *businessman* and *businessperson* in my pilot study are interesting, with *businessman* being more popular than *businessperson* (64% versus 26% of all votes for that *man*-compound and its alternatives), since for example *chairman* was less popular than its *person*-variant. It is possible that social gender is in effect here, as hinted at by Vallenius’ (2012) data.

Vallenius’ (2012) findings give some indication to how certain *man*-compounds and their alternatives may be perceived. Since the *man*-compounds seem to generally draw slightly more masculine connotations than the neutral alternatives, it could be that for gender-neutral situations, such as those in the questionnaire of the present study, these *man*-compounds might not be well-liked by some groups. Furthermore, some of the neutral nouns were often associated with women, so they may be more easily approachable by women. However, in most cases the neutral terms

were not considered that different from the *man*-compounds and overall the social gender of the occupations seemed to play a more prominent role in the gender-association than the form of the nouns. Overall it will be interesting to see whether the forms of certain occupational nouns will really make a difference. Even though Vallenius (2012) compared Finnish perceptions to Canadian, it is difficult to compare the results with the present study, since both language groups dealt with their own language, unlike in my research where all respondents were asked to assess English terms. However, it is interesting to note that for Finns social gender seemed even more pronounced than it was for Canadians (Vallenius 2012). Whether that has any relevance for Finnish perceptions of English language items remains to be seen.

### 3.2.2 Alternative terms

The non-sexist language reform has produced various terms to replace *man*-compounds and other language items. ‘Alternative terms’ is used here to refer to this replacement of sexist terms in language with gender-neutral language or non-sexist language use (Mills 2008: 84). This is the central strategy of language reform in the context of this study (see Mills 2008: 83–91 for other strategies of non-sexist language reform).

Alternative terms may adopt either an engendering or a degendering approach. Concerning Sunderland’s four effects of sexist language (See section 2.1 and Sunderland 2006: 34), alternative terms are used in the following two ways:

1. To reduce the ‘invisibility’ effect of English with the engendering approach, with the attempt to raise female visibility by promoting feminine terms. In practice, this means

replacing male-centric language of only male-marked terms with more general use of female-marked forms. For example, the use of *policewoman* and *waitress* could be promoted alongside or instead of *policeman* and *waiter* to allow for better visibility for the female gender.

2. To reduce the ‘trivializing’ effect with the degendering approach, with the attempt to reduce gender-markers (usually feminine markers as in *hostess*). Degendering reforms also contribute in diminishing the ‘invisibility’ effect by reducing male visibility, such as by replacing *man*-compounds with gender-neutral forms. In practice, sexist forms such as *policeman* and *waitress* are replaced with degendering alternatives, such as *police officer* and *waiter* for both genders. These neutral terms also cater well to those who do not identify as female or male.

According to Pauwels (1998: 196–197), the truly generic *person* has in many cases replaced *man*, such as in *chairperson*. To illustrate, Romaine (2001: 160–163) analyzed the use of *chairman* and *spokesman*, along with their *-woman* and *-person* alternatives and other gendered forms, in the BNC and in the older Brown and LOB corpora. The results show the lasting prevalence of the *man*-compounds along with limited but increasing use of the gender-neutral *person*-forms in the BNC, as opposed to the complete lack of gender-neutral or feminine forms in the older corpora (Romaine 2001: 160–163). For the reason behind the prevalence of *chairman*, Romaine (2001: 163) suggests that since most chairmen are still male, the term is likely to stay as is (also Cooper 1989: 19–21). However, there is evidence in the data for *chairperson* used equally for both the male and female genders, as well as in reference to the gender-neutral office as opposed to the person holding it, though its use clearly pales in comparison to *chairman* (Romaine 2001: 163).

Like Romaine (2001), Holmes (2001: 125–126) also analyzed *chairman* and *spokesman*, along with their alternatives, but in New Zealand English. She compared the WCWNZE and the WCSNZE with the Brown and LOB corpora (Holmes 2001: 125–126). Similarly to Romaine’s (2001) study, the *man*-compounds prevailed, usually in direct reference to the male gender (idid.). However, in spoken language (WCSNZE) the *person*-forms appeared quite popular and were used primarily in non-gendered situations (ibid.). Table 4 shows the prevalence of the *man*-compounds and the growing popularity of the *person*-forms in Holmes’ (2001) data.

Table 4: *Chair*- and *spokes*-forms in WCSNZE, WCWNZE, LOB and Brown corpora (Holmes 2001: 126; *chair*- and *spokes*-specific percentages added by author).

	<b>WCSNZE 1989–94</b>	<b>WCWNZE 1986–89</b>	<b>LOB (UK) 1961</b>	<b>Brown (USA) 1961</b>
<b>chairperson(s)</b>	7 (26%)	6 (5%)	0	0
<b>chairman/men</b>	20 (74%)	109 (93%)	119 (100%)	78 (100%)
<b>chairwoman/women</b>	0	2 (2%)	0	0
<b>spokesperson(s)</b>	7 (39%)	4 (9%)	0	0
<b>spokespeople</b>	1 (6%)	1 (2%)	0	0
<b>spokesman/men</b>	9 (50%)	36 (84%)	22 (100%)	24 (100%)
<b>spokeswoman/women</b>	1 (6%)	2 (5%)	0	0

In contrast to both Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001), my pilot study demonstrates a notable acceptance of *chairperson* as opposed to *chairman*. Figure 2 shows that *chairperson* has the highest portion of votes for each alternative, being more popular than the *man*-compound.

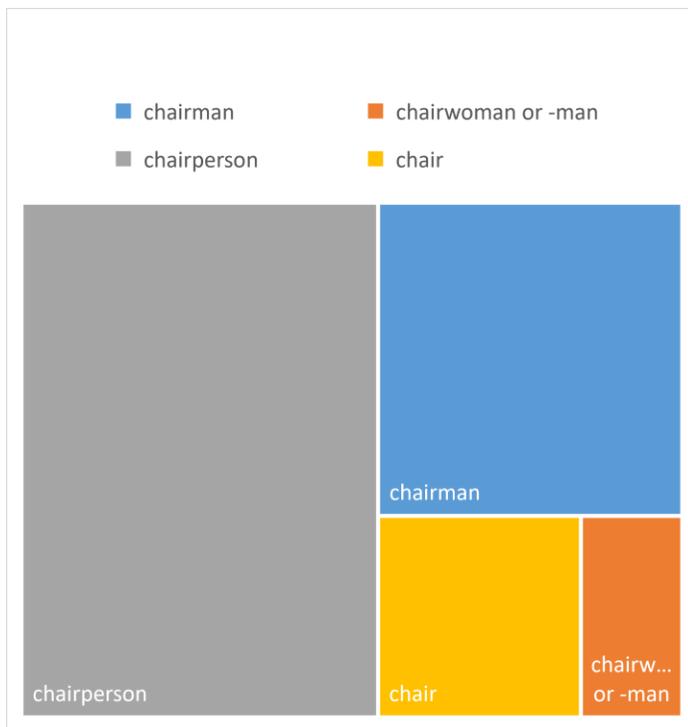


Figure 2: The relative popularity of *chairman* and alternatives in the pilot study.

This difference to Romaine’s (2001) and Holmes’ (2001) studies might simply have to do with differences in the research sample, as my study concerns mainly university students while both Romaine and Holmes have broader corpus-based samples. Interestingly, my corpus data contained no mention of *chairperson*, while *chairman* was the most numerous *man*-compound in the data. Judging from the difference in the use of *chairperson* in the corpus study as opposed to the others, there are likely some sample-based differences between all four studies. Nevertheless, *chairperson* seems to have become an established alternative to *chairman*, though the extent of its popularity is still somewhat unclear. This study aims to acquire a more profound understanding of the use of *chairman* and its alternatives.

Figure 2 also shows the smaller yet notable popularity of *chair*. Romaine (2001: 163) did not analyze *chair*, which according to her has a different meaning in British as opposed to American English. However, according to my corpus data, *chair* seems to be used in both the American and

British varieties in roughly the same way. There were also examples of *chair* in the data (both corpora) used as a rough equivalent to ‘chairman position’ or ‘to lead’, meaning that it was used not always in reference to a person but instead the position, and sometimes as a verb. These occurrences were not added to the numerical results due to their grammatical difference to the other forms, which would have made direct comparison difficult, but it seems like a fairly common alternative way to communicate that someone is a chairman. *Chair* seems to be an interesting alternative to *chairman* that may or may not be received differently by various groups (such as American and British participants). As such, it is included in the present survey.

Mills (2008: 50) suggests that some degendering alternatives, such as *firefighter* and *police officer* (for *fireman* and *policeman*, respectively) have been adopted to general use. To illustrate, my pilot study shows a clear preference of *police officer* over *policemen* (in plural) as demonstrated by figure 3 below.

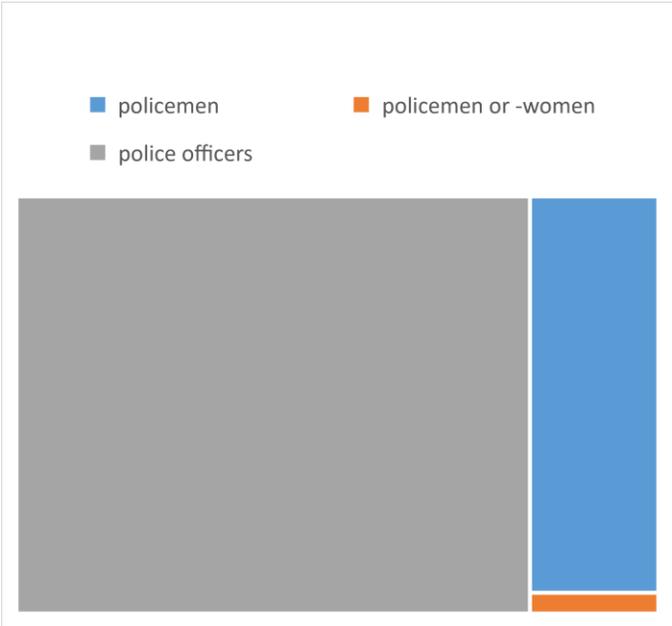


Figure 3: The relative popularity of *policemen* and alternatives in the pilot study. The data concerns the question “If you see any \_\_\_\_\_, please don’t mention me”.

The corpus study also demonstrates the popularity of *police officer*, particularly in the American corpus, although *policeman* was more common in the British data (Figure 4).

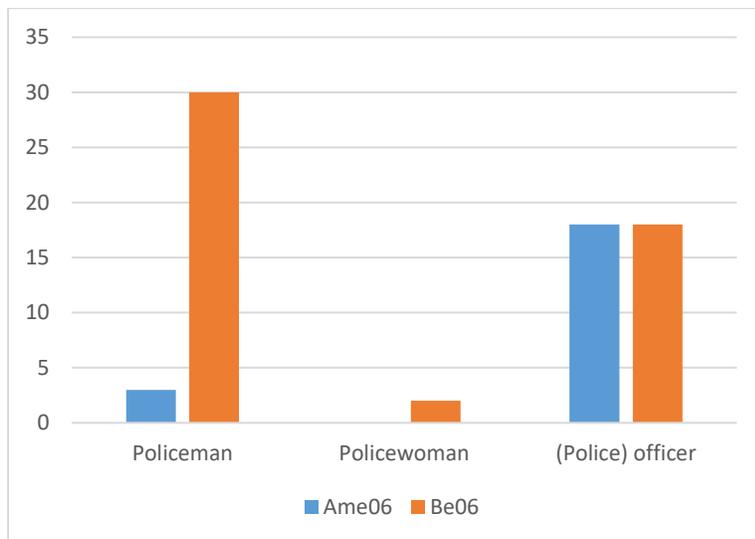


Figure 4: *Policeman* and alternatives in Ame06 and Be06.

Figure 4 suggests that British English may still give value to the old *man*-compound. The difference between the corpora in the use of *policeman* was statistically supported by the highest logistic likelihood in the data: A comparison of the frequency of *policeman* in both of the corpora of roughly a million words each produced a value of 26.32, which translates into a p-value of  $< 0.0001$ , meaning highly significant.

There could be various explanations for the prevalence of *policeman* in the British corpus, when other data demonstrate the decline of this lexical item. It could be that British English emphasizes social gender more than American English. Another possible explanation is that the British like to differentiate between the genders more. However, the data is too limited for more reliable conclusions. Still, judging from the results of the pilot study, I do not expect *policeman* to gain much popularity in the present survey because of the chosen research sample. *Police officer* is clearly an established term and seems to be one of the most popular degendering alternatives.

Nevertheless, generic substitutes such as *police officer* are not always available or easily accepted. Mills (2008: 50) notes, for example, that the generic *worker* does not carry the exact same meaning as *workman*, and *seaman* and *craftsman* do not have a commonly used alternative. In addition, even *police officer* is not likely to be preferred by all language users.

Concerning engendering reforms, Both Romaine’s (2001) and Holmes’ (2001) data demonstrates their rarity: either the *man*-compounds prevailed or the *person*-compounds had become more common—*woman*-compounds were uncommon (see, for example, table 4 on page 28). This is further supported by my pilot study, where engendering reforms were largely ignored as alternatives to *man*-compounds. Engendering reforms were also rare in my corpus data, though *spokeswoman* was fairly prominent in the American corpus. Table 5 shows how *spokeswoman* is notably well represented in Ame06 in comparison with *spokesman*, while in Be06 *spokesman* is easily the most prominent *spokes*-compound. *Spokeswoman* was clearly the most common *woman*-compound in the entire sample of the corpus study, so it may have use in some varieties or contexts.

Table 5: *Spokesman* and alternatives in Ame06 and Be06. *Spokeswoman* is prominent in Ame06.

	<b>Ame06</b>	<b>Be06</b>
<b>spokesman</b>	56.8%	82.7%
<b>spokeswoman</b>	35.1%	9.6%
<b>spokesperson</b>	8.1%	7.7%

Alternative terms include some of the key reforms used in this study. Both engendering and degendering alternatives are included, since there is no clear-cut answer as to which approach is

most suitable for English and because the study includes participants whose L1 is not English (and may therefore have a different view on the alternative terms).

In this theoretical overview I have defined terminology related to sexism and sexist language (section 2.1): simply put, sexist language is language that discriminates based on gender. In addition, I have presented the subject of this study, the *man*-compound occupational nouns (section 2.2), which include words such as *chairman* and *spokesman*—terms that present the male gender as the norm and consequently indicate that the female gender is deviant. In section 3.1 I have introduced the feminist-driven non-sexist language reform which refers to language planning that aims to eradicate sexist language. Subsequently, in section 3.2 I have examined the various strategies of language reform: Alternative terms are used to replace old sexist language. These terms come in engendering form—terms that give higher visibility to different genders, particularly women, such as *chairman or -woman*—and degendering form—terms that aim for gender-neutrality, such as *police officer*. English language planners tend to favor degendering strategies, a sentiment shared by prior research, but individual perceptions may vary. In section 4, I will describe the methodology of the present survey, the results of which will be analyzed from section 5 onwards.

## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Survey by questionnaire

The method of research is survey by an online questionnaire. Most prior research of similar topics mentioned in previous sections, such as Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001), have utilized corpus-based methodology in their research. However, those studies examined the appearance of certain types of language within an existing language sample – that is, one or more corpora. My research, however, similarly to Vallenius (2012), aims to analyze the perceptions concerning language. This requires methodology that directly interacts with the language users. This leaves questionnaires and interviews as potential methods of data collection, of which the former was chosen.

Rasinger (2010: 60) argues that the major benefit in using questionnaires is the potential of acquiring a large amount of information that is comparatively simple to process. According to Wagner (2015: 87), information acquired by a questionnaire can be analyzed objectively and by quantitative means, as opposed to, for example, interviews, which rely more or less on qualitative analysis. A questionnaire may also contain qualitative data collection, as does the present study. Furthermore, with an online questionnaire, it is relatively easy to target a large and varied population, as is the case here. Finally, using an online questionnaire avoids problems with geography and costs, though it is impossible to fully control who participates (Wagner 2015: 92). As the present study aims to acquire a large amount of data, both quantitative and qualitative, and from a varied population, conducting a survey by questionnaire seems logical, or even necessary.

By contrast, the biggest drawback of questionnaires, according to Rasinger (2010: 60–61), is the fact that a questionnaire needs to be entirely planned out before gathering the data; any fault in the

questionnaire not noticed beforehand is going to affect the results, because it cannot be changed afterwards without conducting the whole survey again. Once it is sent, the questionnaire carries all of its faults to the end of the research, making it a somewhat risky method of research. Because of the high risk-factor, a pilot survey (or several) should be conducted and several people should review the questionnaire before submitting, though resources for this may not always be available (Wagner 2015: 89–90). The present study was tested by a few people unrelated to the study and preceded by one actual pilot survey (see section 1.2), which had a broader subject yet lacked some of the features of the current survey. Based on the experience and feedback gathered from the pilot, some changes were made to the present survey. However, since the aims of the present study are somewhat different from the pilot, new unforeseen issues may rise. While feedback from several people is utilized here, there is always the possibility of methodological flaws that only surface after the survey is conducted.

In addition to the risk factor, Wagner (2015: 87) argues that another drawback of questionnaires is that the data is ultimately superficial and does not allow for a deep analysis of complex subjects. My survey, being a master's level thesis, aims only for a rather small sample which realistically does not cater itself to particularly conclusive findings. Instead of a conclusive understanding of the subject, this survey aims for an approximate overview of the topic for future in-depth research to expand upon.

