

doi: 10.15584/sar.2018.15.2.3

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## **HUSBAND STATUS-RELATED NAMES FOR WOMEN ‘IN POWER’: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF SELECTED SUFFIXED FORMATIONS IN POLISH**

**Abstract:** Since the times of emancipation Polish speakers have faced the problem of forming names for working women. Although in most cases the *-ka* suffix has taken on this role, it is not suitable for deriving names for all kinds of professions across all the social strata. In the Polish hierarchical society, the derivation of names for women holding high positions in public life (especially in the Polish establishment) has always followed its own ‘elite’ rules. Male names (with a few exceptions declining according to the masculine paradigm) have been ‘frozen’ in their masculine form and used in reference to women regardless of grammatical case, receiving the name of paradigmatic ‘zero’. This, however, goes against the modern feminist ideals where equality between men and women is expressed not by giving the same name but a name by which the referent’s sex is marked overtly. Language evolves in such a way as to cater for the needs of the changing society by providing separate nomenclature for men and women. Since the *-ka* suffix strongly connotes with the working class, other solutions have been proposed. This paper will explore the use of the long-standing, husband status-related (‘maritonymic’) names, ending in *-owa* and *-ina/-yna* in this function. It is a corpus-based study of all contexts of usage of 13 husband status-related formations in Polish which are potential candidates for becoming names of women holding high positions. This strategy curiously diverges with the Slavic tradition of suffixation preserved in Polish rural dialects, which has spread imperceptibly over the language in the shape of colloquial names for women in question, encouraged also for colloquial use by Polish linguistic authorities (the Polish Language Council), leaving speakers trapped between two opposing tendencies each of them having its own reasons for demanding priority.

**Key words:** corpus analysis, female professional names, the suffix *-owa*, the suffix *-ina/-yna*, maritonymic names

## Introduction

This paper provides a corpus-based analysis of all contexts of usage, the number of which amounts to 1219, of 13 husband status-related formations in Polish which are potential candidates for becoming names of women holding high positions in the Polish establishment, i.e. *prezydent-owa* ‘president of the state-fem.’/‘mayor of a city-fem.’, *senator-owa* ‘senator-fem.’, *posł-owa* ‘MP-fem.’, *marszałk-owa* ‘speaker of the Sejm/the Senate-fem.’, *premier-owa* ‘prime minister-fem.’, *ministr-owa* ‘minister-fem.’, *sędz-ina* ‘judge-fem.’, *województwo-ina* ‘voivode-fem.’, *starość-ina* ‘starosta-fem.’, *wójt-owa* ‘vogt-fem.’, *burmistrz-owa* ‘mayor of a small town-fem.’,<sup>1</sup> *ambassador-owa* ‘ambassador-fem.’, *sołtys-owa* ‘village leader-fem.’. Our aim is to assess their chances in this field, although, we fully realise that they encounter fierce rivalry in the shape of masculine nouns (paradigmatic derivation) – (*pani*) *prezydent*, (*pani*) *premier*, (*pani*) *minister*, (*pani*) *marszałek* etc., and other suffixed formations used (or aspiring to be used) in the same sense – *prezydentka*, *premierka*, *marszałkini*, *burmistrzynie*, *sołtyska* etc. Still, we expect, in our research, to come across at least some examples of such formations. This hypothesis is based on the premise that some of them (*sędzina*, *starościna*, *sołtysowa*, *wójtowa*) already function in colloquial Polish. Furthermore, an extensive vocabulary system in the field of female names is also typical of Polish dialects (Miodek 1999: 88, Urbańczyk 1972: 39-40). Thus, it is possible that some husband status-related names are used in reference to local elite women by the Polish rural society.

