ukrainian analytical digest

LANGUAGE USAGE AND LANGUAGE POLICY

Introducing the Ukrainian Analytical Digest

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Ukrainian Analytical Digest (UAD), a bi-monthly open access publication designed to present academic insights about and from Ukraine to a broad international audience. To this end, the UAD will provide expert analysis of current affairs focusing on background information and interpretation. Contributions to the UAD will undergo fast-track peer review by an editorial board of distinguished scholars and will comply with academic standards of quality and integrity.

Each issue will feature several analyses focusing on a broader topic. The first issue will address language usage and language policy. Further issues will look at the state of social science research on Ukraine, Ukraine's foreign and domestic policy, public opinion in Ukraine and the Russian occupation of Ukrainian territory.

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We are looking forward to engaging with authors and readers.

Eduard Klein, Jeronim Perovic and Heiko Pleines
(Initiators of the Ukrainian Analytical Digest)

Language Policy in Ukraine—Overview and Analysis

Juliane Besters-Dilger (University of Freiburg)

Abstract
Since Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, except during Viktor Yanukovych's presidency, Ukraine's language policy has been marked by efforts to close the prestige gap between the Russian and Ukrainian languages and to enforce the Ukrainian language in all domains of public use. When it joined the Council of Europe in 1995, Ukraine was obliged to implement the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which strengthens the position of Russian. The controversial language law of 2019 gives the Ukrainian language supremacy in all areas of public life, which is hardly questioned anymore due to Russian aggression.

1. Ukrainian Language Policy in the 1990s—Typological Classification and Consequences

The proclamation of independence on August 24, 1991 was preceded by a language law of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic of October 1989, in which Ukrainian was declared the sole state language and Russian the language of interethnic communication. At the same time, the languages of the minorities were guaranteed special protection, which was reaffirmed in a separate law for minorities in 1992. In 1989, in the final phase of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian language policy could initially strive only for status planning, i.e., the creation of a basic language law.

In the first years of autonomy, the focus was not only on status planning but also on corpus planning

and acquisition planning, i.e., on the one hand the creation and expansion of Ukrainian terminologies and on the other hand the determination of which languages should be offered as languages of education at all levels of the education system. In the 1990s, usage planning included not only education and administration, but also the media sector, for example the "Law on Television and Radio" (1993) and the "Law on Cinematography" (1998), both of which stipulated increased or exclusive use of the Ukrainian language, but were not complied with. It is significant that only in the two state-controlled domains (administration, education) was the enforcement of Ukrainian more or less successful; prestige planning, i.e., implementation in prestigious domains (economy, science, media, culture, internet), did not succeed at that time.

With the 1989 census, in which every inhabitant of Ukraine declared his or her nationality (Ukrainian: 72.7%, Russian: 22.1%) and mother tongue (Ukrainian: 64.7%, Russian: 32.8%), the state felt entitled to force the transition in schools to the Ukrainian language of instruction in the various regions to the extent that corresponded to the respective proportion of members of Ukrainian nationality. In fact, in everyday usage, Russian was used at least as often as Ukrainian, and a large majority of ethnic Ukrainians declared themselves bilingual, while ethnic Russians did so to a much lesser extent. With this measure in the field of education, resistance against the Ukrainian language began in the eastern and southern Ukrainian cities, where Ukrainian had previously been smiled at or ignored. There was talk of "forced Ukrainization". The subsequent 2001 census (the last ever conducted) seemed to show that a growing proportion of the population identified themselves as having Ukrainian nationality (Ukrainian: 77.8%) and Ukrainian mother tongue (Ukrainian: 67.5%). Ukrainian nationality was dominant in all regions except Crimea (Russians: 58.3%, Ukrainians: 24.4%). Comparing the two censuses, it is striking that proficiency in the Ukrainian language had increased in all regions except Donetsk and Luhansk, where it had actually decreased.