Wagner (2015: 96) also points out the chance of bias on part of the respondents: the respondents may, unconsciously or consciously, answer in a way that is not really truthful but instead answer in a way that makes them look better, answer how they would like to answer instead of what they would really answer, or answer according to what they expect the wanted answer to be. It is not possible to fully eliminate the chance of bias, and that simply has to be acknowledged in this type

of research. However, the chance of it can be reduced. In the present study, the participants are reminded multiple times that there are no correct answers and that their actual views on language are expected, not views on what is right or wrong. Still, the chance of bias exists and, as such, any findings should be viewed critically. With an online questionnaire, perfect validity of results is practically impossible to achieve.

Finally, Rasinger (2010: 61–62) notes that a questionnaire should be concise and approachable enough not to turn away participants; it should contain only what is needed and be as clear as possible, taking into account the participants' lack of knowledge of the subject. Wagner (2015: 89) adds that the questionnaire should also appear professionally made; bad formatting and errors in language might turn away participants who think an amateurish survey is not worth their time. These factors have been taken into consideration in designing the current questionnaire. As such, the language of the questionnaire aims for accessibility. In addition, the number and type of the questions and language items are limited and focused.

Relying on survey by questionnaire as the chosen method of data collection offers a chance to gather a large amount of data from a varied population. This data may then be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively for a comprehensive overview of the subject. However, the validity and reliability of the data should be taken into consideration, since the potential for irreversible methodological flaws and bias on part of the participants is relatively high. In addition, the data cannot be particularly in-depth. Subsequently, all data from this survey should be taken as approximate rather than conclusive. In future research, other data collection methods should be used for a more comprehensive analysis of a more narrowed-down subject. Recommendations for future research will be discussed in section 6.

## 4.2 The present questionnaire and methodology

The present questionnaire has been made using e-lomake of the University of Eastern Finland (found in the appendix (I)). For the questionnaire to be successful, it would require either a highly controlled sample population, which is very difficult to achieve with the current resources, or a target demographic wide enough to attract enough participants, which is what has been done here. The broadly defined sample population for the survey is university-educated (or comparable) English speakers from western countries familiar with English-speaking culture. In practice, this means university-level students (current or former) from Europe and various western countries (including Australia and New Zealand) who have some understanding of English, since the English-language questionnaire is sent mainly to universities in Europe and English-speaking countries outside Europe. It is impossible to list the exact potential participants, since the questionnaire is forwarded around the world through multiple channels.

Participation to the survey is not strictly limited, so people outside the target demographic, such as from Asia, are able to participate—they are just not the target demographic. If any such participants take part in the survey, they will be analyzed separately or removed from the results depending on their number—only a few participants will not produce meaningful results. Along with the need to attract a large number of participants, this particular sample was chosen for the following reasons:

1. To allow for a wide selection of language backgrounds within a limited cultural framework. Vallenius (2012) compared only two language groups (English and Finnish) but I aim for a more varied sample of at least three language groups for a more comprehensive analysis.

2. To maintain a focused selection of variables. If participants from widely different cultural contexts or socio-economic backgrounds are also included, cultural and socio-economic background would have to be made another variable, which in itself might complicate the study too much.
3. Because of limited resources and scope. With the limited resources at my disposal, it is much easier to gather participants from western countries, particularly from Europe, and from universities and associated entities. In addition, the limited scope of the study (master's level) suggests a more limited sample.

The questionnaire includes multiple-choice and short open-ended questions concerning the participant: gender, age, language background, nationality and field of study, as well as related background knowledge, such as whether or not the participant has heard of the non-sexist language reform or related reforms. No names or other information concerning a participant's actual identity will be collected. All data concerning the participants will be handled entirely anonymously and individual participants cannot be traced. The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR (EU 2016/679)) dictates that the researcher responsible for handling personal information regarding the participants to a study must prove that they handle said information according to the data protection regulation. A detailed form concerning the privacy policy of this study can be found in the appendix (II). This form describes the author's responsibilities and actions concerning the participants' personal data.

The questions concerning the subject of the study, *man*-compound occupational nouns and their alternatives, are divided into three types:

1. **Multiple-choice questions.** Each multiple-choice question includes a gender-neutral sentence, where the participant chooses the item they think best fits the sentence from a

selection of a *man*-compound, two engendering alternatives and one or more degendering alternatives. They mostly offer quantitative data by testing the relative appeal of a *man*-compound and its alternatives by offering situations where any form could be used.

2. **Open questions.** These ask the participant to explain their choice in a multiple-choice question. They complement the multiple-choice questions with qualitative data.
3. **Rate-a-word-questions.** These questions ask the participants to evaluate a word on a scale of 1–5, providing additional data on different language items.

All of these question types are obligatory. The options for each multiple-choice question in the questionnaire follow the formula listed in table 6. This order ensures ease of analysis.

Table 6: The contents of different types of options in the multiple-choice questions.

Survey option	Type of item
A	<i>Man</i> -compound, such as <i>chairman</i> .
B	Engendering alternative that starts with the <i>man</i> -compound and is followed by the <i>woman</i> -compound, such as <i>chairman or -woman</i> .
C	Engendering alternative that starts with the <i>woman</i> -compound, such as <i>chairwoman or -man</i> . This option is given in addition to option B to test whether some demographics prefer <i>woman</i> -fronted options.
D–F	Degendering alternatives, such as <i>chairperson or chair</i> .

Below is an example of a multiple-choice question in the questionnaire (example 10):

(10) A \_\_\_\_\_ isn't the one to blame for a company's actions.

A=spokesman B=spokesman or -woman C=spokeswoman or -man D=spokesperson

Each *man*-compound in the questionnaire is included in three of these questions, each of which contains a slightly different situation: some more formal than others, some having the item in

question as the subject and some as the object, for example. The different situations may offer insight into how the linguistic context affects the use of these items. All of the situations are linguistically gender-neutral in order to reveal the potential effects of social gender and to allow a similar standing to all of the options gender-wise.

There is one open question per *man*-compound—a limited number in order to make the questionnaire easier to answer. Each of these questions asks the participant to briefly explain the reasoning behind their choice in a preceding multiple-choice question. The open questions are meant to reveal why certain forms are more appealing than others and whether the linguistic situation affects the choice. They may also reveal language the participant would have wanted to use in a situation, but which was not an option.

The answers to the open questions in the questionnaire contain reasons given by the participants for their choice of a particular item. To enable a focused data analysis and comparison on a general level, these reasons are divided into the following broad categories throughout section 5:

1. **Inclusiveness** includes reasons related to the gender-neutrality or gender inclusiveness of an item. For example, *person*-nouns were often picked because they take into account all genders.
2. **Context** refers to all reasons that are somehow related to the larger context of the question, either linguistic, such as register or plural form, or extra-linguistic, such as social gender or the situation presented in the question. Usually these answers indicated that other options might have been chosen in another context.
3. **Convention/convenience** includes choices made because of the familiarity of the word or its appeal in comparison to other words. Answers such as “sounds best”, “most natural

option” and “heard it the most” are typical of this category. It was often difficult to tell whether a choice was made because the word is familiar or because it sounds or feels more appealing than others, which is why they are in the same category.

4. **Unspecified neutrality/generalality** is a vague category of answers such as “most neutral” or “general option”, which makes it unclear whether the choice was made because of the word’s inclusiveness or some context-related reason (such as register).
5. **Other** refers to detailed answers that fit no other category. These are typically unique to only one or a small handful of participants, though there are a few exceptions related to certain words, such as a word’s specificity to a certain variety of English (particularly *freshman*).
6. **Unspecified/unclear reason** is a category of blank, uninformative or highly ambiguous answers.

The open answers proved to be plentiful and interesting, though often vague and ambiguous. Typical vague reasons given for the choice of a word included “sounds best” or “most natural”. There were of course more detailed answers as well—discussed in section 5—but answers such as the above were common. Because of this vagueness, the categories that the answers are divided into are also broad. The categories have been formulated to represent the fragmentary qualitative data in some cohesive and comparable form so that the larger trends can be examined. More accurate categories would have been possible for some answers but the need for more vague categories would still have persisted. This would have resulted in too many similar groupings of data, which would have ultimately been pointless for qualitative analysis. The aim of the current categories is to allow for meaningful comparison of the data through different-enough data sets.

However, section 5 offers more detailed analysis of the answers beyond these categories. The categories mainly serve the presentation of the data in tables and the comparison of data sets.

One participant's answers often included multiple reasons for the choice of an item. Such answers have been added to every corresponding category. The numbers listed for each category should only be taken as approximations, considering that most of the answers are rather ambiguous. After all, the open questions are meant to qualitatively complement the quantitative data from the multiple-choice questions, not present quantitative data by themselves.

Finally, the rate-a-word-questions ask the participant how appealing they find the given word on a scale of 1 to 5—1 being great dislike and 5 being great appeal. There is also an optional field for each of these questions for additional comments on the rating. Some of these words are *man*-compounds, others *woman*-compounds and the rest are degendering alternatives. These questions are included to gather additional data on the perceptions on *man*-compounds and their alternatives. Their specific purpose is to gather information on the appeal, or the lack of appeal, of certain types of words; whether *woman*- or *person*-compounds, for example, have an appealing form or whether they appeal because of gender-issues. The rate-a-words are additional questions first and foremost and supplement the other two types in a more lighthearted fashion. They help to make the questionnaire more accessible yet may also reveal important additional information about how different words are perceived.

Based on the prior studies, particularly Romaine (2001), Holmes (2001) and the pilot and corpus studies (see sections 1.2, 2 and 3.2.2), the following *man*-compounds and their engendering and degendering alternatives have been selected as the main subject of research. Each selected *man*-compound appears in three multiple-choice questions along with selected alternatives. In addition,

there is one open question per each *man*-compound and at least one rate-a-word per type of word (*man*-compound, *person*-compound etc.). The words in the questionnaire are listed in table 7.

Table 7: The *man*-compounds and alternatives included in the questionnaire.

<b><i>Man-compound</i></b>	<b><i>Engendering alternative</i></b>	<b><i>Degendering alternative(s)</i></b>
<i>Businessman</i>	<i>Businesswoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Businessperson</i> (with the plurals <i>businesspersons</i> and <i>businesspeople</i> )
<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Chairwoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Chairperson</i> (with the plurals <i>chairpersons</i> and <i>chairpeople</i> ) <i>Chair</i>
<i>Fireman</i>	<i>Firewoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Firefighter</i>
<i>Freshman</i>	<i>Freshwoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>First-year student</i>
<i>Policeman</i>	<i>Policewoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Police officer</i>
<i>Salesman</i>	<i>Saleswoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Salesperson</i> <i>Sales clerk</i> <i>Sales representative</i>
<i>Spokesman</i>	<i>Spokeswoman</i> + <i>man</i> -compound	<i>Spokesperson</i>

The words in table 7 have been chosen for the questionnaire because of various reasons. Firstly, cases with the *man*-compound and one or more alternatives in popular use (according to prior research: See Romaine 2001: 160–163; Holmes 2001: 125–126; Cooper 1989: 19–21 and sections 2.2 and 3.2.2) make it interesting to see if different groups prefer different terms. *Chairman*, *businessman*, *salesman* and *spokesman* fit in to this group. Secondly, some *man*-compounds seem to be viewed differently by certain groups as opposed to others, according to prior research (See Vallenius 2012: 37–41, Romaine 2001: 157–160 and section 3.2.2). *Policeman* falls into this group, since the British may view it differently, as does *salesman* with its varying alternatives for

which there is not yet much data. Such terms are included mainly to test the hypotheses. *Fireman* was included because it and its degendering alternative are similar in form to *policeman*. Lastly, *man*-compounds that are in some way specific to a certain variety of English, but not specific to a certain culture, such as *congressman*, were chosen. *Freshman* (American centric) falls into this group (See section 3.2.2). The collection of words is by no means exhaustive. The list was narrowed down for reasons of the scope of the research and to minimize the length of the questionnaire.

The data gathered by the questionnaire will be analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative means. Chi-square testing will be used to quantitatively measure the relative appeal of the words and differences between groups in the multiple-choice questions, while the open questions and rate-a-words offer qualitative data that will be analyzed in relation to the quantitative data. An Excel-based statistical template provided by the University of Eastern Finland is used to calculate the chi-square values. This template includes tables for performing chi-square-tests of both one-way and multiple-way design. One-way design is used when calculating the distribution of a single group, such as a *man*-compound and its alternatives. Two- and three-way designs are used when comparing answers of two or more groups.

## 5 Results and discussion

This section presents the central findings of the survey, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The first subsection (5.1) includes an overview of the participants and the general findings of the survey. The following three subsections (5.2–5.4) detail the main findings concerning different types of words: 5.2 for *man*-compounds, 5.3 for engendering reforms and 5.4 for degendering reforms. Finally, section 5.5 includes both quantitative and qualitative analysis of specific group-related findings, such as trends specific to different age groups and language groups, divided into appropriate subsections.

### 5.1 Overview of the survey

#### 5.1.1 Participation in the survey

The survey received 177 participants. Two of these (1 Thai, 1 Yemeni) are not part of the intended sample and are therefore not analyzed as part of the total. Just as in the pilot study, women are overrepresented in comparison to others (76% of all genders; see figure 5).

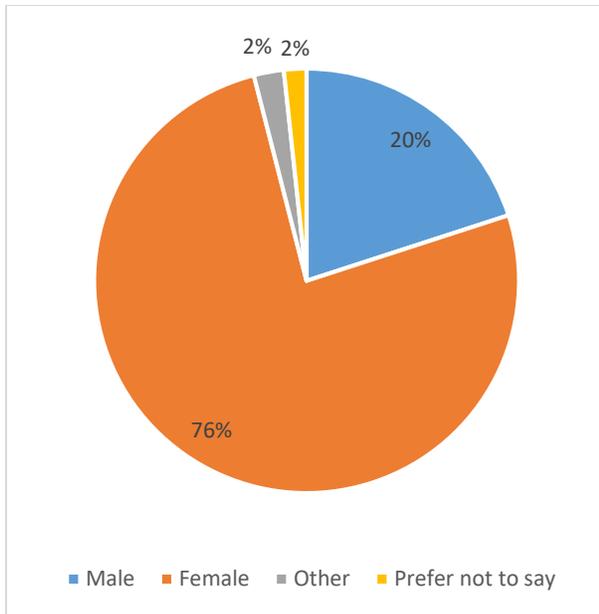


Figure 5: Gender division in the survey.

This may be explained by the simple fact that the majority of university students tend to be female in western countries and most of the participants are likely from European universities (I do not know exactly where the participants are from, only the countries). Non-binary genders and those who preferred not to reveal their gender are marginal in the data (4%), which was to be expected for statistical reasons.

Of the age groups, the 23–30-group is notably larger than the other two which are more even, as demonstrated in figure 6. The make-up of the age-groups will be discussed more closely in section 5.5.

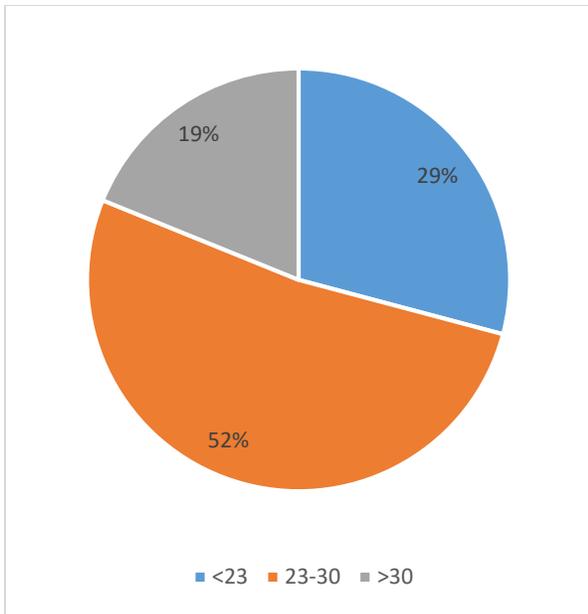


Figure 6: Age division in the survey.

Around 83% of the participants are English students, with fewer than 9% not being language students (figure 7). It seems that some participants understood the questions differently than intended, since there are more English students than language students reported in the data, even though language students are supposed to include English students. This makes it difficult to compare the student groups reliably.

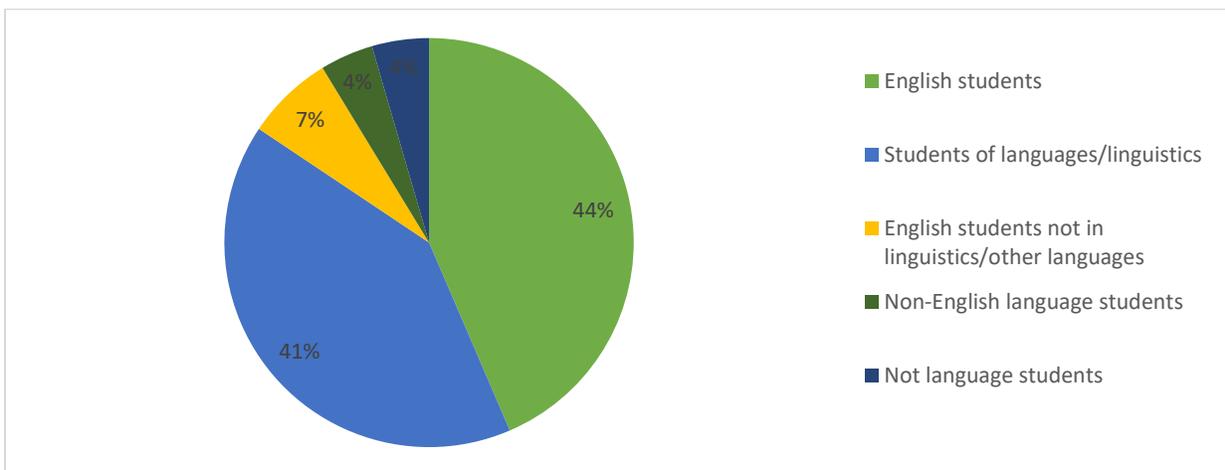


Figure 7: Participants' fields of study.