The proposed analysis is based on the data from the National Corpus of Polish (Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego NKJP) (Przepiórkowski et al. 2012) available online at <http://nkjp.pl/> obtained with the aid of the PELCRA search engine. The names submitted for the analysis come from two reverse dictionaries – *Indeks a tergo do Słownika języka polskiego pod redakcją Witolda Doroszewskiego* and *Indeks a tergo do Uniwersalnego słownika języka polskiego* (ed. Bańko 2003). In addition, seven dictionaries were used to provide background knowledge about the formations with a view to forming a basis for comparison between the theoretical lexicon of the native speaker, as represented in the dictionaries, and the linguistic reality, as represented in the Corpus. They are *the Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Słownik Języka Polskiego) (1807-1814) by S. B. Linde (Lsjp), *The Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Słownik Języka Polskiego) (1900-1927) by J. Karłowicz (Ksjp), *The Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Słownik Języka Polskiego) (1958-1969) by W. Doroszewski (Dosjp), *The Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Słownik Języka Polskiego) (1978-1981) by M. Szymczak (Szsjp), *The Universal Dictionary of the Polish*

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<sup>1</sup> In Poland the mayor of a town with the population below 1000,000 is called *burmistrz* (although *prezydent* has been a traditional title used there even before 1990).

*Language* (Uniwersalny Słownik Języka Polskiego) (2003) by S. Dubisz (Dusjp), *The Dictionary of the Polish Language PWN* (Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN) (Sjp PWN) available online at <https://sjp.pwn.pl/>, and *the Etymological Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Słownik Etymologiczny Języka Polskiego) by W. Boryś (Bsejp).

### **The position of women and derivation**

It has not always been obvious that women can hold high positions in the society. In the Middle Ages a woman was dependent first on her father, and then on her husband or brother (Bogucka 2005: 76, Bystróż 1994: 120). And her role as a wife was strictly defined – she was ‘the first servant’ responsible for the children, the house and the farm (Bystróż 1994: 121; Cf. Chwalba 2009: 610). Peasant women busied themselves with tending cows and poultry, producing food, cooking, weaving etc. Town women helped their husbands in the craft workshops or merchant’s offices (Bogucka 2005: 65-68). And it was only after the economic changes of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (industrialisation, urbanisation and working migrations) that women began ‘going to work’ (working outside the family and the household). First, they became a cheap working force for factories, smelter plants and mines (Bogucka 2005: 247). Another hallmark was the First World War when men went fighting on the front, leaving vacancies not only in factories, but also in bureaux, offices, banks, shops etc. that had to be filled (Bogucka 2005: 279). Women also began to fight for their rights to vote – in England the suffragette movement expanded (Bogucka 2005: 263-270, Chwalba 2009: 612-613), and to study (also at universities) (Chwalba 2009: 614-615, Bogucka 2005: 263). Since that time, step by step, women have been moving up the social ladder winning access to more prestigious jobs (Chwalba 2009: 615) to become, finally, part of the ruling elite. Admittedly, men still significantly outnumber women in this respect (Bogucka 2005: 316-318).

The changing reality required changes in the linguistic system. Thus, names for working women had to be coined (a woman was no longer somebody’s daughter, wife or sister only). What is special about it here is the dichotomisation of the language that separates names for lower and middle class working women from those ‘in power’ (being part of the ruling elite), employing different linguistic devices in the derivation of both, and sometimes still hesitating how to do it (Klemensiewicz 1957: 101-119, Jadacka 2000: 1767-1768, Miodek 1999: 86-89, Łaziński 2006: 248, Kubiszyn-Mędrala 2007: 32).<sup>2</sup> Thus, in Polish a