When the Ukrainian constitution was passed in 1996, the pro-Ukrainian faction succeeded in making Ukrainian the only state language. For several years there had been discussions about making Russian the official language; President Kuchma (1994–2004) even promised this during his 1994 election campaign. In 1999, however, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine declared that "official language" and "state language" were the same and therefore the introduction of an official language was as inconsistent with the constitution as a second state language. The constitution simultaneously guarantees the free development, use and protection of the Russian language and other languages of national minorities (Article 10) and differentiates in Article 11 between autochthonous peoples and national minorities—a differentiation carried out in the Constitution only in Article 11 and revisited later (2017 and 2019, see Section 3). Article 53 guarantees citizens belonging to national minorities the right to receive instruction in their mother tongue or to study their mother tongue in state and municipal educational institutions or through national cultural associations.

2. Accession to the Council of Europe: Between Europeanization and Re-Russification?

Ukraine joined the Council of Europe (CoE) in 1995 at a time when the latter had recently decided that accession was connected with the obligation to sign and ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter: Charter) within one year. Other post-Soviet states that joined at this time or later, unlike Ukraine, did not fulfil this obligation (Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation). Russian was among the languages of 13 minorities that Ukraine listed as worthy of protection, although it was spoken by at least half of the population. Only the languages spoken by less than half of the population of a given territory are protected by the Charter. First, a translation error may have played a role here, second, Russian and Russian-speaking members of parliament pushed for the inclusion of Russian in the languages protected by the Charter because they hoped this would compensate for the lack of status as a second state language or official language.

The consequences included, on the one hand, constant calls for more support for Russian, which were repeatedly made both by Russian-speakers (ethnic Ukrainians and ethnic Russians) in Ukraine and by the Russian Foreign Ministry. Individual cities and municipalities in the south and east interpreted the Charter, which came into force on January 1, 2006, in such a way that they declared Russian their regional language and from then on did not want to accept Ukrainian as official language or as language of education. On the other hand, as usual, a committee of experts from the Council of Europe checked compliance with the Charter at regular intervals. The special problem of the situation in Ukraine—having a state language that, after a long period of suppression, cannot assert itself in numerous prestigious domains such as economy, science, culture, media and internet—was only considered by individual European representatives (the OSCE High Commissioners on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel and Knut Vollebaek).

The CoE experts' reports (Council of Europe: Reports) made it clear that Ukraine wass trying to achieve two contradictory goals at the same time—con-

solidation of the state language Ukrainian and fulfilment of European requirements.

The Ukrainian Language Law of 1989 remained in force until 2012, despite dozens of amendments proposed by various MPs. Under the government of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovych (2009–2014), a controversial draft law by the Party of Regions (the so-called Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law) prevailed and was brought through parliament under illegal circumstances (iinter alia vote rigging, cf. Besters-Dilger 2022, 150, 159). This law entitled "On the Principles of State Language Policy" gave all territorial units where 10% of the population are Russian-speaking or speakers of any other minority language the right to designate it as their regional language and de facto use it with Ukrainian on an equal footing or even to give it priority, e.g., as an educational and official language. For Russian, no fewer than 13 out of the 27 regions of Ukraine met this condition. The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, which examines the compliance of national legislative projects with the principles of the European legal system, complained, among other things, that there were no guarantees for the protection and priority of Ukrainian as the only state language, which has an integrating task in the state. The Commission demanded that Ukrainian must be taught as a mandatory requirement in all schools. Likewise, it complained that there was no regulation of the language issue in the mass media. Although the law received more exclusively negative assessments from European and national auditors (OSCE High Commissioner Knut Vollebaek; Scientific Committee of Experts of the Ukrainian Parliament, responsible parliamentary committee, Academy of Science, etc. [Maidan.org 2012]), it came into force in August 2012. As a result, a total of 15 territorial units (seven out of 27 regions and eight cities) officially switched to Russian, 3 units to other minority languages (Hungarian, Moldovan, Romanian), and Ukrainian was abolished as the school and official language. The preamble to the law claimed that it served to fulfil Ukraine's European obligations under the Charter, namely the promotion of regional or minority languages.

3. The Aftermath of Maidan and Russia's Full Scale Invasion

It is indicative of the controversial nature of this language law that on February 23, 2014, the day after the end of the Maidan, i.e., after Viktor Yanukovych fled, the Ukrainian Parliament decided to repeal this law with a majority of 86%. The annulment failed due to the refusal of Parliament Speaker Turchynov to sign the repeal law, and the new President Petro Poroshenko (May 2014–2019) also refused to sign, fearing that the Russian-speaking population, who predominantly

lived in the east and south of the country, would react negatively. International commentators, above all the OSCE High Commissioner, warned against signing. Nonetheless, the false claim propagated by Russia that "Kiev bans the use of the Russian language" was spreading in eastern Ukraine. This was one of the triggers for political unrest supporting Putin's plans to annex Crimea and destabilize eastern Ukraine.

