

# Linguistic Innovations in a Globally Interconnected World

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# Evolving Femininities in English and French Chick-lit

**Galyna Tsapro**

**Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University**

Across three decades, the voices of English and French chick-lit have changed with women's lives, tracing the distance between irony and sincerity, between self-display and self-knowledge. The genre's evolution unfolds in three distinct phases: its exuberant beginnings, a turn toward reflection, and the quieter synthesis of recent years. This periodisation shows how the genre moves from self-ironic humour to sincerity and ethical awareness.

The early works, from Bridget Jones's Diary to Confessions of a Shopaholic, turn everyday anxiety into comedy, turning irony into a form of survival. Later novels, such as Me Before You and You Had Me at Hello, adopt a quieter voice, using empathy and moral choice to replace the optimism of consumer culture. Recent titles — Book Lovers, The Switch, Love Your Life — join popular form with emotional maturity, speaking of care, reciprocity, and balance rather than success.

In France, a similar evolution is evident through Virginie Grimaldi, Aurélie Valognes, and Agnès Martin-Lugand, who reinterpret the genre within a culture of calm and solidarity. Their stories transform humour into gentleness and romance into a reflection on kindness and domestic stability.

Together, these trajectories reveal chick-lit's gradual turn from social parody to moral realism. The genre, once defined by self-mockery, now expresses sincerity and emotional ethics, a shift that marks not its decline but its quiet renewal as an art of everyday feeling.

Keywords: chick-lit; femininity; English literature; French literature; popular fiction; gender and culture