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<sup>2</sup> This hesitation can be illustrated by the attempt made by Joanna Mucha, the Minister of Sport and Tourism, who coined the art house derivative *ministra* ‘a female minister’, in the political chat-show *Tomasz Lis na żywo* (Lis 2012). This has become the subject of debate among both linguists

woman can be called *fryzjer-ka* ‘hairstylist-fem.’, *kuchar-ka* ‘cook-fem.’, *krawc-owa* ‘dressmaker-fem.’, *kosmetycz-ka* ‘beautician-fem.’, *laborant-ka* ‘laboratory assistant-fem.’, *sekreter-ka* ‘secretary-fem.’, *nauczyciel-ka* ‘teacher-fem.’, *śpiewacz-ka* ‘singer-fem.’ etc. But, if she becomes a party secretary or a minister nobody dares to call her *sekreterka* or \**ministerka*, but (*pani*) *sekreterz*, (*pani*) *minister*. \**Prezydentka* would not be the right name for a potential woman president in Poland as well (perhaps except for feminists). That would not be respectful enough. While for a woman *vogt*, a village leader or a headmistress speakers vacillate between *wójcina*, *wójtka*, *wójtowa* and (*pani*) *wójt*, *sołtyska*, *sołtysowa* and (*pani*) *sołtys*, *dyrektorka* and (*pani*) *dyrektor*.

Polish is a highly affixing language, which does not exclude the existence of other word-formation devices such as compounding, back-formation and paradigmatic derivation (Szymanek 2015: 21-22). And it is the first (affixation) and the last (paradigmatic derivation) device that will be taken into account in the area in question. This great variety of choice, however, especially as regards feminine suffixes (*-ka*, *-ica*, *-ina/-yna*, *-owa*, *-ini*) does not make things easier. Some affixes have already assumed a specific semantic ‘tinge’, or have another meaning, or some other drawback – the *-ka* suffix is for the working class (as mentioned above), often not ‘respectful’ enough, “marked by a shade of humorousness” (Reczek 1993), *-ica* specialises in ‘bad girls’ – *grzesznica* ‘sinner-fem.’, *anielica* ‘naughty girl, lit. ‘bad angel’’, *złośnica* ‘vixen’, *szefica*<sub>hum</sub> ‘an over-requiring boss-fem.’<sup>3</sup>), and the *-ina* and *-owa* suffixes are reserved for wives.<sup>4</sup>

The paradigmatic derivation is not a perfect solution either. The paradigmatic zero in *minister*, *premier* or *wójt* is grammatically masculine and sounds awkward with feminine verb forms such as *powiedziała* ‘say-3.SG.PST.FEM’, *podpisała* ‘sign-3.SG.PST.FEM’, *stwierdziła* ‘state-3.SG.PST.FEM’ etc. (Thus, it is often supported by the honorific pronoun *pani*.)

- (1) *Pan minister* NOM.SG.MASC. *powiedział* 3.SG.PST.MASC., *że nie trzeba płacić podatku.*  
 ‘The minister (man, honorific) said that the tax was not to be paid.’

*Pani minister* NOM.SG.MASC. *powiedziała* 3.SG.PST.FEM., *że nie trzeba płacić podatku.*  
 ‘The minister (woman, honorific) said that the tax was not to be paid.’

As regards other formations, *marszałkini* is a fresh invention speakers are not accustomed to (0 occurrences), and *ministra* goes beyond the framework of Polish word-formation devices used in the formation of female names (Bloch-

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and non-linguists (Lis 2012, Bloch-Trojnar 2015: 206-220), an official stance issued by the Polish Language Council (Rada Języka Polskiego 2012), and mocking comments on TV (Gąbka 2012).

<sup>3</sup> An occasionalism coined by one of the author’s friends.

<sup>4</sup> See Jadacka (2000: 1602-1603, 1607-1608) for a discussion of the suffixes *-ina/-yna* and *-owa*.