Thus, this language law remained in force until February 2018, when the Ukrainian Constitutional Court declared it unconstitutional for formal (violation of the rules for parliamentary voting), not content-related, reasons.

Contrary to many state measures in favour of the Ukrainian language "from above", the annexation and Russia's war in the Donbass had a major impact on the extent to which Ukrainian is truly used "from below". As a result, many bilingual or Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine decided to shift from Russian to Ukrainian. On the one hand, approximately 1 million mainly Russian-speaking internally displaced persons fled from Crimea and the so-called People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk to predominantly Ukrainian-speaking western and central Ukraine. On the other hand, many Ukrainian citizens who were previously Russian-speaking or bilingual wanted to set an example and no longer communicate in Russian. This change in everday language usage did not always last (Tsar 2020). Nevertheless, in the years after the Maidan, a slow but steady increase in the commitment to Ukrainian nationality and the Ukrainian mother tongue, and in the actual use of Ukrainian could be observed (Kulyk 2018 and in this issue).

In addition to several other laws, the following two are important for the current Ukrainian language policy: the "Law on education" (entry into force on September 5th, 2017) and the "Law on supporting the functioning of the Ukrainian language as the State language" (signed by President Poroshenko on one of the last days of his term and coming into effect on July 16, 2019; hereafter State language law). The Ukrainian Constitutional Court confirmed the constitutionality of the former on July 16, 2019. This was necessary, because both laws were critically examined by international representatives of Ukrainian minority languages and by the Venice Commission. In particular, the Venice Commission criticized a principle that is enshrined in both laws (in Article 7 resp. Article 21): Ukrainian is the only language of instruction from secondary school onwards—apart from the languages of autochthonous peoples that can be used in general middle schools. The minority languages Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, Bulgarian and Slovak lose their former function as languages of instruction from secondary schools onwards, and stu-

dents can learn them only as a separate subject. In some cases (Hungary, Romania) this led to foreign policy conflicts. Individual subjects can be taught in higher education institutions in English or in official EU languages, but not in Russian. This is basically a tripartite division of non-state languages: the division into languages of autochthonous peoples, EU languages used by national minorities plus English, and non-EU languages used by national minorities. The latter include Russian. In the State language law, this unequal treatment is extended to other areas of public life. The Venice Commission advises removing the boundary between the second and third groups.

Like the previous law, the State language law refers in its preamble to European demands by claiming that it takes up the Venice Commission's criticism of the law "On the principles of State language policy". In fact, this law singles out only one aspect, namely the insufficient consideration of the special position of Ukrainian as the only state language. What is new is the obligatory use of Ukrainian in almost all domains (Internet, trade and business, science, culture, advertising, health care, election campaigns, etc.), in other words strong prestige planning that had thus far had little success. Certain exceptions are made for English and EU languages (especially in science) but not for Russian. Another addition is the office of a Commissioner for the Protection of the Ukrainian Language, who monitors compliance with the regulations and acts as an ombudsman for citizens who feel that their use of the Ukrainian language is restricted, as well as a commission that regulates the standards of the Ukrainian language, and the right of every citizen to free Ukrainian lessons. Moreover, another new element is that with regard to the rights of other languages used in Ukraine, reference is made to a law on national minorities that has yet to be drafted. This was criticized by the Venice Commission which argued that the law on minorities should have been passed first, followed by the State language law. The law expressly does not restrict the private use of any language and the language of church rites. Nevertheless, in eastern Ukraine, "Kiev bans the Russian language" was claimed, just as in 2014.

The differentiation between autochthonous peoples and national minorities was retained in the period that followed. The law "On autochthonous peoples of Ukraine" was adopted on July 1, 2021, and the law "On national minorities (communities)" on December 13, 2022, in the middle of the Russian–Ukrainian war. Concerning the language issue, both refer to the Education law of 2017 and the State language law of 2019. The Russian language is not mentioned. The current political situation is referred to in three interesting passages of the law "On national minorities (communities)".