Over 95% were familiar with the non-sexist language reform; this will make it unproductive to compare those familiar with the reforms to those who are not (figure 8).

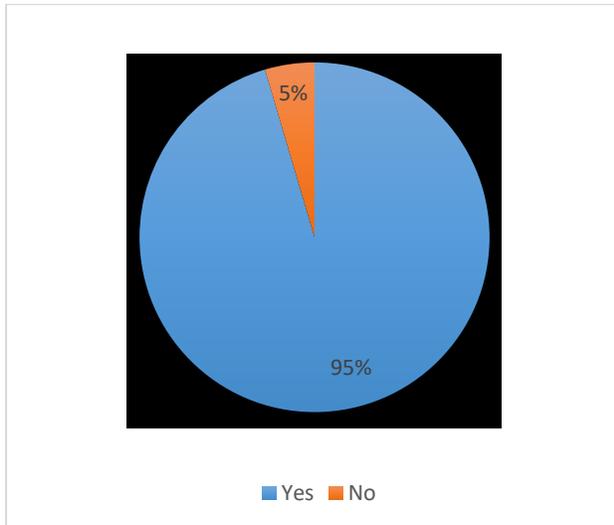


Figure 8: Participants' familiarity with the non-sexist language reform.

The language repertoire of the participants is varied, allowing for analysis of something other than only Finnish views—an improvement over the pilot study. Figure 9 below lists languages that are mentioned by the participants as their strongest languages. Many participants listed more than one language as their strongest. Figure 9 does not take into account which languages are L1 and which are not. It shows that English, German and Finnish are by far the most common languages and are partly comparable to each other in the data.

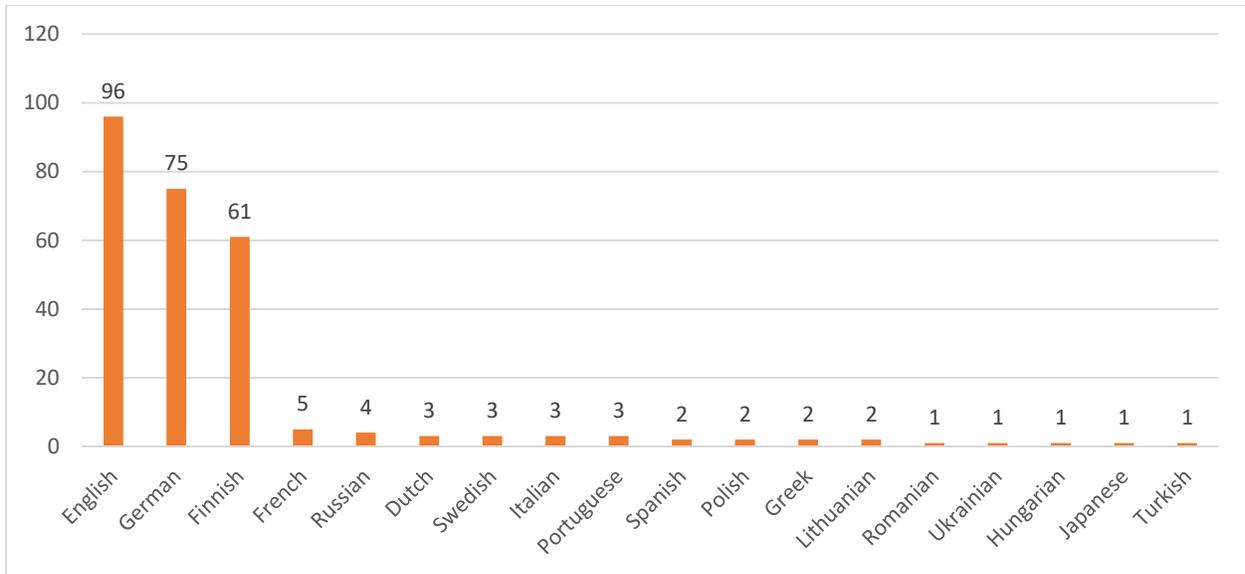


Figure 9: Languages listed as strongest languages by the 175 participants.

While English is a common strong language in the data, English-speaking countries are relatively underrepresented in comparison to strong English-as-L2–countries such as Germany and Finland. Therefore, most English speakers in the data are most likely not L1 speakers, but instead either L2 or bilingual. There was a question in the survey about whether the participant considers English their strongest language, which was meant to reveal L1 English speakers. Almost 22% picked ‘yes’, roughly 79% ‘no’, which further highlights the lack of L1 speakers of English in the survey. In addition, some of those who picked ‘yes’ are most likely not L1 speakers or bilinguals but instead interpreted the question in a different way than intended. Many of these participants are Finnish in nationality and listed Finnish first in their strongest languages list, yet for some reason marked English as their strongest language. It is unlikely that this many of the participants are bilingual, although their English skill level is likely high. Due to these issues, comparing L1 and L2 English speakers is not particularly viable. Instead, it is better to focus more broadly on language competence or repertoire.

### 5.1.2 General findings

The central findings regarding the reception of *man*-compounds and their engendering and degendering alternatives are as follows:

1. Degendering alternatives were generally the most popular options across the survey, only rivalled by some *man*-compounds, mainly *chairman* and *businessman*.
2. Engendering reforms were generally unpopular.
3. *Man*-compounds were typically chosen for their familiarity or convenience of use.
4. Alternatives were typically chosen for their inclusiveness, i.e. gender neutrality.
5. Degendering alternatives were generally found more convenient than engendering alternatives, which in turn were sometimes considered more familiar.

Chi-square tests with one-way design were used to determine whether the results for each question are statistically significant or not. In the case of each *man*-compound, all three questions involving it were calculated together with each option added into one (*man*-compound, *man*-fronted engendering alternative, *woman*-fronted engendering alternative and one to three degendering alternatives, with the plural forms of *person* listed under the *person*-compound as one variable), allowing the measurement of a larger whole. In the case of every *man*-compound, the p-value was < 0.001, indicating that the results are highly significant. In addition, the same tests were carried out while comparing different types of options (resulting in three comparable variables: *man*-compound, engendering alternatives and degendering alternatives) for all three questions of a *man*-compound. Just like with the distribution of different options, the distribution of different types of options yielded a p-value of < 0.001, indicating high statistical significance.

Degendering alternatives were generally popular throughout the survey. Several of these, particularly *police officer*, *firefighter*, *first-year student* and *spokesperson*, matched or surpassed *man*-compounds in popularity. In the singular form, every degendering alternative in the survey received at least 20 votes per question, often more, out of a total of 175 votes. This suggests that no degendering alternative included in the survey is entirely marginal in popularity, and all of them seemed fairly well-known (according to the open answers). On the other hand, the plural forms to *person*-compounds—*people* and *persons*—were rather controversial. Those will be discussed more closely in section 5.4.1.

All of the degendering alternatives were praised for their inclusiveness, catering to all genders, unlike the gendered forms which adhere to a binary view of gender (see example 11 regarding *spokesman*). This includes all *person*-compounds, most of which were also considered established or at least relatively familiar terms (example 12).

(11) “It reflects appropriate position/title without assuming gender.”

(12) “I want to be gender neutral and also chairperson is a somewhat familiar word.”

As for *man*-compounds, by far the most common reason given for their choosing was their familiarity or convenience of use (the ‘convention/convenience’-category). This reason was given 188 times, whereas the next most popular reason, context, was given only 58 times. Below examples 13 and 14 demonstrate these ideas. Example 13 concerns the choice of *spokesman*, example 14 *chairman*.

(13) “Sounds better, perhaps because it’s shorter than the alternatives.”

(14) “That is the phrase I am most likely to use. Probably because I have heard it said like that a lot.”

Engendering alternatives, on the other hand, were generally not popular in the data. Example 15 demonstrates a typical view of engendering reforms in the survey (the example concerns the choice of *chairperson* instead of *chairman- or woman*). Furthermore, choosing the degendering options was made easier by their shortness, as opposed to the engendering forms.

(15) “Gender neutral, formal context and **“chairman or -woman” would be far too complicated.**“

## 5.2 Reception of man-compounds

The most popular *man*-compounds in the survey were *businessman* and *chairman*. Those options were among the most popular in each multiple-choice question they appeared in, as exemplified by figures 10 and 11.

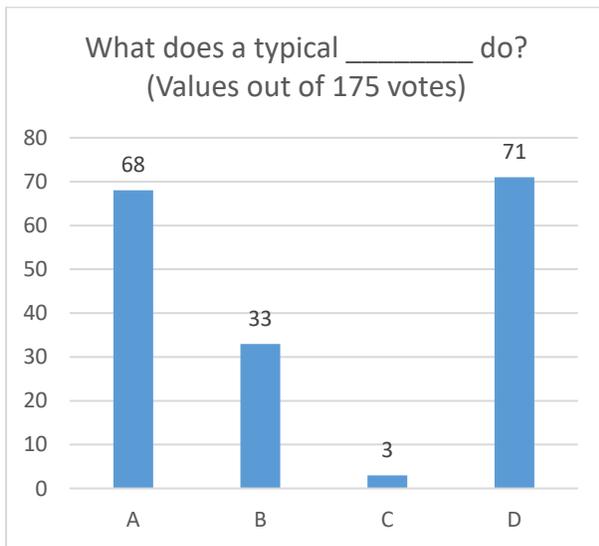


Figure 10: Demonstrating the popularity of *businessman*. A businessman; B businessman or -woman; C Businesswoman or -man; D businessperson

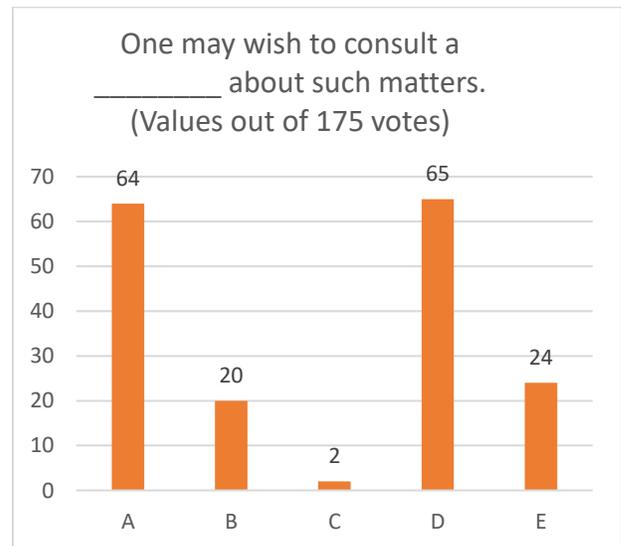


Figure 11: Demonstrating the popularity of *chairman*. A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

*Freshman* was another commonly chosen option in the survey, as indicated by figures 12 and 13, with each of its multiple-choice questions presenting its plural form roughly equal in popularity to *first-year students*.

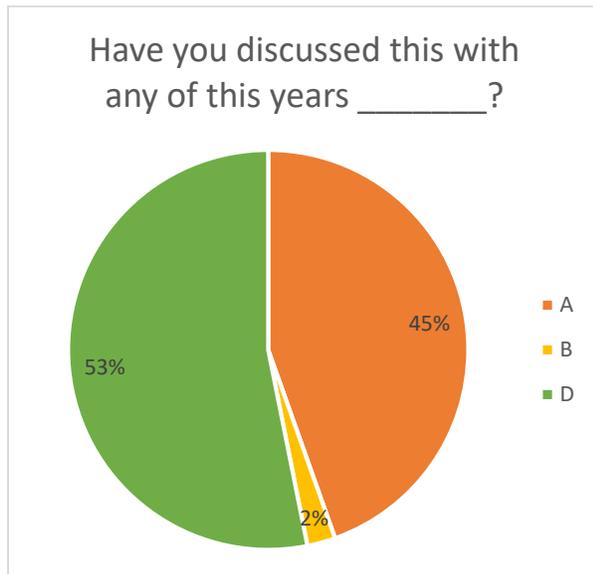


Figure 12

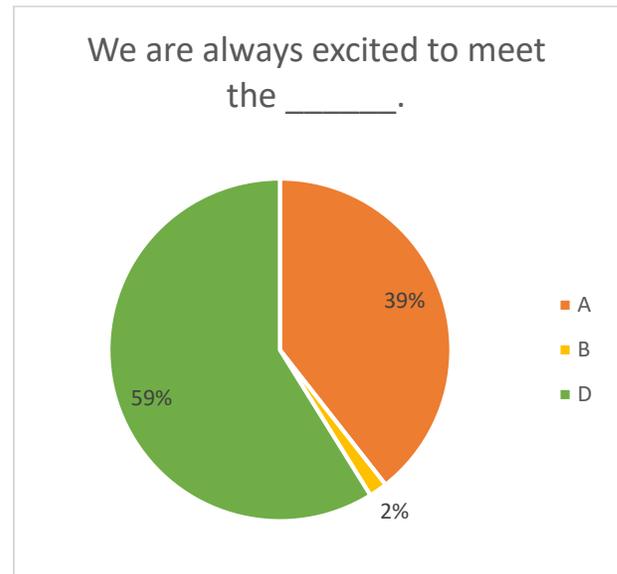


Figure 13

Both figures: Demonstrating the popularity of *freshman*. A freshmen; B freshmen and -women; C freshwomen and -men; D first-year students

*Freshman* stands out from other *man*-compounds because of its association with American English. The view that the word is a particularly American term was a notable reason given for avoiding it. Eleven participants noted its exclusivity to American English and chose *first-year student* instead based on their own language background or preference (example 16). However, despite its somewhat unfavorable American association to some, *freshman* was still one of the most popular *man*-compounds in the survey.

(16) “‘freshman’ is sooooo ‘murica.’”

The popularity of *chairman*, *businessman* and *freshman*—the most popular *man*-compounds in the survey—was founded on the same general reasons that were given for the choice of any *man*-

compounds. Table 8 lists the general categories of reasons behind the choice of *man*-compounds and the numbers of answers for each category per *man*-compound. Percentages could not be used here because many answers fit multiple categories, meaning that one answer may have been added to the totals of several of the listed categories.

Table 8: Reasons behind the choice of different *man*-compounds according to the open questions, and respective numbers of answers per *man*-compound.

	chairman	businessman	freshman	salesman	spokesman	policeman	fireman	total
Inclusiveness	12	4	19	1	3	0	0	<b>39</b>
Context	9	12	24	6	4	0	3	<b>58</b>
Convention/ convenience	52	30	56	17	24	5	4	<b>188</b>
Unspecified neutrality/ generality	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	<b>5</b>
Other	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	<b>5</b>
Unspecified/ unclear reason	3	2	1	4	1	1	0	<b>12</b>

As was mentioned in section 5.1.2, familiarity or convenience of use (the convention/convenience-category) was the most common reason given for the choice of a *man*-compound, including *chairman*, *businessman* and *freshman*. Some participants gave multiple reasons for their choice. Therefore, some who mentioned convention or convenience as their reason also gave context or something else as additional reasons. According to many participants, *man*-compounds are established terms that are easy to use; many have learned them before any of the alternatives, so they come naturally. In addition, many specified that the alternatives sound or feel odd or unnatural in comparison with the *man*-compounds. Below examples 17 and 18 demonstrate these ideas. Example 17 concerns the choice of *spokesman*, example 18 *chairman*.

(17) “Sounds better, perhaps because it’s shorter than the alternatives.”

- (18) “That is the phrase I am most likely to use. Probably because I have heard it said like that a lot.”

The effect of social gender is evident in the answers of at least four participants, who based their choice of *businessmen* on social gender, indicating that they usually think of men when people in business are in question (example 19). Social gender was also mentioned with *fireman*, as two people argued that the profession is for men or dominated by men (example 20).

- (19) “too instinctive to clarify, yet would expect to see a suit and tie and other more masculine features on a businessmeeting for lunch...”

- (20) “very few firewomen and for good reason.”

Answers related to social gender are part of the context-category, because they refer to the perceived reality outside the words themselves. Sometimes it was difficult to tell whether a participant based their choice on social gender or some other context-related aspect, which is why they are in the same group. Adding to the context-category, two participants stated that they would also use *businesswoman*, but only if women were clearly included in the context (example 21). There were a few similar answers for some other *man*-compounds as well, where the participants stated that they would use *woman*-compounds if they knew that women were present.

- (21) “I would only say ‘businessmen and -women’ if half of the people were female, but since that’s probably not the case I went with ‘businessmen’.”

Interestingly, gender-neutrality or inclusiveness (the inclusiveness-category) was specified as the reason behind the choice of *man*-compounds a total of 39 times—a reason understandably typical for the choice of the alternatives. Inclusiveness was a particularly common reason given for the choice of *chairman* and *freshman*. For *chairman*, a very typical argument was that the word is the most common of the options and already gender-neutral (example 22). At least six people argued that the word is so lexicalized that they do not think about gender when using it (example 23).

(22) “It’s the least complicated and most common term for what is meant. And I regard it merely as a word which describes the ‘function’ of the person in question, not its ‘gender’, therefore (in my opinion) the word “chairman” doesn’t exclude women.”

(23) “To me, the form seems lexicalised and thus more or less gender-neutral (even though as a linguist, I am sure that such words will activate the male prototype).”

As for *freshman*, five participants mentioned that they had not even thought about the masculinity of the word’s form before the questionnaire (example 24).