Trojnar 2015). Perhaps these attempts are the best evidence of the difficulty language users have in dealing with the problem.<sup>5</sup>

### Husband status-related names in Polish

The most commonly used husband status-related or ‘maritonymic’<sup>6</sup> female names are those with the suffix *-owa*, typical of Polish as well as other Slavic languages such as Czech, Slovak and Slovenian. The suffix is frequently attached to male surnames to denote a wife – *Kowalczykowa* ‘Kowalczyk’s wife’ (Polish), *Nováková* ‘Novák’s wife’ (Czech, Slovak), *Kozakova* ‘Kozak’s wife’ (Slovenian), though the languages differ as regards stylistic details and legal regulations concerning such surnames (Nowakowska 2016). In addition to this, the suffix *-owa* in Polish derives common female names from male ones denoting a professional or a highly-placed man. Thus, there exist derivatives such as *aptekarz* ‘chemist’ – *aptekarzowa* ‘chemist’s wife’, *doktor* ‘doctor’ – *doktorowa* ‘doctor’s wife’, *dyrektor* ‘headmaster’ – *dyrektorowa* ‘headmaster’s wife’, *general* ‘general’ – *generalowa* ‘general’s wife’, *inżynier* ‘engineer’ – *inżynierowa* ‘engineer’s wife’, *mecenas* ‘lawyer’ – *mecenasowa* ‘lawyer’s wife’, *naczelnik* ‘governor’ – *naczelnikowa* ‘governor’s wife’, *wójt* ‘vogt’ – *wójtowa* ‘vogt’s wife’, *kucharz* – *kucharzowa* ‘cook’s wife’, *ochmistrz* ‘chief steward’ – *ochmistrzowa* ‘chief steward’s wife’, *marynarz* ‘male sailor’ – *marynarzowa* ‘sailor’s wife’ etc., which emphasise the wife’s social status.

Another suffix employed in the ‘maritonymic’ field is *-ina/-yna* deriving, similarly to *-owa*, names (and surnames) of wives from the names of positions held by their husbands. Derivatives of this kind are *wojewoda* ‘voivode’ – *wojewodzina* ‘voivode’s wife’, *sędzia* ‘judge’ – *sędzina* ‘judge’s wife’, *starosta* ‘starosta, leader’ – *starościna* ‘starosta’s wife’, *gazda* ‘a farmer in the Polish Carpathians’ – *gazdzina* ‘gazda’s wife’, *leśniczy* ‘forester’ – *leśniczyna* ‘forester’s wife’, *Zaręba* – *Zarębina* ‘Zaręba’s wife’, *Kościuszko* –

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<sup>5</sup> For more detailed information regarding the derivation of female names of professions/professions and titles the reader is referred to Benni (1933: 184-187), Obrębska-Jabłońska (1949: 1-4), Klemensiewicz (1957: 101-119), Kupiszewski (1967: 371-374), Satkiewicz (1981: 142-143), Nowosad-Bakalarczyk (2006: 126-136) and Kępińska (2007: 79-84). Kreja (1964: 129-140) extensively discusses the specialisation of feminine suffixes. See Sujecka (1978: 30-34) and Kaproń-Charzyńska (2006: 260-270) for the derivation of female names. Different attitudes towards the formation of female occupational names and their use over the period from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the present day are outlined by Woźniak (2014: 295-312).

<sup>6</sup> The term ‘maritonymic’ is our own coinage based on the Polish term ‘marytonimiczny’ used in ‘nazwy marytonimiczne’ by Halina Wiśniewska in *Świat płci żeńskiej baroku zaklęty w słowach* (Wiśniewska 2003:15), meaning husband status-related names (next to ‘patronimiczne’ meaning ‘patronymic’ or father status-related).

*Kościuszczyzna* ‘Kościuszko’s wife’ etc. However, according to Skudrzykowa, this suffix is being replaced by its rival *-owa* (so doublets are possible *Piętka – Piętczyzna/Piętkowa*). The *-owa* suffix does not trigger any phonetic changes in the root cf. *Waga – Ważyna/Wagowa*, which is formally and semantically transparent (Skudrzykowa 1996: 19).