Article 5 (6) states that " …Persons belonging to national minorities are prohibited to popularize or propagandize the terrorist state (aggressor state) and its bodies, the Russian Nazi totalitarian regime, symbols of the military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Nazi totalitarian regime…" etc. Article 13 (9) formulates the aim of preventing interethnic conflicts and the abuse of national minorities by other states for the autonomization of their regions of residence and the disintegration of Ukraine, and Article 21 (2) forbids cooperation with foreign states whose activities are aimed at the elimination of Ukraine's independence. In June 2023, in its criticism of this law, the Venice Commission referred almost exclusively to Article 10 (language use) and expressed that the linguistic rights of minorities should be further expanded and the obligation to constantly take the state language into account should be reduced. The Venice Commission also referred to its criticism of earlier laws (Law on education and State language law) because these served as a point of reference on several occasions.

It was a smart manoeuvre to pass the laws on Education and State language before the two Minority Laws, since the latter refer to them repeatedly. A special disregard for the Russian language cannot be proven in the law "On national minorities (communities)", as it is treated like all languages of national minorities. The Russian–Ukrainian war has had no direct consequences for the Russian language on the legal level, but it has had an effect at the level of language users. In fact, the legal deprecation of Russian took place in 2017 and 2019 and was confirmed as constitutional by the Ukrainian Constitutional Court.

4. Outlook

The Russian invasion on February 24, 2022 gave the State language law of 2019 a topicality and relevance for everyday life that it would probably not have achieved without the war. The explosion of the number of Ukrainian-speaking citizens (see the contributions of N. Kudriavtseva and V. Kulyk in this issue) was, contrary to 2014, strongly supported by the law and the active State language policy it describes. Only years after the end of the war we will be able to judge whether the widespread shift to the Ukrainian language will be permanent. In times of war, international criticism of the State language law—with the exception of that from Hungary—has mainly fallen silent.

In the balancing act between the consolidation of the Ukrainian language, the Soviet legacy (dominance of the Russian language) and Ukraine's European commitments, the confrontation of the former two was still dominant in Ukrainian language policy until the 2022 invasion. The criticism of the Venice Commission was generally largely ignored or misused for political pur-

poses. However, the Charter, such as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, remains valid. Ukraine's accession to the EU will require adoption of the complete acquis communautaire, which also includes regulations regarding minorities and their languages.

About the Author:
Prof. Dr. *Juliane Besters-Dilger* is the former Head of the Department of Slavic Studies at Freiburg University, Germany.

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ANALYSIS

Ukrainians Now (Say That They) Speak Predominantly Ukrainian

Volodymyr Kulyk (Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Abstract
Contrary to Putin's expectations, most Ukrainians responded to Russia's full-blown invasion of Ukraine by a stronger attachment to their country and nation. One element of this attachment is an embrace of the national language at both the symbolic and communicative levels. Not only did Ukrainians come to love their language more than before, but they also started to speak it more often in their everyday lives. Or so they say.

Introduction

Language use has long been a controversial issue in Ukrainian politics and Ukraine's relations with Russia. (Arel 1995, Kulyk 2002, Besters-Dilger 2009) While champions of Ukrainian wanted to make it the main language of all social domains and called for the state to take active measures to achieve that goal, supporters of the Russian language sought to prevent its unrestricted use and for many years tried to have its legal status elevated to the level of Ukrainian. Moreover, the Russian government considered any expansion of the use of Ukrainian as a violation of the rights of Ukraine's Russian-speakers and pressured the Ukrainian authorities to refrain from any such moves. Although Russian continued to be widely used in virtually all domains and remained the predominant language of the eastern and southern regions, the status of Ukrainian as the sole official language facilitated the gradual expansion of its use in institutional and everyday communication.

The introduction of Ukrainian in various domains became more resolute after 2014 when the victory of the Euromaidan revolution brought to power more nationally minded politicians, and Russian aggression urged many Ukrainian citizens to more strongly embrace the titular language as an important element of nationhood. This embrace became much more pronounced after Russia's full-blown invasion in February 2022 when millions of Ukrainians came to hate Russia and all things Russian, which for many of them included the language.