(24) “I haven’t even thought about the ‘man’ in the word, so chose the one I’m used to using.”

Finally, *salesman* stands out among the rest of the *man*-compounds due to its special relationship with its alternatives. It received a moderate number of votes, although it was not the most popular option in any question. The below figures 14 and 15 exemplify its use.

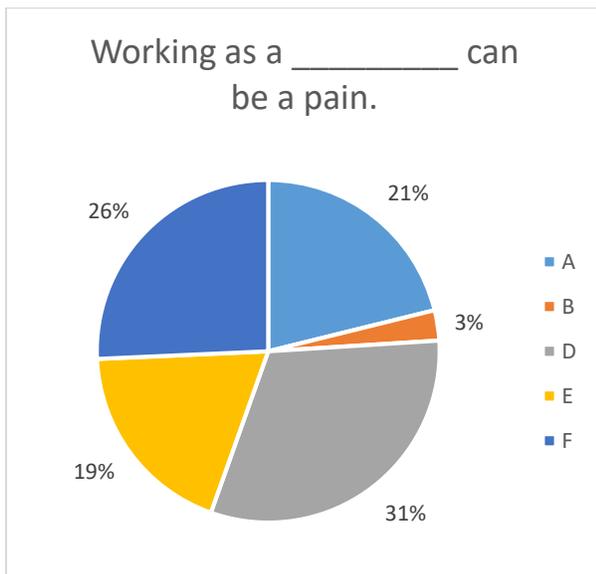


Figure 14

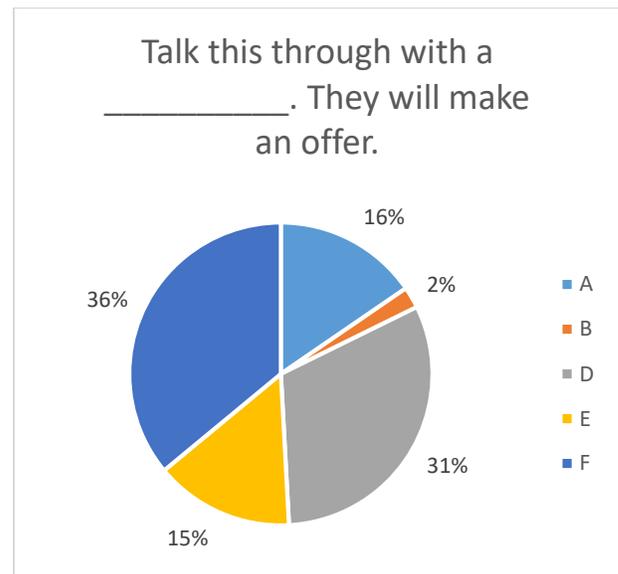


Figure 15

Both figures: The reception of *salesman* and alternatives. A salesman; B salesman or -woman; C saleswoman or -man; D salesperson; E sales clerk; F sales representative

In figure 14 *salesman* appears as a notable option among many. Figure 15 presents a slightly different situation, where *salesman* is not as popular as *salesperson* and *sales representative*. Apparently, the context described in the sentence is different in the questions, with each question

asking for a slightly different kind of salesperson. This is evidenced by open answers such as example 25:

- (25) “Here, the choice actually depends on the job for me. Someone in a retail store is a “salesperson”, unless they’re only a cashier (no actual sales), then they’re a “sales clerk”. Someone who does business to business selling is either a sales person or a sales representative.”

There are at least 12 answers of this kind (again, some answers are vague), particularly by those who chose a degendering alternative. Clearly the different options have different connotations, which makes the terms incompatible in certain contexts. Overall, the results indicate that *salesman* seems to still be a viable option next to *salesperson*, *sales representative* and *sales clerk*, but its usability is often dependent on context.

### 5.3 Reception of engendering alternatives

Generally, engendering options were not popular in the survey, but some participants did favor them in some cases. Of the two engendering variants in each multiple-choice question (option B: e.g. *chairman* or *-woman*; options C: e.g. *chairwoman* or *-man*) the *woman*-fronted option C received very few votes. Figures 16 and 17 below exemplify the unpopularity of option C. In both figures, option C received three or less votes out of a total of 175. Every multiple-choice question in the survey demonstrates a similar trend with option C.

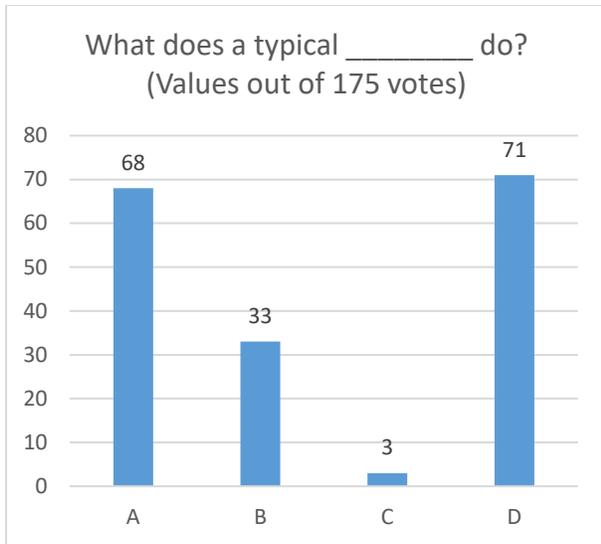


Figure 16: Demonstrating the unpopularity of the engendering option C. A businessman; B businessman or -woman; C Businesswoman or -man; D businessperson

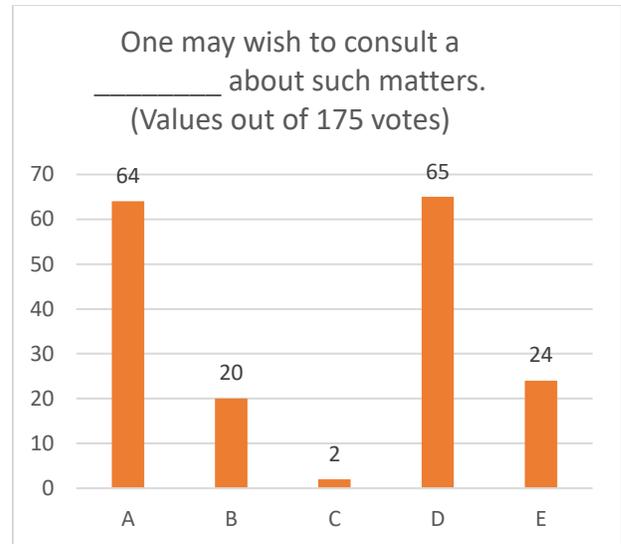


Figure 17: Demonstrating the unpopularity of the engendering option C. A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

By contrast, the also engendering *man*-fronted option B was in some cases notably more popular.

This result stands to reason that people specifically find the *woman*-fronted engendering options awkward to use.

Table 9 below has been compiled to present the broad categories of reasons given for the choice of engendering reforms, most of which were the B options. Each column includes the number of votes for both options B and C, even though only option B is shown (C is the same, but *woman*-fronted).

Table 9: Reasons behind the choice of different engendering alternatives (both *man*- and *woman*-fronted) according to the open questions, and respective numbers of answers per reform.

	chairman or -woman	businessmen and -women	freshmen and -women	salesman or -woman	spokesman or -woman	policeman or -woman	fireman or -woman	<b>total</b>
Inclusiveness	11	12	1	1	3	3	2	<b>33</b>
Context	5	7	3	2	1	0	1	<b>19</b>
Convention/ convenience	9	20	1	0	3	0	1	<b>34</b>
Unspecified neutrality/ generality	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>2</b>
Other	2	4	0	1	0	1	0	<b>8</b>
Unspecified /unclear reason	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	<b>3</b>

Inclusiveness was a typical reason for the choice of engendering reforms, as is to be expected for any reforms for *man*-compounds (see example 26). After all, they include the male and female genders.

(26) “Because I think it is important to include both genders in a sentence referring to people.”

The answers in the ‘context’-category generally follow the same logic as those in the ‘inclusiveness’-category (some answers apply to both categories), but with context-specific clarification. For example, at least five people mentioned that the situation in the question did not specify gender and therefore women should be included, as it is likely that there would be women in that context.

However, certain participants who aimed for gender-inclusiveness in their answers noted that the engendering reforms are not truly inclusive, since they promote a binary view of gender (examples 27 and 28).

(27) “people/persons is gender neutral, and **”businessmen and -women” is structurally clumsy and not truly neutral**— — —.”

(28) “— — —(Wo)man or (wo)man” is— — —non-sexist, but excludes non-binary genders — — —.”

In addition, it was occasionally mentioned that distinguishing between the genders is unnecessary in most cases, and therefore the degendering reforms work better (example 29, concerning the choice of *chairperson*).

(29) “It feels useless to specify sex or gender since the word serves its purpose without it.”

It is interesting that convention or convenience was so often given as a reason to choose an engendering reform, especially when the consensus seems to be that those reforms are long and difficult to use. A closer look at the answers reveals that many who chose engendering reforms based on convention or convenience did so because they find the degendering reforms artificial or dull in some way (example 30).

(30) “I find it a bit odd to refer to a female chairperson as “chairman” and **the gender neutral terms just seem a bit too impersonal and robotic.**”

Such participants clearly wanted some degree of gender inclusiveness when not choosing the *man*-compounds, yet they chose engendering reforms since the degendering options seemed too unfamiliar or unappealing to them. In other words, the engendering options simply sounded or felt better than other gender-inclusive choices to some people.

Despite the general lack of popularity of the engendering reforms in the survey, there were those who preferred them, particularly as alternatives to *businessman* and *chairman*. Figure 18 shows the most votes for an engendering option relative to other options in any of the multiple-choice questions: 61 votes (35%) out of a total of 175—almost the same as the degendering D option.

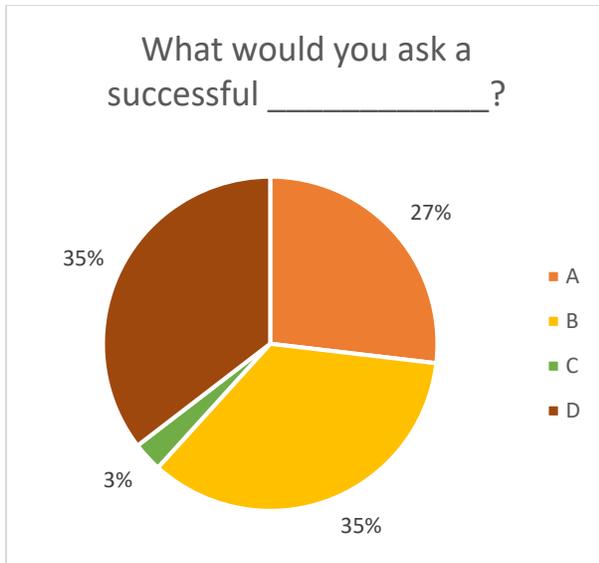


Figure 18: The question with the most votes to an engendering option (B) in the survey (61 votes out of 175). A businessman; B businessman or -woman; C Businesswoman or -man; D businessperson

Option B is generally at its most popular in every question including *businessman*, but figure 18 demonstrates the only time in the whole survey that option B trumps the *man*-compound. When comparing figure 18 with figure 16 on page 57—which also includes *businessman* and its alternatives—the options are exactly the same, yet the difference in the popularity of option B is visible: in figure 16, the B option has around half of the votes of *businessman*, yet in figure 18 the popularity of the B option surpasses that of the *man*-compound. Since the options are the same in both questions, the reason behind this difference has to do with the language context. Neither question has an attached open question, so the reasons behind choosing option B cannot be directly uncovered. The open answers to the third question for *businessman* do not offer definitive answers to this question.

I would argue that a likely explanation for the difference is the position of the blank space in the questions. In figure 18 the blank space is at the very end of the sentence whereas in figure 16 it is in the middle, which has a different effect on the flow of the sentence. Several participants argued

that the engendering options are generally long and disrupt the flow of the language. Examples 31 and 32 demonstrate the disruptive nature of the double-gendered structures in two different contexts (important sections are marked in bold).

(31) “Since “businessmen” does not exclude women, **constructions mentioning both genders disrupt the flow of a sentence unnecessarily.** — — —”

(32) “again, the word i chose is gender neutral, which i consider very important in today’s world. in addition, **the “spokesman or -woman” structure is clumsy.**”

Taking the flow-argument into account, it is possible that the participants feel option B has a less negative effect on the flow of the sentence when placed at the end of the sentence and a more negative impact in the middle. However, this argument cannot be definitively proven with the current data.

Finally, the engendering aim of offering visibility to the female gender was brought up. Five participants explained their choice of *businessmen or -women* with a need to distinguish between the genders, one of whom specified that the engendering option gives visibility to women (examples 33 and 34). Three of these concerned the question with *businessman*.

(33) “I think it is important to equally use terms for both genders in day to day language in order to “normalize” it. The way people speak affects the way they think.”

(34) “For some reason I prefer seeing genders with this occupation.”

The popularity of *businessman* and some participants’ association of people in business with the male gender (see section 5.2), as well as the popularity of option B in the business-questions seem to indicate that people have a particular preference to distinguish between the genders when the context concerns people in business.

## 5.4 Reception of degendering alternatives

A lot of variation exists in the perceptions concerning individual degendering alternatives. As table 10 below demonstrates, many of the items were chosen for inclusiveness or convention or convenience, yet there are some with a notable number of context-specific or other reasons. *Businesspeople* and *businesspersons* are grouped together in the table because both are plural forms of *businessperson* and because *businesspersons* received very few votes; therefore it has very few reasons stated for its choosing. The following section 5.4.1 focuses on the reception of *person-compounds* (including their plural forms), whereas 5.4.2 offers a look at all other degendering alternatives in the survey.

Table 10: Reasons for choosing different degendering alternatives according to the open questions, and respective numbers of answers per reform.

	Inclusiveness	Context	Convention/ convenience	Unspecified neutrality /generality	Other	Unspecified /unclear reason
chairperson	41	21	31	4	1	0
chair	17	2	13	2	1	1
Businesspeople and -persons	50	27	47	8	0	7
first-year students	38	22	30	6	17	1
spokesperson	65	26	72	10	0	4
salesperson	29	19	25	4	0	0
sales clerk	11	4	19	0	0	0
sales representative	16	36	16	4	0	6
police officer	74	42	80	11	4	8
firefighter	68	44	77	14	1	9
<b>total</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>

### 5.4.1 Person-compounds

*Person*-compounds are typical degendering alternatives in the survey. All of them were relatively popular. According to the data, the most well-established of these seems to be *spokesperson*, exemplified by figure 19 below. No other option came close to the popularity of *spokesperson* in its respective questions.

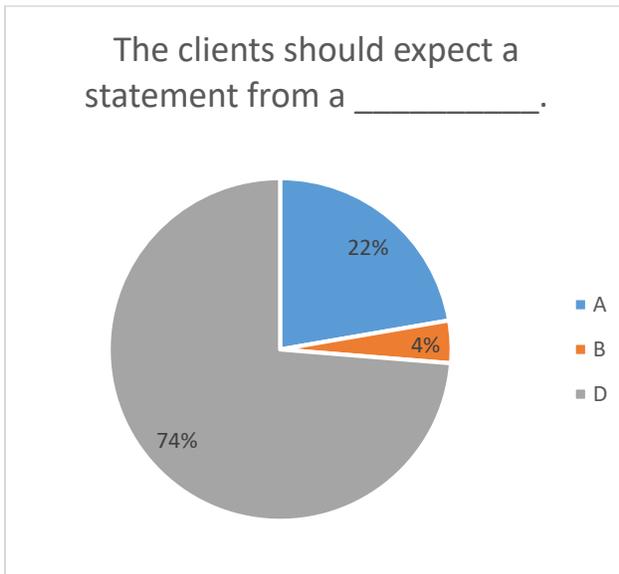


Figure 19: Demonstrating the popularity of *spokesperson* in comparison to its alternatives. All questions involving *spokesperson* show similar results. A spokesman; B spokesman or -woman; C spokeswoman or -man; D spokesperson

*Chairperson*, *businessperson* and *salesperson* were also popular alternatives, often roughly equal in the number of votes to the respective *man*-compound or another degendering alternative. The below figures 20 and 21 are typical examples of this trend.