Other ‘maritonymic’ suffixes, used in dialects, are *-ka* (Little Poland), as in *kowalka* ‘smith’s wife’ (Grzegorzczkova 1984: 52), *ciesielka* or *cymermanka* ‘carpenter’s wife’, *krawczka* ‘tailor’s wife’, *lokajka* ‘valet’s wife’, *organistka* ‘organist’s wife’, *szewczka* ‘shoemaker’s wife’, *zbójniczka* ‘ruffian’s wife’ (Cyran 1977: 24), *sołtyska* ‘village leader’s wife<sub>obs, dial.</sub>’ (Dosjp), and *-ula* (Silesia), as in *krawcula* ‘tailor’s wife’, *szewcula* ‘shoemaker’s wife’ (Cyran 1977: 93), *bacula* ‘baca’s wife’ (Grochola-Szczepanek 2012: 176) (*baca* is a senior shepard in the Polish Carpathians). A curiosity is the suffix *-icha/-ycha* in *Rzepicha* (a name derived from *rzepa* ‘turnip’), who was the wife of the semi-legendary Piast the Wheelwright, founder of the Piast dynasty, mentioned by Gallus Anonymus in his *Polish Chronicle*. Then, there is *bracicha* ‘brother’s wife’, *czarcicha* ‘devil’s wife’, *kowalicha* ‘smith’s wife’, *krawczycha* ‘tailor’s wife’, *parobczycha* ‘farm worker’s wife’, *poganicha* ‘pagan’s wife, i.e. a Jew’s wife’, *szewczycha* ‘shoemaker’s wife’ (Cyran 1977: 104), *Kozaczycha* ‘Cossack’s wife’ (Dosjp) and *starostycha* ‘starosta’s wife’ (Ksjp). The *-icha/-ycha* suffix is typical of the region of the Eastern Borderlands. It is now perceived as obsolete by native speakers of Polish (Grzenia 2002).

## Research results

Of the 13 husband status-related formations selected for analysis 10 were found in the NKJP (*prezydentowa, marszałkowa, ministrowa, sędzina, wojewodzina, starościna, wójtowa, burmistrzowa, ambasadorowa, sołtysowa*), and 3 exist neither in the ‘maritonymic’ or ‘professional’ sense (*senatorowa, posłowa* and *premierowa*). The names appeared in colloquial contexts in excerpts from newspapers and magazines (*Gazeta Wyborcza, Polityka, Gazeta Pomorska, Trybuna Śląska, Dziennik Zachodni* etc.), books, and, to a lesser extent, poems and drama, embracing the period between 1988 until the present day (2018).

The number of occurrences in the NKJP of each of the formations in the sense of ‘a woman ‘in power’’ in the Polish (and foreign) establishment is as follows (in descending order): *sędzina* – 153 occurrences, *sołtysowa* – 13 occurrences, *wójtowa* – 10, *starościna* – 9 occurrences (5 in Poland and 4 abroad), *burmistrzowa* – 4, *wojewodzina* – 3, *prezydentowa* (head of state) – 2, *prezydentowa* (mayor of a city) – 2, *marszałkowa* – 1, *ministrowa* – 1, *ambasadorowa* – 0.

Here, we present the research results for each individual *-owa* and *-ina*<sup>7</sup> formation.

### *Prezydentowa*

*Prezydentowa* is ‘president’s wife’ (Lsjp, Ksjp and Dosjp). The more recent dictionaries such as Szsjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN consider the word as non-existent.

The NKJP research results contradict this. There were 403 occurrences of *prezydentowa* in the sense of ‘the wife of the head of a republic’ (96.75%, 391 occurrences), and ‘the wife of the mayor of a big city’ (2%, 8 occurrences), which is in agreement with the definition of the word in the older dictionaries (Lsjp, Ksjp and Dosjp). Examples of women ‘in power’ are few and far between – only 0.5% for ‘a female president of a republic’ (2 occurrences), one of them being the name for a potential Polish female president suggested by the feminist M. Gretkowska in the book *Europejka*. Then, there is 0.5% (2 occurrences) for ‘a female mayor of a big city’ and 0.25% (1 occurrence) used figuratively in the sense of ‘a bossy woman’.