A nationwide survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) in December 2022

presented a picture of a predominantly Ukrainian-speaking Ukraine, with language preferences in different parts of the country manifesting greater convergence than at any time since the advent of mass surveys in the early 1990s. (For analyses of survey data of the 2000s and 2010s, see Kulyk 2007 and 2018, Vyshniak 2009) The comparison of the results of KIIS surveys of the last decade demonstrates a slow growth of the use of Ukrainian in the years after Euromaidan and the Russian intervention in Crimea and the Donbas and then an impressive upsurge in the wake of the full-blown invasion of 2022.

The Surveys

Before I begin to discuss the survey results, a few words about the design are in order. All surveys I rely on had a sample of approximately 2000 respondents. Those of 2012, 2014 and 2017 were conducted by means of face-to-face interviews, while the last one, conducted during the full-scale war of 2022, relied on computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). As the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the subsequent occupation by its proxies of part of the Donbas made these territories inaccessible to Ukrainian sociologists, I also excluded the respondents from these territories in the earlier surveys to make the results comparable. Unfortunately, a similar procedure could not be applied to make the results of the first three surveys fully comparable with those of the 2022 survey, which aimed at the entire territory controlled by the Ukrainian government before Russia's full-blown invasion but managed to reach only a small portion of respondents in the newly occupied territories in the east and south and none of those who fled to other countries. However, the data of all surveys have been weighted to make the shares of different regions and different demographic categories correspond to the structure of Ukraine's entire population.[1]

Language Use As Reported

One question repeated in several KIIS surveys of 2012–2022 asked the respondents in what language they "primarily communicate in everyday life", without prioritizing any particular practice of communication. Figure 1 and Table 1 present the results for different years, distinguishing between those respondents who reported predominantly speaking Ukrainian or Russian and those supposedly speaking the two languages equally (The small percentage of respondents who indicated other languages are not shown). In view of well-known differences between language use in different parts of Ukraine, I present the results not only for the country as a whole but also for its three distinct macroregions (I treat the

east and the south as one region, not least because sociologists disagree on where to draw the line between them). It should be kept in mind that the breakdown by region that is analysed in this article pertains to respondents' place of residence before the full-blown invasion; that is, people who have fled more dangerous regions to safer parts of the country are related to their regions of permanent residence, which makes the comparison of the regional breakdowns from different surveys more meaningful. The figures in the table demonstrate that while the Rus-

Figure 1:   Responses to the question "In what language do you communicate in everyday life", for Ukraine as a whole and for particular macroregions (KIIS surveys of February 2012, September 2014, May 2017 and December 2022; in percentages)
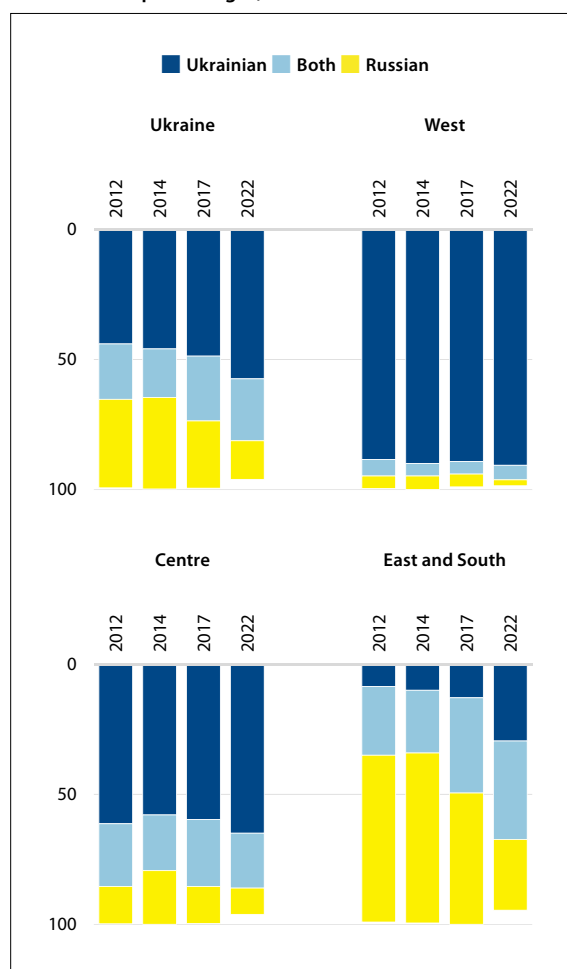
The figures on which the chart is based can be found in Table 1 on p. 11.