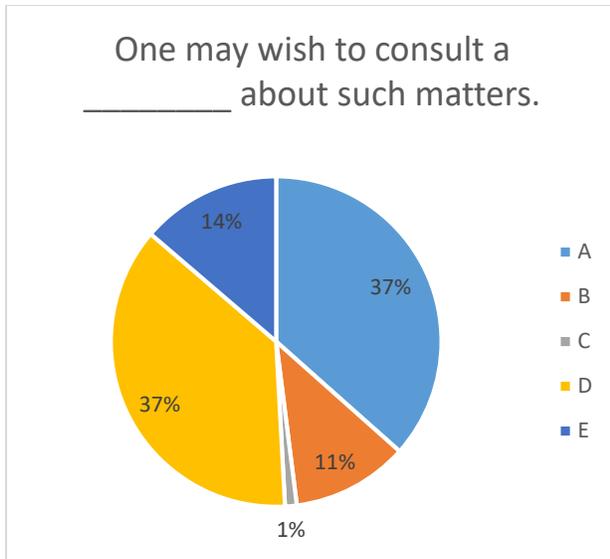


Figure 20: Demonstrating the popularity of *chairperson* (equal to *chairman*). A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

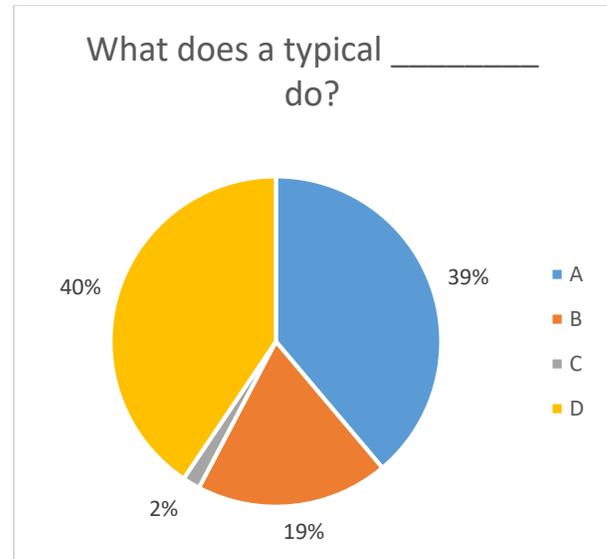


Figure 21: Demonstrating the popularity of *businessperson* (roughly equal to *businessman*). A businessman; B businessman or -woman; C Businesswoman or -man; D businessperson

Some of the *person*-nouns were considered to be in general use and subsequently familiar. One of these was *spokesperson*, which was viewed as common and established (the ‘convention/convenience’-category; see table 10 on page 63) by over 40 participants, with some comparing it favorably to other *person*-compounds. Its familiarity is demonstrated by example 35.

(35) “— — —one of the most often used “new” job titles, so it comes naturally.”

*Chairperson* was another *person*-compound generally considered familiar and established in the open answers. Two participants specifically compared it favorably to *businessperson* (example 36).

(36) “It was difficult to decide between chairperson and chair. Maybe I would first talk about a chairperson and on the second mentioning just chair. On contrast to the earlier question, I have never heard the word businessperson, but chairperson is quite common gender neutral word.”

The rate-a-word–questions for *chairperson* and *businessperson* (figures 22 and 23) reveal some views that may possibly be generalized to other *person*-compounds. The ratings are somewhat mixed, with *chairperson* having a slightly more negative overall rating.

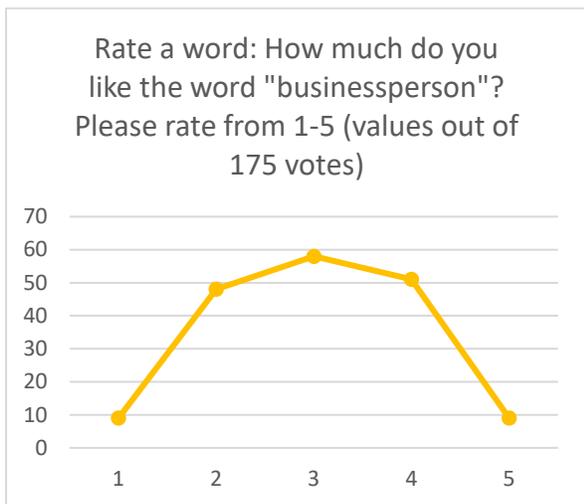


Figure 22: The reception of *businessperson* in a rate-a-word. 1=hate it; 2=dislike it; 3=can't really say; 4=like it; 5=love it

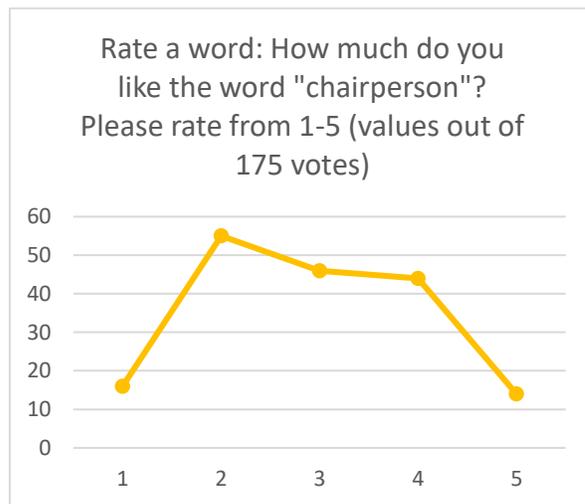


Figure 23: The reception of *chairperson* in a rate-a-word. 1=hate it; 2=dislike it; 3=can't really say; 4=like it; 5=love it

While the *person*-compounds were popular in the data, the rate-a-word–answers reveal dissatisfaction regarding the form of the words. While people typically applauded them for their inclusiveness, they tended to find the words odd, clunky or too vague (example 37).

(37) “It sounds a bit unusual and feels a bit unspecific, but it is the gender neutral term.”

The perceived vagueness of the words led to some interesting descriptions, as demonstrated by example 38 regarding *chairperson*.

(38) “It does not sound like a term wanting to include both men and women, it rather sounds like a person who likes chairs. Like being a “cat person” or a “dog person”.”

Regardless of the negative views concerning the words, *person*-compounds are popular in the data. As indicated by the data presented earlier, particularly *spokesperson*, *chairperson* and *businessperson* seem to be well-established. Therefore, it seems many people are willing to use

somewhat unappealing terms if it means achieving inclusiveness in language. Some added that the *person*-compound they chose sounds better than engendering alternatives, which is another explanation for their popularity. Judging from the evidence, people are generally more tolerant of the *person*-compounds than the engendering options.

However, the plural forms for *person*-compounds are more varied in popularity. There are two questions in the survey that include *persons*- and *people*-compounds as plural forms for a *person*-compound. The results for both can be seen in figures 24 and 25 below.

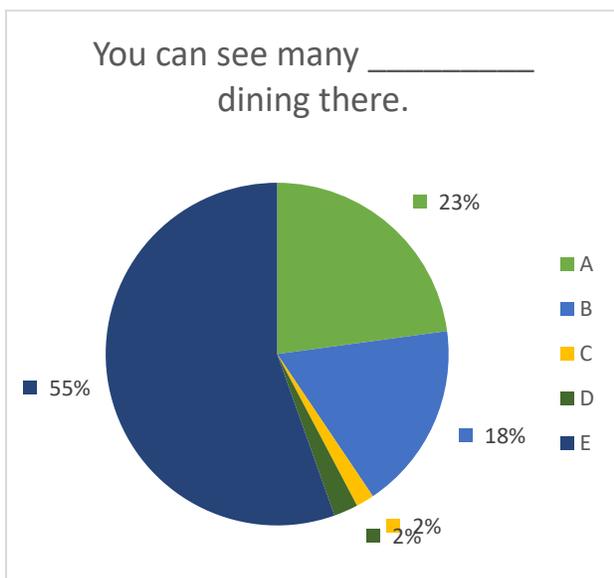


Figure 24: The varied reception of the plural forms to *businessperson* (D and E). A businessmen; B businessmen and -women; C businesswomen and -men; D businesspersons; E businesspeople

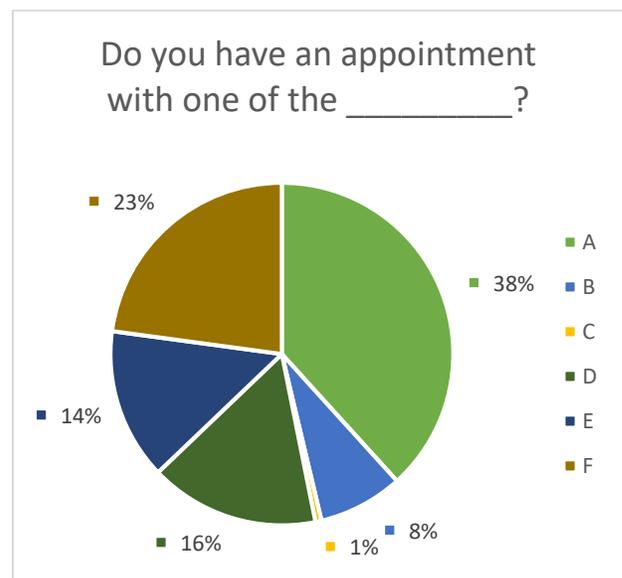


Figure 25: The varied reception of the plural forms to *chairperson* (D and E). A chairmen; B chairmen and -women; C chairwomen and -men; D chairpersons; E chairpeople; F chairs

As figure 24 above shows, *businesspeople* was clearly the preferred plural for *businessperson* and generally the preferred plural for people in business. By contrast, *chairpersons* and *chairpeople* were equally popular plurals for *chairperson*. However, it is clear from figure 25 that *chairmen* is the most popular plural form in that context.

Only one open question supplied information on the reasons for choosing a specific plural form for the *person*-compounds. That question included *businesspeople* and *businesspersons*. Many who chose *businesspeople* stated that the form is simpler and more pleasing than *chairpersons*, which in turn was often considered strange and, interestingly, very formal, as in example 39.

- (39) **“Businesspeople doesn’t sound as serious/formal as businesspersons** and still characterizes the (presumably) mixed group of female and male businesspeople accurately and neutrally.”

In addition, nine participants who chose *businesspeople* specified that that form is the best one for plural (example 40).

- (40) ““People” implies a large number of persons, while all the other answers don’t necessarily do so. As it says “many” in front of the blank, I guess that fits best.”

Judging from the varied reception of the various plural forms, it seems the first part of the compound (*chair-*, *business-*, etc.) dictates which plural seems best. I would suggest further research into the reception of various plural forms to *person*-compounds, as the current data is too limited for a thorough analysis on this particular subject.

#### 5.4.2 Other degendering alternatives

*Person*-compounds were not the only degendering alternatives in the survey. Of these other alternatives, *firefighter* and *police officer* were the most popular. The below figures 26 and 27 are indicative of the overall trend concerning both items in the survey.



Figure 26: The overwhelming popularity of *firefighter(s)*. A firemen; B firemen and -women; C firewomen and -men; D firefighters

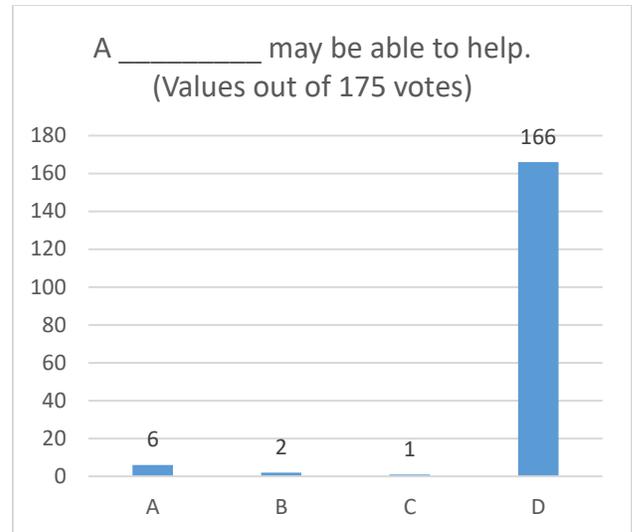


Figure 27: The overwhelming popularity of *police officer*. A policeman; B policeman or -woman; C policewoman or -man; D police officer

*First-year student* was another popular degendering alternative. It was equally popular to *freshman* in every respective question. Figure 28 below provides an example.

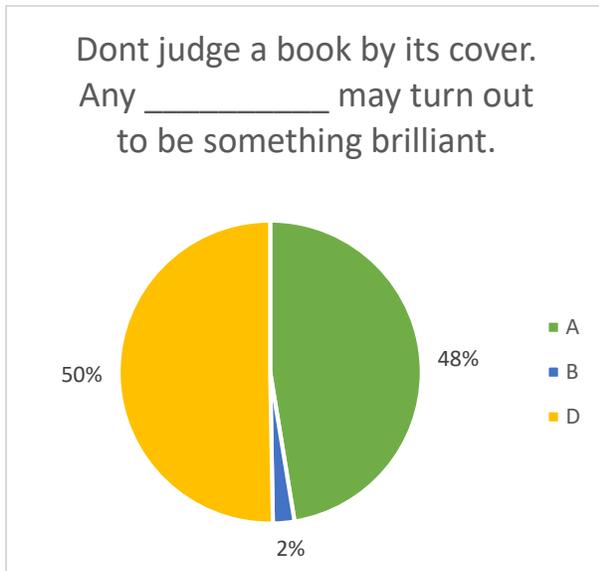


Figure 28: The popularity of *first-year student* was roughly equal to *freshman*. A freshman; B freshman or -woman; C freshman or -man; D first-year student

Meanwhile, *chair* was not as popular as *police officer*, *firefighter* or *first-year student*, but still gathered a moderate number of votes. Figures 29 and 30 below indicate that its plural form might be more easily accepted than the singular.

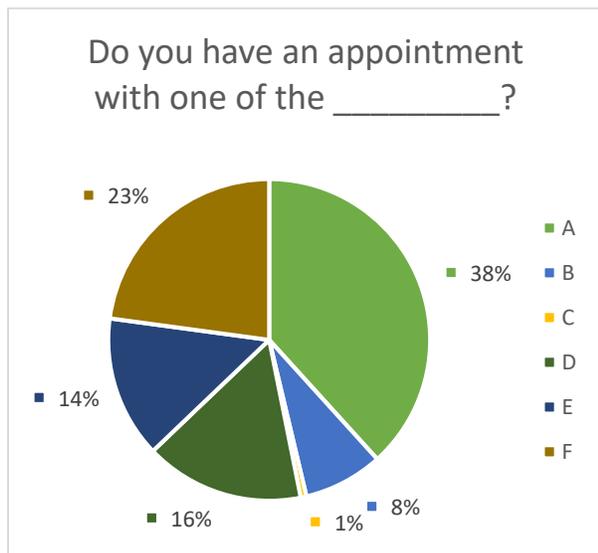


Figure 29: *Chairs* seems a notable plural alternative to *chairman*. A chairmen; B chairmen and -women; C chairwomen and -men; D chairpersons; E chairpeople; F chairs

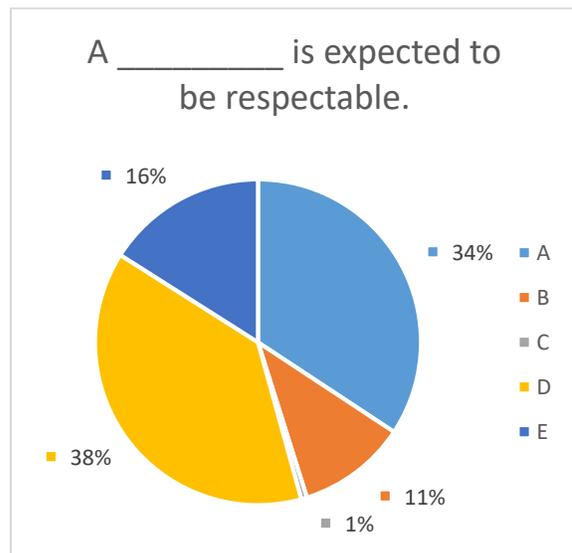


Figure 30: In singular, *chair* is a notable alternative, though not as popular as *chairman* or *chairperson*. A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

The open questions offered a variety of reasons for the popularity of *police officer*, *firefighter*, *first-year student* and *chair*. As was typical for the *person-compounds*, these words too were favored for their inclusiveness. In addition, numerous open answers fit the ‘convention/convenience’-category, many of which point to the familiarity of the word. The familiarity of *firefighter* is illustrated in example 41, which reflects the view that *firefighter* is even more familiar than *fireman*.

(41) “It is the term I learned to begin with, in fact it sounds even more natural to me than fireman.”

There were similar sentiments concerning *police officer* as well as *first-year student*. As noted in section 5.2, *freshman* was often considered a specifically American term. Consequently, it is no

surprise that some participants, most of whom are not American, were not particularly familiar with *freshman* and chose *first-year student* instead.

Familiarity was not the only characteristic of these degendering alternatives listed in the ‘convention/convenience’-category. Concerning *police officer* and *firefighter*, many people seemed to like the words themselves, particularly the latter—many mentioned that the words sound good and powerful. The rate-a-word below (figure 31) illustrates the generally positive view of *firefighter*—a rarity among the rate-a-word-questions, as most words had more neutral or mixed reception.

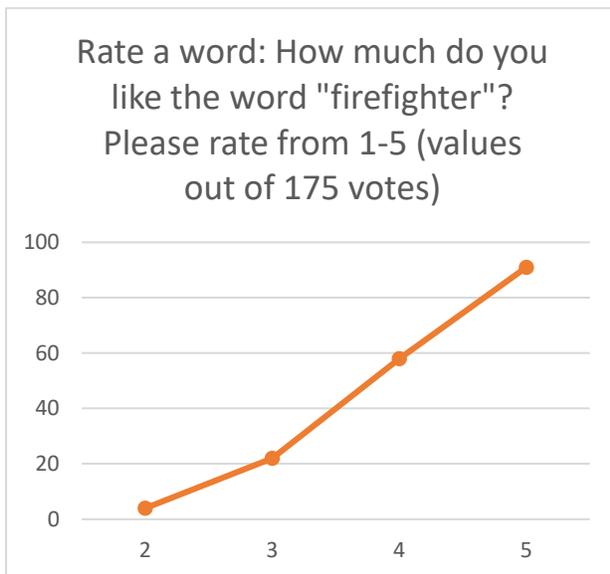


Figure 31: The positive reception of *firefighter* in a rate-a-word. 1=hate it; 2=dislike it; 3=can't really say; 4=like it; 5=love it

Occasionally, *chair* was also considered likeable, as the closest alternative *chairperson* was seen by some as too artificial or clumsy (example 42).

(42) “It is most gender-neutral but also not as cumbersome as ‘chairperson’.”

It is easy to imagine that as a short word *chair* could be an attractive alternative. However, many reasons were given as to why the other options were more popular. For example, it was noted that *chair* might be a decent option but requires a more specific context than *chairperson* (example 43) or the definitive article *the* (example 44).