### *Marszałkowa*

According to Sjp PWN *marszałek* is ‘the speaker of the Sejm and the Senate’. Its ‘maritonymic’ counterpart is *marszałkowa* ‘marshal’s wife’ (Lsjp, Ksjp, Dosjp).

As regards women ‘in power’ there is 1 occurrence of *marszałkowa* ‘a female speaker of the Senate in Poland’ in the NKJP. This is 1% of the total of the occurrences (133) – the rest of them denote wives of different types of marshals (132).

### *Ministrowa*

*Ministrowa* is ‘minister’s wife’ (Ksjp, Dosjp, Szsjp, Dusjp (coll.) and Sjp PWN (coll.)). In the NKJP there is 1 occurrence (out of 47) referring to a female minister (2%). Then, there is 1 reference made to a minister’s spokeswoman (2%). The rest of the occurrences (96%) denote wives.

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<sup>7</sup> In the research results we do not mention the phonological alternant *-yna* of the *-ina/-yna* suffix since the three formations we analyse (*sędzina*, *starościna*, *województwina*) end in *-ina*.

## *Sędzina*

In Lsjp *sędzina* is ‘a judge’s wife, or a person who arbitrates in a dispute’. In Dosjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN the order of definitions has changed – *sędzina* is, in the first place, ‘a woman judge’ (Dosjp, rare), or ‘a female form of *sędzia*’ (Dusjp, Sjp PWN, (coll.)). In the second place, it is defined as ‘a judge’s wife’ (Dosjp (obs.), Dusjp, Sjp PWN (obs., arch.)). The corpus-based research mirrors this change of emphasis noting 153 occurrences of *sędzina* in the sense of ‘a female judge’ (72%) and only 18 of ‘a judge’s wife’ (9%). There are also 41 occurrences of *sędzina* ‘a female referee’ (19%) – a meaning not included in any of the dictionaries (contrary to *sędzia* ‘a referee’ in Dusjp and Sjp PWN).

## *Wojewodzina*

*Wojewodzina* is ‘a voivode’s wife’ (Lsjp, Dosjp (arch.), Dusjp, Sjp PWN (arch.)) – the wife of a man who, etymologically speaking, was ‘a warrior-leader’ (Besjp). In the Corpus there are 79 occurrences (96%) of the word meaning ‘a voivode’s wife’, and 3 occurrences (4%) of *wojewodzina* as ‘a female voivode’, including one example of feminist language.

## *Starościna*

*Starosta* is a Proto-Slavic word meaning ‘the oldest person or a person highest in rank, chief, leader’ (Bsejp). The female form of *starosta* is *starościna* ‘starosta’s wife’ (Lsjp, Ksjp, Dosjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN) or ‘a kind of female leader’ (to sum up the different definitions given in Ksjp, Dosjp, Szsjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN).

In many aspects the results of the NKJP research reflects the dictionary findings. First of all, *starościna* is a multi-aspectual word. Its large spectrum of referents includes wives, pseudo-wives such as mistresses of the ceremony at harvest festivals etc., independent leaders such as a female year/group prefect, or the leader of a group of female prisoners.

There are 5 examples of women ‘in power’ i.e. female officials in charge of *powiat* in the Polish local self-government. Another group of 4 occurrences refer to female leaders in the self-governments abroad.

The NKJP findings are in agreement, to a great extent, with the information given in Dosjp and Sjp PWN, where the ‘maritonymic’ sense of the word gives ground to *starościna* as ‘a female leader, organiser, manager, representative etc.’, being respectively 41% for wives, and 52% for different types of female leaders. Here, women ‘in power’ take 7% (4% in Poland i.e. 5 occurrences, and 3% abroad, 4 occurrences).