sian intervention of 2014 did not change the nationwide distribution by everyday language, the full-scale

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1   For a more detailed description of the methodology of the 2022 survey, see: https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng&cat=reports&id=1173&page=1. For a detailed discussion about the challenges and pitfalls of public opinion surveys in wartime Ukraine, see Kit Rickard, Gerard Toal, Kristin M. Bakke and John O'Loughlin, "How Reliable are Polls in Wartime Ukraine," *PONARS Eurasia Memo No. 830*, February 15, 2023. https://www.ponarseurasia.org/how-reliable-are-polls-in-wartime-ukraine/.

war of 2022 drastically shifted the balance in favour of Ukrainian. There was some shift away from Russian between 2014 and 2017, but this led to an increase in the share of respondents reporting the equal use of the two languages, while the percentage of those speaking primarily Ukrainian changed insignificantly. In contrast, the change between 2017 and 2022 is a direct and drastic shift from Russian to Ukrainian, which is obviously related to the war that had affected virtually all Ukrainian citizens, albeit to a very different extent.

The regional breakdown reveals different dynamics in different parts of the country. While westerners were overwhelmingly Ukrainian-speaking before 2014 and did not significantly change their usage afterwards, in the east and south, there was a gradual shift from Russian to Ukrainian, with an intermediate stage of reportedly using the two languages equally. The change in this macroregion was particularly impressive between 2017 and 2022, thus affecting the distribution for Ukraine as a whole. Remarkably, residents of the centre responded to Euromaidan and the Russian intervention of 2014 by reporting the increased rather than decreased usage of Russian, but later they reverted to the pre-Maidan figures and in 2022, demonstrated a small but significant shift towards Ukrainian.

Language Use As Demonstrated

The finding that the share of Ukrainian in the east and south is now no smaller than that of Russian obviously contradicts the observable sociolinguistic reality in those regions where Russian has long dominated and can hardly be expected to retreat in a matter of months. This leads us to assume that the reported language preferences do not reflect the actual language use as much as that which respondents consider appropriate. Scholars have long argued that survey responses can be affected by the social desirability bias, that is, the tendency of respondents to answer the questions in a manner that will, they presume, be viewed favourably by others. There are reasons to believe that during the war and its concomitant mobilization, such a bias becomes stronger than in calmer times (Toal 2023). Scholars have developed some experimental techniques to account for this bias, but these techniques were not used in the surveys I rely on, which only included simple closed questions. However, KIIS has its own ways of eliciting respondents' language preferences rather than directly asking about them.

The first of these techniques is intended to determine which of Ukraine's two main languages, Ukrainian or Russian, the respondent prefers for interaction with a bilingual and accommodating interviewer. Of course, the language the respondents say (or otherwise signal) that they are more comfortable communicating in is not necessarily one they actually speak better or more often; here too, the respondents are influenced by social desir-

ability considerations that lead them to choose the language they believe is the most appropriate for this type of interaction. However, the respondents cannot plausibly choose the language they are not proficient in. In addition, they must make a clear choice between the two languages during the survey, in contrast to their reports about their everyday use, where they can resort to the ambiguous option "Ukrainian and Russian equally". The distribution of preferences in the sample as a whole and in particular groups thus reflects both the proficiencies in the two languages and their perceived appropriateness for semipublic communication, which gives an indication of the relative powers of the two languages among different populations.