(43) “I think of a chairperson as the most generic version. Just “chair” is more specific, more like a director figure, like in a university department, than the leader of an organization (for which we tend to use “president” in American English anyway)— — —.”

(44) “Chair is the most neutral of the terms, it, however doesn’t fit the sentence as chair usually accompanied by the “the” pronoun”

It was also argued in both the answers to the open questions and the rather negative rate-a-word (figure 32) that it is often difficult to distinguish between *chair* as a person and *chair* as a piece of furniture (example 45).

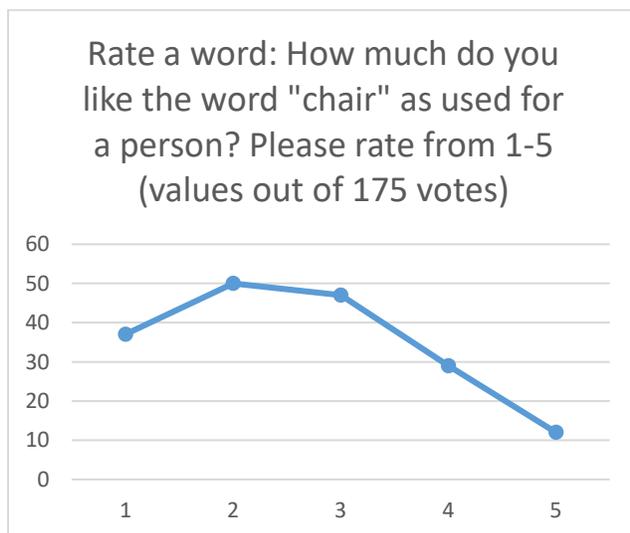


Figure 32: The reception of *chair* in a rate-a-word. 1=hate it; 2=dislike it; 3=can’t really say; 4=like it; 5=love it

(45) “I have seen chairperson being used elsewhere, and while chair would probably also be a technically valid term, it just doesn’t fit here without additional context. **I’d rather consult a human being than a piece of furniture.**”

Meanwhile, context-based answers were numerous for *firefighter*, *police officer* and *first-year student*. The most typical answer in that category points out the item's suitability for its respective profession or field (example 46).

(46) "Firefighter is actually more descriptive than "fireman." They fight fire."

It was pointed out in the answers to the open questions that *police officer* sounds official or professional. It was often unclear why exactly the word's official or professional character influenced the decision-making, but it was likely to do with the word's compatibility with either the official-sounding context of the question or the profession itself (as in the case of *firefighter*).

Example 47 demonstrates the official or professional nature of *police officer*.

(47) "very formal tone of sentence itself and again its the authority and status of the profession that important, not the gender."

*First-year student* was also thought to be fitting for its use, a characteristic that further makes the word accessible to non-Americans. Its descriptiveness was noted by 13 participants (example 48).

(48) "1st year is more precise, especially if you are speaking with people with bad english or in formal speaking."

Finally, there is the special degendering group of *salesperson*, *sales clerk* and *sales representative*, all of which were rather popular alternatives to *salesman*. The following figure 33 shows the roughly even distribution of votes among the alternatives.

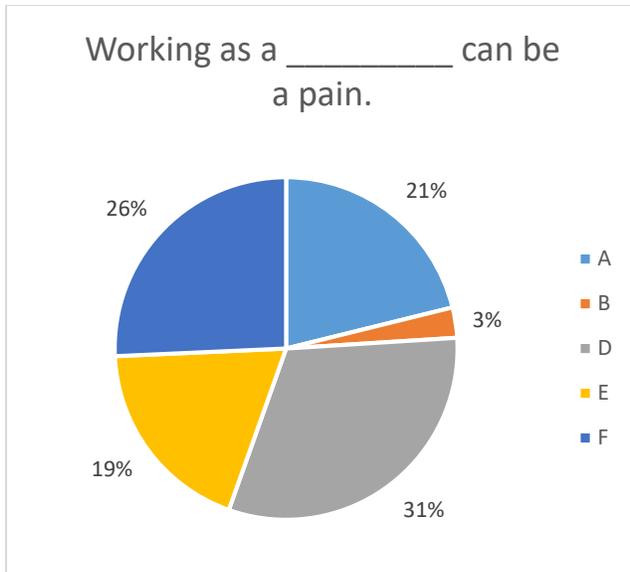


Figure 33: The roughly even distribution of votes among *salesman* and its degendering alternatives. A salesman; B salesman or -woman; C saleswoman or -man; D salesperson; E sales clerk; F sales representative

As noted before in section 5.2, these words apparently have slightly different meanings or connotations, which makes them work differently from one another depending on the context. At least four participants argued that *salesperson* has a less specific meaning than *sales clerk* and *sales representative* and is therefore a better fit for the unspecific context of the question (example 49, regarding the choice of *salesperson*).

(49) “Because it is the most accurate, inclusive, and the briefest option. The latter two options are that, too, but they are more limited in which position they describe.”

Some participants specified that *sales clerk* refers mostly to a cashier of some kind, while a *sales representative* has more to do with actual sales and business even outside a store. The language context in the question referred to in example 49 is concerned with asking a salesperson in a store for help, which to some fit *sales representative* best. Example 50 shows this question.

(50) Talk this through with a \_\_\_\_\_. They will make an offer.

A salesman; B salesman or -woman; C saleswoman or -man; D salesperson; E sales clerk; F sales representative

In addition, 17 participants mentioned that *sales representative* sounds more official or professional or has a higher register than the other options which also affected which option was chosen. Clearly people view the items in different ways, which explains the division of the answers. In addition, the neutral language context seems to favor the selection of a neutral term like *salesperson* in particular, whereas in a less neutral environment the other terms might stand out more.

Overall, most degendering alternatives included in the survey seem to have been accepted into general use, at least as far as the sample population is concerned. *Police officer* and *firefighter* have clearly taken the *man*-compounds' places as the "default" terms for those professions, whereas *spokesperson* seems to have succeeded among the somewhat controversial *person*-compounds as a suitable replacement for its *man*-compound. The rest of the degendering alternatives seem like notable alternatives but are either more contextual in their use (particularly the alternatives to *salesman*) or still in conflict with their respective *man*-compounds as to which are the most useful terms (the other *person*-compounds, for example).

## 5.5 General findings concerning different groups

In this section, the terms 'English, Finnish and German speaker' refer to those who named any of these language as **one** of their strongest languages. As such, a participant who listed English and Finnish as their strongest languages will be named both an English speaker and a Finnish speaker.

This has been done because it is impossible to dependably differentiate which of the listed strongest languages is truly the strongest. For example, some participants listed Finnish and English as their strongest languages—in that order—yet chose to answer “yes” in the question “do you consider English your strongest language”. It is impossible to tell whether these participants truly are the most competent in English or whether they are bilingual, for example. What matters in this analysis is simply whether a participant knows a language well or not. Listing a language in the strongest languages -box is taken as a dependable indicator that the participant is reasonably familiar with that language, no matter how many languages are listed in that box.

#### 5.5.1 Age-groups

The participants are divided into three age groups: <23, 23–30 and >30. These ages were selected because of the high likelihood of most participants falling into the 20–30 -age range due to most of them being university students. Some of them are likely at the early stages of their studies, some at the late stages and some have started studying later in their lives—hence, the aforementioned three groups were formed.

Age groups presented consistent differences in their answers. The most consistent trend here is the >30 -age group’s tendency to favor degendering alternatives, such as *businessperson*, over the other alternatives—more so than any other age group. Table 11 below shows the portion of votes for degendering alternatives between age groups concerning questions involving *businessman*. In the question involving the plural form of *businessperson* (question 10), the >30 -age group chose *businesspeople* almost uniformly, with the other alternatives getting minimal votes each.

Table 11: Portion of votes for all degendering alternatives in questions involving *businessman* within different age groups.

Age group	Question 1	Question 10	Question 14
<23	31%	47%	45%
23–30	33%	54%	32%
>30	48%	85%	58%

A chi-square test was used to statistically compare the <23 and >30 -age groups' reception of *businessman* and alternatives across all three questions involving them, with the votes for all three questions combined. The p-value calculated by the test was < 0.01, indicating high statistical significance. The same test comparing the 23–30 and >30 -age groups yielded a p-value of < 0.001, indicating even higher statistical significance. The difference between the <23 and 23–30 -age groups is not statistically significant, however, so the >30-group is the outlier here.

In addition to *businessman* and its alternatives, the tendency of the >30 -age group to favor degendering alternatives the most also applies generally to questions involving *chairman*, *freshman* and *salesman*. The other age groups more often chose the *man*- and *woman*-compounds in addition to the *person*-variant; subsequently, the distribution of votes was more even in other age groups. Chi-square tests used to statistically compare the age-groups' voting habits revealed clear differences between all three age groups. The comparison of the >30 and <23 -groups demonstrated the largest differences: calculating the differences concerning all of the three *man*-compounds and their alternatives in question (*chairman*, *freshman* and *salesman*, again with the votes to all three questions combined in each case) offered p-values of < 0.05, indicating statistical significance. The >30-group differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) from the 23–30-group in the case of

*freshman* and *chairman* but not *salesman*. The same applied to the differences between the <23 and 23–30 -groups.

In the case of all of these three items and their alternatives, the >30-group was the least enthusiastic about the *man*-compounds and the most supportive of certain degendering alternatives (particularly *chairperson* and *first-year student*). By contrast, the <23-group preferred the *man*-compounds the most in all cases at the expense of degendering alternatives, whereas the 23–30 -group fell somewhere between the other two. The below figures 34–37 demonstrate the differences between the >30- and other age groups.

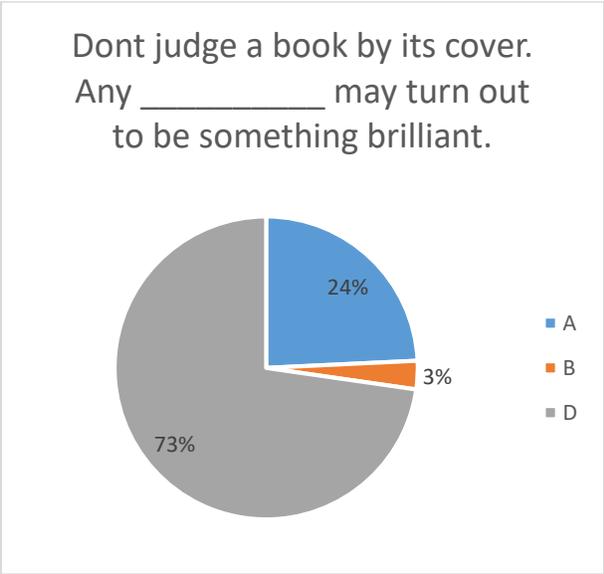


Figure 34: Demonstrating The >30 -age group’s tendency to favor *first-year student*. A freshman; B freshman or -woman; C freshwoman or -man; D first-year student

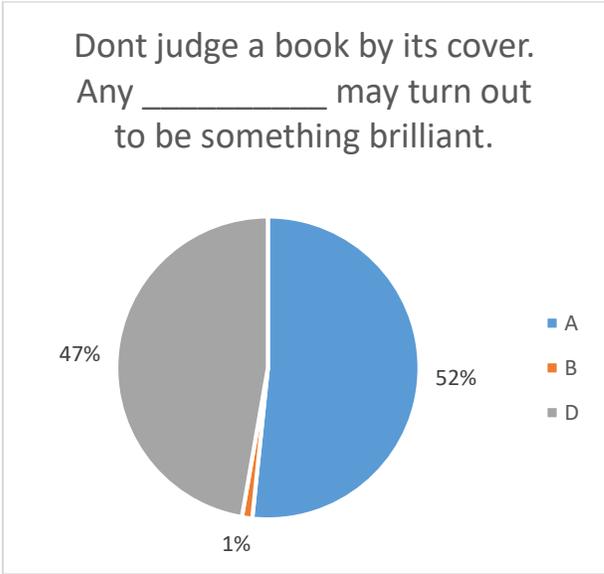


Figure 35: The roughly even division of votes between *freshman* and *first-year student* in the 23–30 -age group. A freshman; B freshman or -woman; C freshwoman or -man; D first-year student

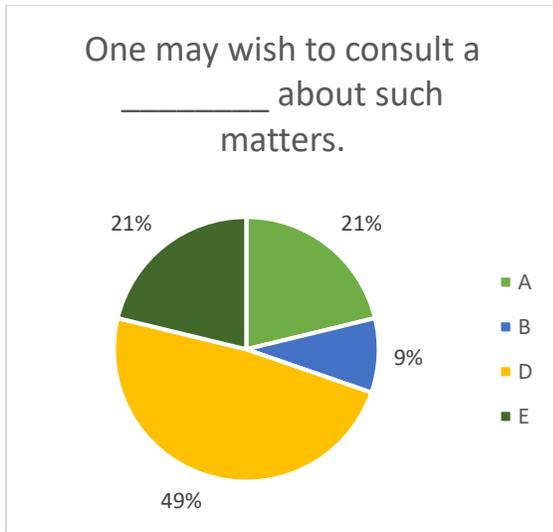


Figure 36: Demonstrating The >30 -age group's tendency to favor *chairperson*. A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

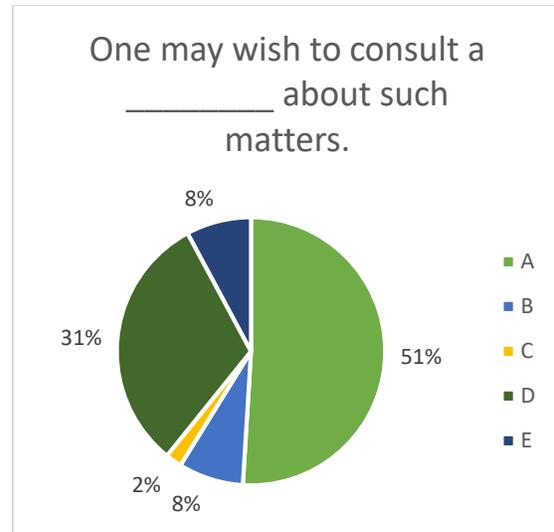


Figure 37: Only 31% in the <23 -age group voted for *chairperson*. A chairman; B chairman or -woman; C chairwoman or -man; D chairperson; E chair

According to these results, it seems the <23-group stands out as a kind of opposite to the >30-group. However, the <23-group's tendency to favor *man*-compounds did not extend beyond the aforementioned examples, and otherwise the group did not differ much from the general consensus. A larger sample would be needed to determine whether that group is truly unique in the same way the >30-group seems to be.

The >30 -age group's difference from the other age groups may be partly explained by its unique make-up:

1. Proportionately more male participants (30%) than in other age-groups (19% in 23–30 and 16% in <23).
2. Higher proportion of those who named English as one of their strongest languages (almost 70% vs 51% in 23–30 and 55% in <23).
3. Comparatively fewer English language students (58% vs 88% in 23–30 and 90% in <23).
4. Much fewer German speakers (only 4% of the total German speakers).

The lack of German speakers most likely has the strongest individual effect on the group's voting habits, since German speakers tended to favor *man*-compounds more than other language groups (see section 5.5.2 for a closer look at language groups). Without the German presence, the more general preference of degendering alternatives stands out. By contrast, the <23 -age group has a 61% share of German speakers, and since that group favored *man*-compounds the most in many cases, the presence or lack of German speakers truly seems to factor in a group's voting tendencies. Of course, age could also be a factor, but that is impossible to prove with just the current data.

### 5.5.2 Different language backgrounds: English, Finnish and German

By far the most participants speak English, Finnish or German, or more than one of these languages, which is why it was possible to form comparable groups out of the speakers of these languages. Other languages were ultimately too minimally represented in the data for reliable analysis.

The reception of *chairman* and its alternatives presents some differences between the groups. Table 12 below shows the difference between the groups concerning *chairman* and alternatives in singular. As the table shows, English and Finnish speakers generally preferred *chairperson* the most, followed by *chairman*. Both groups gave value to *chair* but very little to the engendering alternatives. German speakers, on the other hand, gave the most votes to the *man*-compound, with *chairperson* a distant second. They also gave some value to the engendering *chairman or -woman*, but very little to *chair*.

Table 12: Comparison of different language groups in singular concerning question 2: One may wish to consult a \_\_\_\_\_ about such matters.

	<b>English speakers</b>	<b>Finnish speakers</b>	<b>German speakers</b>
<b>chairman</b>	34%	25%	45%
<b>chairman or -woman</b>	7%	8%	18%
<b>chairwoman or -man</b>	0%	0%	3%
<b>chairperson</b>	43%	49%	28%
<b>chair</b>	16%	18%	6%

The options were more divisive in plural: Table 13 demonstrates how Finnish speakers preferred *chairs* and *chairmen*, whereas English speakers gave the most votes to *chairmen*. German speakers again gave the most votes to the *man*-compound, some to *chairmen and -women* and very little to *chairs*.

Table 13: Comparison of different language groups in plural concerning question 10: Do you have an appointment with one of the \_\_\_\_\_?