### *Wójtowa*

*Wójt* is ‘the head of *gmina*’ (commune). The female counterpart of *wójt* is *wójtowa* ‘vogt’s wife’ (Lsjp, Ksjp).<sup>8</sup> The NKJP, however, recognises three types of *wójtowa*: ‘female head of *gmina*’ (67%, 10 occurrences), ‘female head of a (female) organisation’ (6%, 1 occurrence), and ‘a vogt’s wife’ (27%, 4 occurrences). Thus, the use contradicts the dictionary search results – *wójtowa* in the historical sense of ‘vogt’s wife’ is retreating in favour of ‘a female vogt’.

### *Burmistrzowa*

Lsjp, Ksjp, Dosjp, Szsjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN all agree that *burmistrzowa* is ‘the wife of the mayor of a town’. To a great extent, the NKJP research confirms the dictionary findings since 95% of all of the occurrences (76) refer to wives, and 5% (4 occurrences) to female mayors of towns.

### *Ambasadorowa*

According to Lsjp, Ksjp, Dosjp, Szsjp, Dusjp and Sjp PWN *ambasadorowa* (spelled *ambassadorowa* in Lsjp) is ‘ambassador’s wife’, and all the occurrences of the word in the NKJP (45) bear this meaning. No female ambassador is referred to as *ambasadorowa*.

### *Soltysowa*

*Soltys* is a village administrator. *Soltysowa* is the ‘maritonymic’ form of *soltys* (Lsjp, Ksjp and Dosjp). *Soltysowa* as ‘a female *soltys*’ is also non-existent in the dictionaries. The NKJP research, however, contradicts this. *Soltysowa* as ‘a female *soltys*’ constitutes 23% of the total occurrences of the word (13 out of 56).

### *Senatorowa, posłowa and premierowa*

There were no occurrences in the NKJP of *senatorowa* ‘senator’s wife’ (Ksjp), and *posłowa* – ‘MP’s wife’ (Lsjp, Ksjp, Dosjp (rare)), ‘a female messenger’ (Ksjp) or ‘a female messenger of the court’ (Dosjp). *Premierowa* ‘prime minister’s wife’ is non-existent both in the dictionaries and the Corpus.

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<sup>8</sup> Ksjp gives also an alternative form – *wójcina*. This, however, has no results in the NKJP.

## Conclusions

The chart shows the percentage of formations ending in *-owa/-ina* used as names of women ‘in power’ contrasted with other meanings of the words – ‘maritonymic’ ones or those connected with different kinds of small-scale power.

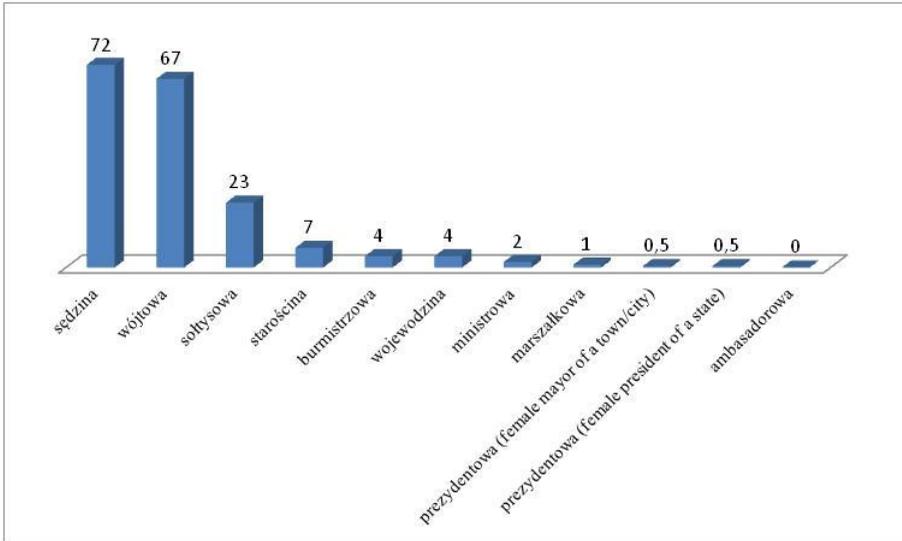


Figure 1. Women ‘in power’ vs. other *-owa* and *-ina* formations.

Only *sędzina*, *wójtowa* and *sołtysowa* have a significant share in the field of husband status-related names used as names for women ‘in power’. The semantic shift (by which we understand that the occurrences of a given word in the sense ‘woman ‘in power’’ outnumber those meaning ‘wives’) has already happened in the case of *sędzina* (72% of ‘a female judge’), which is confirmed by the dictionaries, and, *wójtowa* (67%). As regards *sołtysowa*, the result of 23% for ‘a female sołtys’ indicates that ‘sołtys’s wife’ is still the primary meaning of the word.

The results obtained by *starościna*, *burmistrzowa*, *wojewodzina*, *ministrowa*, *marszałkowa*, *prezydentowa* and *ambasadorowa* meaning ‘woman ‘in power’’ are not higher than 7%. Thus, in this sense, the formations are used marginally, their primary meaning being ‘wives’.

### Formations ending in *-owa*

The association of *-owa* with the position of wife is so strong that *-owa* formations are not able, in most cases, to stabilise in the language in the sense of a ‘woman ‘in power’’. All the more that *prezydentowa* and *ambasadorowa* are

deeply-rooted in the language in the ‘maritonymic’ sense today (respectively 98.75% and 100% of the total). And even though some husband status-related, *-owa* formations we searched for are not frequent enough to appear in the NKJP (*senatorowa*, *posłowa*, *premierowa*), which could potentially make space for their use as female titles, they do not occur in this sense. Formations ending in *-owa* as names for women ‘in power’ exist only in the linguistic periphery since their number oscillates between 0 and 4 percent. Exceptions are *-owa* names connected with rural societies (Matysiak 2015: 128) – *sołtysowa* (23%) and *wójtowa* (67%), where the ‘maritonymic’ character of the suffix is not an obstacle in using them in the meaning in question.<sup>9</sup>

### Formations ending in *-ina*

Despite their ancient origin, *-ina* formations are associated by language users with wives. However, contrary to *-owa* names they are likely to be employed in the derivation of names for women ‘in power’. The *-ina* suffix is unproductive as ‘wife’ today – a president’s wife is called *prezydentowa*, not *\*prezydencina*, and an ambassador’s wife is *ambasadorowa*, not *\*ambasadorzyna*. The suffix is of historical value. The referents of most of the still-existing *-ina* ‘maritonymic’ formations are non-existent. They have vanished together with the historical functions of *podskarbi* ‘treasurer’, *podstoli* ‘a court official responsible for the king’s pantry’, *podczaszy* ‘cupbearer’, *koniuszcy* ‘the Master of the Horse’ etc., and if they appear at all it is only in historical contexts. And those which have survived until today are few and far between (*sędzina*, *województina*, *starościna*). Moreover, wives who could potentially be called these names have been re-named – the starosta’s wife who is a teacher will be called *nauczycielka* ‘a teacher-fem.’ rather than *starościna*. Women are perceived in the first place as professionals. This gives some hope that *województina* and *starościna* will follow the example of *sędzina*, which has already anchored in the language as ‘a female judge’.

The question is whether Polish language users want to give up the honorific tradition of *pani* names to the rules of the affixing language. The Polish society is fond of showing respect, emphasising hierarchy, historically, taking shape of the omnipresent title-using (*tytułomania*) (Kuchowicz 1975: 324-327), the remnants of which are visible in the form of *pan/pani* in front of occupational names or titles in the masculine form, fulfilling a double role – being a marker of femininity and an honorific pronoun. Are ordinary Poles ready to get rid of the tradition and be on the same terms with the ruling class? The above-presented analysis shows that the psychological barrier has not been broken yet.

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<sup>9</sup> Jadacka quotes *doktorowa* ‘a female doctor’ as an example of *-owa* formations existing typically in dialects (Jadacka 2000: 1768).

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