	<b>English speakers</b>	<b>Finnish speakers</b>	<b>German speakers</b>
<b>chairmen</b>	35%	28%	47%
<b>chairmen and -women</b>	3%	5%	13%
<b>chairwomen and -men</b>	1%	0%	1%
<b>chairpersons</b>	19%	20%	15%
<b>chairpeople</b>	16%	13%	15%
<b>chairs</b>	26%	34%	9%

Judging from both tables 12 and 13, it seems German speakers are more inclined to distinguish between the genders, seeing as they gave more value to the *man*-compound and the engendering

options than the other groups. Chi-square tests were used to determine whether the difference in the use of *chairman* and its alternatives by the German speakers in relation to the other language groups is statistically significant. The group-specific votes for the options in all three questions concerning *chairman* and alternatives were added together for the test—the plurals of *chairperson* being added together with the singular. The results support the special nature of the German speakers: the group’s comparison with both the English and Finnish speakers yielded p-values of  $< 0.001$ , indicating high statistical significance. By contrast, the difference between English and Finnish speakers was not statistically significant.

The German speakers’ tendency to favor gendered language can also be observed with *spokesman* and *salesman*. While all groups voted *spokesperson* the highest in all questions (all of which are in singular), German speakers had a slightly larger portion of votes for *spokesman* as well as *spokesman or -woman*, and a slightly lower percentage for *spokesperson*. Table 14 below shows the combined portions for all items in every question involving *spokesman* for each language group.

Table 14: Comparison of different language groups concerning all questions related to *spokesman* (results combined for all three questions, all of which have the same options).

	<b>English speakers</b>	<b>Finnish speakers</b>	<b>German speakers</b>
<b>spokesman</b>	15%	14%	21%
<b>spokesman or -woman</b>	2%	2%	6%
<b>spokeswoman or -man</b>	1%	1%	0%
<b>spokesperson</b>	82%	84%	73%

As for *salesman*, both the English and Finnish speakers consistently voted for all of the degendering options more than *salesman*, typically with *salesperson* as the most preferred option. The German speakers, however, were again much more favorable towards the *man*-compound, with a portion of 25% as opposed to the 14% of the other groups (see table 15).

Table 15: Comparison of different language groups concerning all questions related to *salesman* (results combined for all three questions, all of which have the same options).

	<b>English speakers</b>	<b>Finnish speakers</b>	<b>German speakers</b>
<b>salesman</b>	14%	14%	25%
<b>salesman or -woman</b>	2%	3%	4%
<b>saleswoman or -man</b>	0%	0%	0
<b>salesperson</b>	36%	34%	30%
<b>sales clerk</b>	19%	23%	15%
<b>sales representative</b>	30%	26%	26%

While the differences here are not as pronounced as with *chairman*, they do support the idea that German speakers generally like to distinguish between the genders more than the other language groups. The differences in the use of *spokesman* and *salesman* (and their alternatives) between the language groups is statistically supported by chi-square tests (identical to the ones with *chairman*), which calculated p-values of  $< 0.05$  between the German speakers and both of the other groups, indicating statistical significance. Again, comparing English and Finnish speakers did not reveal significant differences.

### 5.5.3 Gender

Gender ultimately had a limited impact on the results, but an impact nonetheless. It is only feasible to compare female and male participants, as there were only four participants who identified as ‘other’. In addition, the three participants who chose not to disclose their gender do not allow for meaningful analysis. The reception of *chairman* and *freshman* and their alternatives stands out. Table 16 below shows how female participants generally favored *chairman* more than male participants, who in turn had a larger portion of votes for *chair*. A chi-square test was used to calculate the statistical significance of the differences concerning the use of *chairman* and alternatives by the genders (all three questions combined). The p-value turned out to be  $< 0.05$ , meaning statistical significance.

Table 16: Female participants favored *chairman* more than male participants, who instead favored *chair* more. The results for singular are from question 21, plural from question 12.

	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b><i>Chairman</i></b>	38%	26%
<b><i>Chair</i></b>	13%	26%
<b><i>Chairmen</i></b>	43%	26%
<b><i>Chairs</i></b>	17%	37

In questions involving *freshman*, male participants gave twice as many votes to *first-year student* in comparison to *freshman*, whereas female participants voted for both items rather evenly. Figures 38 and 39 demonstrate this difference in the plural form, though the results for the singular are similar. Adding all the *freshman*-questions together, a chi-square test comparing the genders calculated a p-value of  $< 0.001$ , which means a highly significant statistical difference.

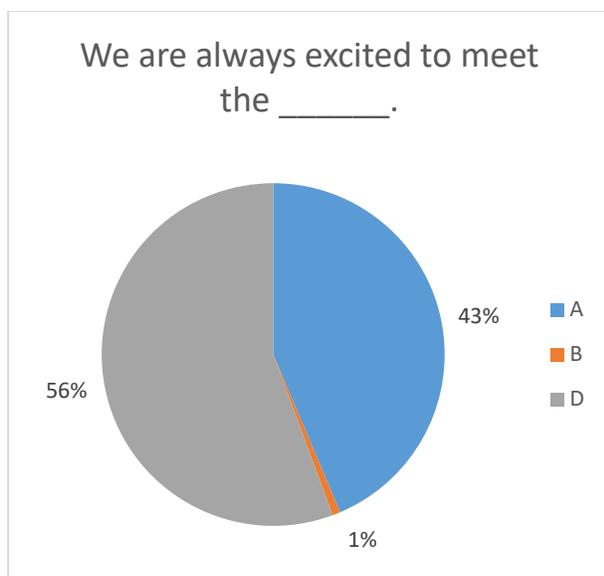


Figure 38: Female participants voted rather evenly for *freshmen* and *first-year students*. A freshmen; B freshmen and -women; C freshwomen and -men; D first-year students

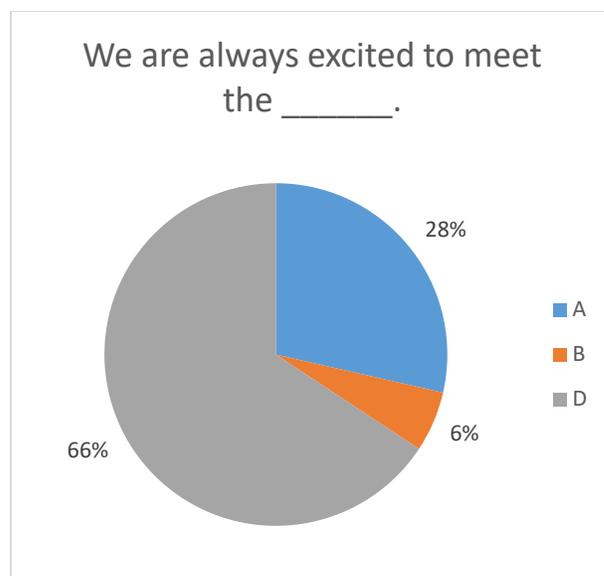


Figure 39: Male participants preferred *first-year students* over *freshmen*. A freshmen; B freshmen and -women; C freshwomen and -men; D first-year students

Judging from the results with *chairman* and *freshman*, it seems female participants are occasionally more accepting of the *man*-compounds than male participants. However, this preference of *man*-compounds does not seem to extend to all cases, but even few examples of this suggests that female participants can be just as accepting of *man*-compounds as any other group, and male participants can be just as resistant.

Another gender-related observation concerns engendering options, most of which were picked by female participants. Perhaps these participants want greater female visibility in language, which is why they chose the engendering approach instead of degendering. Most answers to the open questions concerning engendering choices do not promote this want for greater visibility beyond mentioning general inclusiveness like with degendering alternatives. Therefore it is unclear whether engendering options were picked by women because of greater female visibility or whether they just liked those options the most out of all inclusive options. However, due to the minimal number of overall votes for these items, and the proportionately large number of female

participants, this may very well be a statistical anomaly more than an actual find. A much larger sample would be needed for a proper analysis on the effect of gender on the reception of engendering items.

## 6 Conclusion

This paper presents a survey that aims to reveal information about the relative popularity and the perceptions on *man*-compounds and their non-sexist alternatives proposed by the non-sexist language reform. Since *man*-compounds can be considered sexist, it was interesting to see if a larger population really considers them sexist. Even if they did, some might not like the suggested reforms, possibly due to their artificial nature, or because the change is “forced”. The survey received a decent number of participants: 175 participants who fit the intended sample, roughly the same as the pilot study (see section 1.2). In addition, there was decent variation in the population, with three large language groups and different age groups. While the population was mostly female, there were enough men for approximate comparison of the genders.

Overall, the survey went well enough, though a larger size of some demographics would have been appreciated for more comprehensive analysis on certain topics (such as American and British participants for English variety -related comparison). In addition, there was a problem with identifying the participants’ strongest languages, as the chosen data-collection method did not work as intended (see section 5.1.1 and the introduction to section 5.5). Because of this methodological flaw, separating between L1 speakers of a language from the others is practically impossible. However, the language-related data could be analyzed by focusing on general language repertoire instead. Another methodology-related flaw in the survey concerns the identification of student groups (English students, students of languages other than English; see section 5.1.1). Because of the way the related questions were set up, it became impossible to properly differentiate between English students and language students not studying English. It was

possible, however, to compare English students with those who did not study any languages, for example. However, a comparison of such groups did not reveal any particularly meaningful data.

Generally, degendering alternatives were among the most popular options in the survey (see sections 5.1.2 and 5.4). The validity of the overall distribution of answers for each multiple-choice question was statistically supported by chi-square tests, which indicated that the results were statistically significant and not random chance. The popularity of degendering alternatives suggests that in university-trained populations, the non-sexist language reform has managed to achieve some language change, or at least a change in language attitudes. Romaine (2001: 160–163) and Holmes (2001: 125–126) hinted at the growing acceptance of *person*-compounds in particular. *Spokesperson* was the most popular *person*-compound and one of the most popular options in general (see sections 5.1.2 and 5.4.1), which supports the findings of Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001). My corpus data did not predict such popularity, however, since *spokesperson* was more marginal in that data, but that can probably be attributed to differences in samples.

All alternative terms were typically chosen for their inclusiveness or gender neutrality. Since degendering alternatives were generally found more convenient to use than engendering alternatives, they were also more popular across the board. Engendering alternatives were generally not popular in the data (see section 5.3). This matches the findings of Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001), as well as the pilot and corpus studies.

One participant wondered why there was not a choice for a *woman*-compound by itself in the survey. That is a valid question, since the *woman*-compounds could be considered reforms in themselves. The reason *woman*-compounds were not included in the survey by themselves is because there was supposed to be one clear unreformed option (the *man*-compound), accompanied

by degendering options and engendering options that treated men and women equally. However, increasing female visibility at the expense of male visibility can also be considered a method of gender reformation in language.

The *woman*-compounds would likely not have been popular, however, a hypothesis supported by Romaine (2001) and Holmes (2001), whose data included very little use of the *woman*-compounds of *chairwoman* and *spokeswoman* as opposed to the *man*- and *person*-compounds. In addition, Bettoni (2006: 64) argues that degendering language is more likely to be successful because of its convenience through simplicity, meaning that its simply easier to use one degendering word instead of alternating between *man*- and *woman*-compounds. Had there been female-specific contexts in the survey, *woman*-compounds might have been more popular, but in the current gender-neutral or ambiguous contexts degendering options are more likely to succeed. Nevertheless, *woman*-compounds by themselves should have been included, and were left out mainly due to a technicality.

Vallenius' (2012: 37–41) data suggested that *man*-compounds draw more masculine connotations than their gender-neutral alternatives. Since so many degendering alternatives were chosen due to their inclusiveness, it seems the *man*-compounds do often draw those connotations and are therefore not seen as inclusive. However, it is interesting to see some people specifically consider *man*-compounds gender-inclusive (see section 5.2). The data suggests that some *man*-compounds, particularly *chairman* and *freshman*, have become so established or lexicalized that at least in colloquial use the *man*-part is not always considered to implicate gender. It may be that the male-bias becomes apparent mainly in institutional or formal contexts, where people pay more attention to language use. There is also the simple fact that some people do not find gendered language sexist. The lexicalization process of *chairman* and *freshman* could be an interesting research topic:

for example, how the words' gender-associations have changed over time, or whether a different sample population would associate gender with the words differently.

*Freshman*, while popular with some perceived inclusiveness, as noted in section 5.2, was considered an American term by many participants. These views are supported by my corpus study, in which *freshman* appeared exclusively in the American data but not in the British data. Unfortunately, there were not enough American or British participants for a meaningful English variety -based comparison in the present survey.

*Chairman* and *businessman* were the most popular *man*-compounds in the survey, rivaling most degendering alternatives. The prevalence of *chairman* corresponds with Cooper (1989: 19–21), Romaine (2001: 160–163) and Holmes (2001: 125–126), who all noted its staying power. The pilot study and my corpus study contained similar findings and also pointed out the prevalence of *businessman* (see section 2.2). Cooper (1989: 19–21) and Romaine (2001: 163) attributed the prevalence of *chairman* to the dominance of the male gender among chairmen. The data of the present survey does not exactly correspond with this observation, since the male-dominance of the occupation was not typically given as a reason for its choice. Perhaps there has been a change in chairman-demographics since the earlier studies, with more women in those positions. Nevertheless, the lexicalization of the term and its overall familiarity are more likely explanations for its current status, though the male dominance could have had a subconscious effect on some participants. The choice of *businessman*, however, was occasionally attributed to social gender, a finding supported by Vallenius (2012: 37–41), whose data showed that *businessman* is often associated with the male gender.

*Spokesman*, *policeman* and *fireman* seem to be in the process of being replaced by their degendering alternatives *spokesperson*, *police officer* and *firefighter* (see sections 5.2 and 5.4).

The results for *spokesman* contradict Romaine's (2001: 159–163) and Holmes' (2001: 125–126) findings, according to which *spokesman* was still prevalent. Either a change has occurred or the differences in the research sample have an effect, since the prior studies focused on English speaking countries. In the present survey, *policeman* and *fireman* were trumped across the board by *police officer* and *firefighter*, both of which, according to the participants, are well-accepted, both due to their inclusiveness and usability. *Policeman* was also rare in the pilot study and Ame06 (in the corpus study), which further highlights its decline.

Group-related differences were numerous, though not necessarily conclusive. Probably the clearest trend one can observe in the data is the tendency of German speakers (those who listed German as one of their strongest languages) to favor gendered language more than the other large language groups (English and Finnish speakers; see section 5.5.2). Not only did German speakers choose *man*-compounds more often (notably *chairman*, *spokesman* and *salesman*), they also occasionally valued the engendering alternatives more than the other groups. Chi-square tests comparing the distribution of German answers to the distribution of English and Finnish speakers' answers indicated statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$  or less). By contrast, the difference between English and Finnish answers was not significant, which suggests that German speakers stand out in their views concerning *man*-compounds and their alternatives. The tendency to favor *man*-compounds might have to do with the gender-marked nature of the German language, but it is impossible to say for certain from the current data, since the reasons German speakers gave for their choices did not differ from the general consensus. I would suggest a closer inspection of German views on gender-related English language items.

Perhaps surprisingly, age-groups did have differences between each other. Particularly the >30-age group stood out, with a stronger tendency to vote for degendering options than the other

groups. It was suggested in section 5.5.1 that the >30 -age group's voting habits may possibly be explained by the lack of German speakers in the group. This argument is supported by the fact that German speakers made up the majority of the <23 -age group, who tended to answer in an almost opposite way to the >30 -age group, favoring *man*-compounds at the expense of degendering alternatives. While the <23-group was not as consistent in their views as the >30-group, both of the groups' differences from other age groups were indicated to be statistically significant in many cases.

Finally, in addition to the previously suggested potential further research, I would encourage a similar study to this one, but with a much larger sample and scope (perhaps a doctor's thesis) and with improved, more focused methodology. An entirely different kind of sample might also turn up fruitful results, such as speakers of specific varieties of English. Gendered language is an interesting and current research topic that will hopefully be researched more in the future to enable a comprehensive understanding of issues related to language and gender.

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## Appendix (I): Online questionnaire

# Survey of the English lexicon

## Greetings!

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Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. I am a student of English language and culture at the University of Eastern Finland. I am conducting this survey in order to gain insight into certain phenomena in the lexicon of the English language. This questionnaire will take about 8-14 minutes to complete.

My goal is to understand language as it is, not how it should be. For this purpose I ask you to answer the questions presented here according to how you use the English language, not how you think it should be used. There are no wrong answers here.

The data is collected entirely anonymously. No names will be collected, nor any contact information related to the participants. In addition, the locations and media platforms this survey is sent to will not be made public. There will be no way for anyone to trace individual participants.

If you have any questions concerning the survey, please contact me by e-mail:  
juhook@student.uef.fi

Sincerely,

Juho Oksanen

University of Eastern Finland

## Questions about the participant

---

Gender

	Male	Female	Other	Prefer not to say	Optional: You may specify your gender here, if you wish
You identify your gender as	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

---

Age

	<23	23-30	>30
Choose (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

---

Which language(s) do you consider your strongest language(s)?

---

Do you consider English your strongest language?

Yes No

Choose (1)

---

Optional: If any, which other languages do you consider yourself able to communicate in?

---

Nationality

---

Do you study/Have you studied English as you major or minor at university-level?

Yes No

Choose (1)

---

Do you study/Have you studied linguistics and/or any other languages as your major/minor at university-level?

Yes No Optional: Which language(s)?

Choose (1)

Optional: What is/was your major or main field of study?

## Linguistic questions

---

For each "multiple-choice question", choose the answer you think best fits the blank space. Choose only 1 answer for each question. For each "open question", simply answer the question briefly in your own words in English. For each "Rate a word!", simply rate the specified word according to your tastes. You may also elaborate your rating in the field if you wish. Please remember that there is no right or wrong in this survey.

---

### Multiple-choice question 1

What would you ask a successful  
\_\_\_\_\_?

- businessman
  - businessman or -woman
  - businesswoman or -man
  - businessperson
- 

### Multiple-choice question 2

One may wish to consult a  
\_\_\_\_\_ about such matters.

- chairman
  - chairman or -woman
  - chairwoman or -man
  - chairperson
  - chair
- 

Open question 1: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 2)

---

Rate a word!

1 2 3 4 5 Optional: Can you elaborate on your rating?

How much do you like the word "salesman"?

Please rate from 1-5

(1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

---

Multiple-choice question 3

In that situation you will likely be asked by a \_\_\_\_\_ to move your car out of the way.

- fireman
- fireman or -woman
- firewoman or -man
- firefighter

---

Multiple-choice question 4

Don't judge a book by its cover. Any \_\_\_\_\_ may turn out to be something brilliant.

- freshman
- freshman or -woman
- freshwoman or -man
- first-year student

---

Multiple-choice question 5

A \_\_\_\_\_ isn't the one to blame for a company's actions.

- spokesman
- spokesman or -woman
- spokeswoman or -man
- spokesperson

---

Open question 2: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question)? (multiple-choice question 5)

Rate a word!

1 2 3 4 5 Optional: Can you elaborate on your rating?

How much do you like the word "chairperson"?

Please rate from 1-5

(1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

---

Multiple-choice question 6

Don't expect any \_\_\_\_\_ to have it easy.

- salesman
- salesman or -woman
- saleswoman or -man
- salesperson
- sales clerk
- sales representative

---

Multiple-choice question 7

Have you discussed this with any of this year's \_\_\_\_\_?

- freshmen
- freshmen and -women
- freshwomen and -men
- first-year students

---

Open question 3: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 7)

---

Multiple-choice question 8

The clients should expect a statement from a \_\_\_\_\_.

- spokesman
- spokesman or -woman
- spokeswoman or -man
- spokesperson

---

Rate a word!

How much do you like the word "policewoman"?  
Please rate from 1-5  
(1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

1   2   3   4   5   Optional: Can you elaborate on your rating?

---

Multiple-choice question 9

- Working as a \_\_\_\_\_ can be a pain.
- salesman
  - salesman or -woman
  - saleswoman or -man
  - salesperson
  - sales clerk
  - sales representative
- 

Multiple-choice question 10

- You can see many \_\_\_\_\_ dining there.
- businessmen
  - businessmen and -women
  - businesswomen and -men
  - businesspersons
  - businesspeople
- 

Open question 4: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 10)

---

Multiple-choice question 11

A \_\_\_\_\_ may be able to help.

- policeman
- policeman or -woman
- policewoman or -man
- police officer

Rate a word!

How much do you like the word "firefighter"?  
Please rate from 1-5  
(1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

1   2   3   4   5   Optional: Can you elaborate on your rating?

Multiple-choice question 12

Do you have an appointment with one of the \_\_\_\_\_?

- chairmen
- chairmen and -women
- chairwomen and -men
- chairpersons
- chairpeople
- chairs

Multiple-choice question 13

In case you witness a crime, seek the nearest \_\_\_\_\_.

- policeman
- policeman or -woman
- policewoman or -man
- police officer

Open question 5: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 13)

Multiple-choice question 14

What does a typical  
\_\_\_\_\_ do?

- businessman
- businessman or -woman
- businesswoman or -man
- businessperson

---

Rate a word!

1 2 3 4 5

Optional: Can you elaborate on  
your rating?

How much do you like the word "chair"  
as used for a person?

Please rate from 1-5 (1=hate it, 2=dislike it,  
3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

---

Multiple-choice question 15

For my next project I wish to  
interview some \_\_\_\_\_.

- firemen
- firemen and -women
- firewomen and -men
- firefighters

---

Multiple-choice question 16

If you see any \_\_\_\_\_,  
please don't mention me.

- policemen
- policemen or -women
- policewomen or -men
- police officers

---

Multiple-choice question 17

Talk this through with a  
\_\_\_\_\_. They will make an  
offer.

- salesman
- salesman or -woman
- saleswoman or -man
- salesperson
- sales clerk
- sales representative

---

Open question 6: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 17)

---

Rate a word!

1 2 3 4 5 Optional: Can you elaborate on your rating?

How much do you like the word "policeman"?  1  2  3  4  5

Please rate from 1-5 (1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

---

Multiple-choice question 18

- We are always excited to meet the \_\_\_\_\_.
- freshmen
  - freshmen and -women
  - freshwomen and -men
  - first-year students

---

Multiple-choice question 19

- Companies typically have a \_\_\_\_\_ who speaks for them.
- spokesman
  - spokesman or -woman
  - spokeswoman or -man
  - spokesperson

---

Multiple-choice question 20

- Being a \_\_\_\_\_ is very demanding physically and mentally.
- fireman
  - fireman or -woman
  - firewoman or -man
  - firefighter
-

Open question 7: Please specify why you chose that particular answer for the above question (multiple-choice question 20)

---

Rate a word!

1 2 3 4 5

Can you elaborate on your rating?

How much do you like the word "businessperson"?  1  2  3  4  5

Please rate from 1-5 (1=hate it, 2=dislike it, 3=can't really say, 4=like it, 5=love it)

---

Multiple-choice question 21

A \_\_\_\_\_ is expected to be respectable.

- chairman
- chairman or -woman
- chairwoman or -man
- chairperson
- chair

---

And finally...

Yes No

Before this survey, have you ever heard of language reforms that aim for gender equality or gender neutrality in language?  Yes  No

---

Optional: if you have any comments, suggestions or feedback concerning this survey, please write them here.

Thank you very much for your participation! Please remember to send your answers by pressing the “save” -button.

Proceed

---

## Appendix (II): Privacy policy



*TIETEELLISEN  
TUTKIMUKSEN  
TIETOSUOJASELOSTE  
Laatimispvm: 13.11.2019*

Tietosuojaseloste sisältää ne tiedot, jotka tulee kertoa tutkittaville käsiteltäessä henkilötietoja tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa sekä käsittelytoimista tehtävän selosteen tiedot. Informointivelvoitteesta säädetään EU:n yleisen tietosuoja-asetuksen (EU 2016/679) artikloissa 12 – 14 ja käsittelytoimista tehtävästä selosteesta artiklassa 30. Henkilötietoja ovat sellaiset tiedot, joiden perusteella henkilö voidaan tunnistaa suoraan tai välillisesti esimerkiksi yhdistämällä yksittäinen tieto johonkin toiseen tietoon, joka mahdollistaa tunnistamisen.

Tietosuojaselosteen avulla voidaan huolehtia rekisterinpitäjän osoitusvelvollisuudesta. Osoitusvelvollisuus on keskeinen periaate tietosuoja-asetuksessa ja tarkoittaa, että rekisterinpitäjän on pystyttävä osoittamaan noudattavansa tietosuojalainsäädäntöä. Tietosuojaseloste voi toimia myös pohjana tutkittaville annettavan informaation laatimiseen.

### **1. Tutkimuksen nimi**

Man-compound occupational nouns and non-sexist alternatives: Cross-linguistic perspectives

### **2. Tutkimuksen rekisterinpitäjä**

Nimi: Juho Oksanen

Osoite: Koulukatu 14 B 27, 80110 Joensuu

Sähköposti: juhook@uef.fi

Puh: +358 445550571

### **3. Tutkimuksen osapuolet ja vastuunjako**

Juho Oksanen vastaa yksin tutkimuksen toteuttamisesta.

### **4. Tutkimuksen vastuullinen johtaja tai siitä vastaava ryhmä**

Juho Oksanen

## 5. Tutkimuksen suorittajat

Juho Oksanen

## 6. Tietosuojavastaavan yhteystiedot

-

## 7. Yhteyshenkilö henkilötietojen käsittelyyn liittyvissä asioissa

Nimi: Juho Oksanen; Osoite: Koulukatu 14 B 27, 80110 Joensuu; Sähköposti: juhoo@uef.fi; Puh: +358 445550571

## 8. Tutkimuksen luonne ja kestoaika

Kertatutkimus

Seurantatutkimus 

Tutkimuksen kestoaika  (kuinka kauan henkilötietoja käsitellään):

7 vuotta

Henkilötietojen käsittely tutkimuksen päättymisen jälkeen: 

Henkilötietoja sisältävä tutkimusaineisto hävitetään

Henkilötietoja sisältävä tutkimusaineisto arkistoidaan

ilman tunnistetietoja

tunnistetiedoin

Mihin aineisto arkistoidaan ja miten pitkäksi aikaa:

## 9. Mikä on henkilötietojen käsittelytarkoitus?

Henkilötietojen käsittelyn tarkoitus on tieteellinen tutkimus.

Tutkimuksessa henkilötietojen avulla vertaillaan eri ryhmien näkemyksiä kielestä.

Ryhmäkeskeisyyden vuoksi ainoastaan iän, sukupuolen ja kielitaustan kaltaiset ei-yksilölliset tiedot ovat tarpeellisia. Henkilöiden nimillä ja muilla yksilöivillä tiedoilla ei ole merkitystä, eikä niitä näin ollen kerätä.

## 10. Millä perusteella henkilötietoja käsitellään?

Henkilötietojen käsittely edellyttää aina laista löytyvää käsittelyperustetta. Tässä tutkimuksessa käsittelyperuste <sup>Q</sup> on:

yleistä etua koskeva tehtävä/rekisterinpitäjälle kuuluvan julkisen vallan käyttö, tarkemmin:

tieteellinen tai historiallinen tutkimus tai tilastointi

tutkimusaineistojen ja kulttuuriperintöaineistojen arkistointi

rekisterinpitäjän tai kolmannen osapuolen oikeutettujen etujen toteuttaminen

mikä oikeutettu etu on kyseessä:

rekisteröidyn suostumus <sup>Q</sup>

rekisterinpitäjän lakisääteisen velvoitteen noudattaminen

säädökset:

Tutkimuksessa käsitellään erityisiä henkilötietoryhmiä koskevia henkilötietoja tai rikostuomioihin ja rikkomuksiin liittyviä henkilötietoja <sup>Q</sup>. Niiden käsittelylle tarvittava erityisperuste on:

yleisen edun mukainen arkistointitarkoitus, tieteellinen tai historiallinen tutkimus, tilastointi

rekisteröidyn nimenomainen suostumus

tärkeä yleinen etu koskeva syy lainsäädännön nojalla

kansanterveyteen liittyvä yleinen etu

## 11. Mitä henkilötietoja tutkimusaineisto sisältää?

Sukupuoli, ikä, mahdollinen opiskelijastatus, pääaine (yliopistossa), mahdollisia (kieli) sivuaineita, kielitausta, kansallisuus

## 12. Mistä lähteistä henkilötietoja kerätään?

Henkilötietoja kerätään tutkimukseen seuraavista lähteistä:

Suoraan tutkimukseen osallistuvilta

Haastattelu

Videointi

Sähköinen kyselylomake (eLomake tai vastaava)

Postissa lähetettävä kyselylomake

Muu tapa, mikä:

Muualta kuin tutkimukseen osallistuvilta, mistä ja mitä tietoja:

Tutkittavalla ei ole velvollisuutta toimittaa tarvittavia henkilötietoja, osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista

### **13. Tietojen siirto/luovuttaminen tutkimusryhmän ulkopuolelle**

Tietoja ei luovuteta tutkimusryhmän ulkopuolelle

### **14. Tietojen siirto/luovuttaminen EU:n tai ETA:n ulkopuolelle**

Ei luovuteta

### **15. Automatisoitu päätöksenteko**

-

### **16. Henkilötietojen suojauksen periaatteet**

Tutkimuksen osalta on tehty eettinen ennakoarviointi:

Kyllä

Puoltavan lausunnon antanut tutkimuseettinen toimikunta:

Ei

Tietojärjestelmissä käsiteltävät tiedot on suojattu seuraavasti:

käyttäjätunnuksella  salasanalla  käytön rekisteröinnillä  kulunvalvonnalla (fyysinen tila)

muulla tavoin, miten:

#### **Pseudonymisointi ja anonymisointi:**

Tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa on tarpeellista säilyttää tutkimusaineistot, jotta tutkimustulokset voidaan verifioida ja jo kerätyt tutkimusaineistot voidaan käyttää jatkotutkimukseen ja uusiin tieteellisiin tutkimuksiin. Tutkimusaineistot anonymisoidaan tai pseudonymisoidaan aina, kun se on mahdollista. Tutkimustulokset julkaistaan siinä muodossa, ettei yksittäinen henkilö ole yleisesti

tunnistettavissa. Erityistapauksissa esim., kun haastatellaan kuvataiteilijoita heidän teoksistaan, voi olla perusteltua ilmaista tekijät.

Tässä tutkimuksessa:

- Aineisto anonymisoidaan aineiston perustamisvaiheessa (kaikki tunnistetiedot poistetaan täydellisesti, jotta paluuta tunnisteteelliseen tietoon ei ole eikä aineistoon voida yhdistää uusia tietoja)
- Suorat tunnistetiedot poistetaan aineiston perustamisvaiheessa (pseudonymisoitu aineisto, jolloin tunnistettavuuteen voidaan palata koodin tai vastaavan tiedon avulla ja aineistoon voidaan yhdistää uusia tietoja)
- Aineisto sisältää vain epäsuoria tai pseudonyymejä tunnistetietoja
- Aineisto analysoidaan suurin tunnistetiedoin, koska (peruste suorien tunnistetietojen säilyttämiselle):

Suojatoimet arkaluonteisten tietojen osalta:

- Tutkimussuunnitelma
- Tutkimuksen vastuhenkilö, kuka:
- Henkilötietoja käsitellään ja luovutetaan vain tutkimustarkoituksiin ja toimitaan siten, että tiettyä henkilöä koskevat tiedot eivät paljastu ulkopuolisille
- Tutkimuksen osalta on tehty tietosuojan vaikutustenarviointi

## 17. Tutkimukseen osallistuvan oikeudet ja niiden mahdollinen rajoittaminen

Rekisteröidyllä on tietosuoja-asetuksen mukaan oikeus:

- saada tietoa henkilötietojen käsittelystä, ellei laissa ole erikseen säädettyä poikkeusta
- tarkastaa itseään koskevat tiedot
- oikaista tietojaan
- poistaa tietonsa (ei sovelleta, jos käsittelyperuste on lakisääteinen tai yleisen edun mukainen tehtävä)
- rajoittaa tietojensa käsittelyä
- vastustaa tietojensa käsittelyä, jos käsittelyperuste on yleinen tai oikeutettu etu
- pyytää itse toimittamiensa henkilötietojen siirtämistä rekisterinpitäjältä toiselle, jos käsittelyperuste on suostumus
- peruuttaa antamansa suostumus
- henkilötietojen oikaisua/poistoa/käsittelyn rajoitusta koskeva rekisterinpitäjän ilmoitusvelvollisuus
- olla joutumatta automaattisen päätöksenteon kohteeksi (rekisteröity voi sallia automaattisen päätöksenteon suostumuksellaan)
- tehdä valitus Tietosuojavaltuutetun toimistoon, mikäli katsoo, että häntä koskevien henkilötietojen käsittelyssä on rikottu voimassa olevaa tietosuojalainsäädäntöä

Rekisteröity voi käyttää oikeuksiaan ottamalla yhteyttä tutkimuksen yhteyshenkilöön tai tietosuojavastaavaan. Lisätietoja rekisteröidyn oikeuksista antavat tutkimuksen yhteyshenkilö ja/tai tutkimuksen tietosuojavastaava.

Jos henkilötietojen käsittely tutkimuksessa ei edellytä rekisteröidyn tunnistamista ilman lisätietoja eikä rekisterinpitäjä pysty tunnistamaan rekisteröityä, niin oikeutta tietojen tarkastamiseen, oikaisuun, poistoon, käsittelyn rajoittamiseen, ilmoitusvelvollisuuteen ja siirtämiseen ei sovelleta.

Tutkimukseen osallistuvan oikeuksista poikkeaminen on tarpeen ja perusteltua, jos tutkimuksella on yleisen edun mukaiset tarkoitukset ja tutkimukseen osallistuvan oikeudet todennäköisesti estävät tarkoitusten saavuttamisen tai vaikeuttavat sitä suuresti ja tällaiset poikkeukset ovat tarpeen näiden tarkoitusten täyttämiseksi.

Rekisteröidyn oikeuksista ei poiketa tässä tutkimuksessa

Seuraavista rekisteröidyn EU:n yleisen tietosuoja-asetuksen mukaisista oikeuksista tullaan todennäköisesti poikkeamaan tässä tutkimuksessa:

- Rekisteröidyn oikeus saada tietoa henkilötietojen käsittelystä (informointivelvoite)
- Rekisteröidyn oikeus tarkistaa itseään koskevat tiedot
- Rekisteröidyn oikeus tietojensa oikaisemiseen
- Rekisteröidyn oikeus käsittelyn rajoittamiseen
- Rekisteröidyn oikeus vastustaa henkilötietojensa käsittelyä

Perustelut rekisteröidyn oikeuksista poikkeamiselle:

Seuraavat suoja-toimet on toteutettu tässä tutkimuksessa, jotta tutkimukseen osallistuvan oikeuksista voidaan poiketa:

- Henkilötietojen käsittely perustuu tutkimussuunnitelmaan.
- Tutkimuksella on vastuuhenkilö tai siitä vastaava ryhmä.
- Henkilötietoja käytetään ja luovutetaan vain historiallista tai tieteellistä tutkimusta taikka muuta yhteensopivaa tarkoitusta varten sekä muutoinkin toimitaan niin, että tiettyä henkilöä koskevat tiedot eivät paljastu ulkopuolisille.

- Tutkimuksessa käsitellään ns. arkaluonteisia tietoja ja siitä on tehty vaikutustenarviointi, joka on toimitettu tietosuojavaltuutetun toimistoon ennen käsittelyn aloittamista.