Figure 2 and Table 2 present the data on the chosen language of survey interviews in 2014 and 2022, which provide another way of comparing the language situation in Ukraine in the wake of the two military interventions. We see an even more drastic change than for

Figure 2: Language chosen by respondents for survey interviews, for Ukraine as a whole and for particular macroregions (KIIS surveys of September 2014 and December 2022; in percentage)
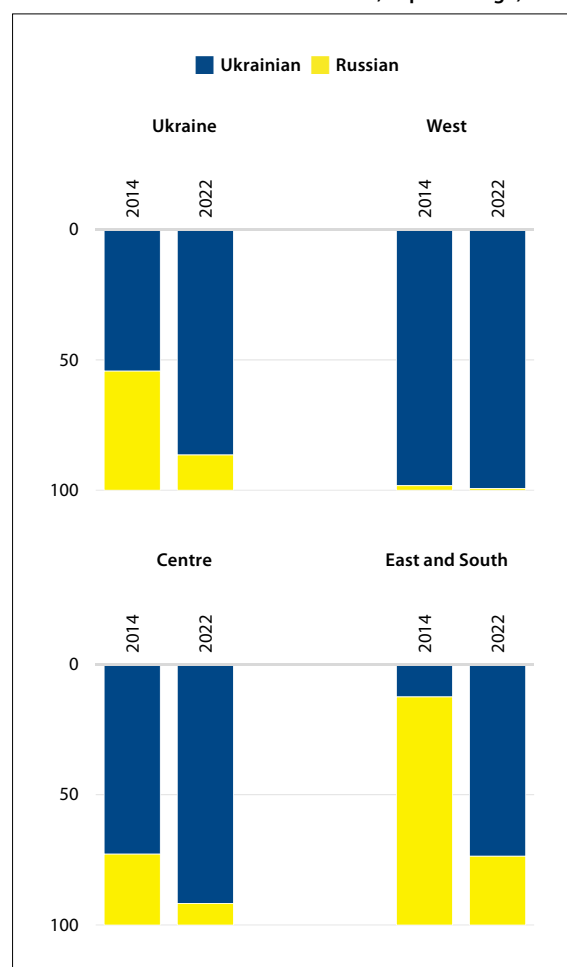
The figures on which the chart is based can be found in Table 2 on p. 11.

the reported language of everyday use, particularly in the east and south, which switched from the predominant preference for Russian to the predominant preference for Ukrainian, thus becoming rather similar to the two other macroregions in this respect.

Moreover, the preference for Ukrainian was not just signalled by respondents at the beginning of their interaction with the interviewers; in most cases, it was indeed practised in the course of the interview. Another technique KIIS employs to reveal the respondents' language preferences is registering the actual language the respondent used during the interview, thus also allowing us to catch the inability or unwillingness to adhere to the language initially preferred. In this case, the interviewers register not only the more or less consistent use of a certain language but also the heavy mixing of the two. In 2014, 47.7% of all respondents reportedly adhered to Ukrainian, 49.8% to Russian, and 11.5% used elements of both languages, with the share of mixers being the highest in the centre (15.1%). In 2022, the share of consistent Ukrainian speech rose to 73.7%, while that of Russian speech dropped to 12.7% and became roughly the same as the share of mixed speech, 13.7%. In this survey, the mixing of the two languages was particularly widespread in the east and south (22.0%), presumably because many people who used to speak mostly Russian now struggled with the "politically correct" Ukrainian.

Language Use in Particular Practices

Apart from everyday use in general, all surveys included questions about particular practices of everyday communication. As the 2022 survey inquired about only three such practices, it is only for them that the comparison with the earlier years is possible. Figure 3 and Table 3 presents the reported language use at home, at work and in the reading of materials on the internet, using the same tripartite structure (Ukrainian—both—Russian) as for everyday use in general. For the sake of comparability, I excluded those respondents who reported not participating in the certain practices (e.g., not working).

The figures in the table demonstrate that the dynamics of language use in each of the three practices has been similar to that of everyday use in general: little change in 2014, a considerable shift from Russian to the supposedly equal use of the two languages by 2017, and a drastic shift from Russian and bilingualism to Ukrainian in 2022. At the same time, the data for each year reveal considerable differences between the three practices, which are all more noteworthy because we can assume that the social desirability bias is roughly the same for similar questions in a given survey. Perhaps most importantly, before 2022, there was less Ukrainian at work than at home, meaning that contrary to widespread allegations of forced Ukrainianization, Ukrain-

Figure 3: Responses to the questions "In what language do you usually communicate at home with your family/at work (in educational establishment)/read materials on the internet" (KIIS surveys of February 2012, September 2014, May 2017 and December 2022; in percentages)
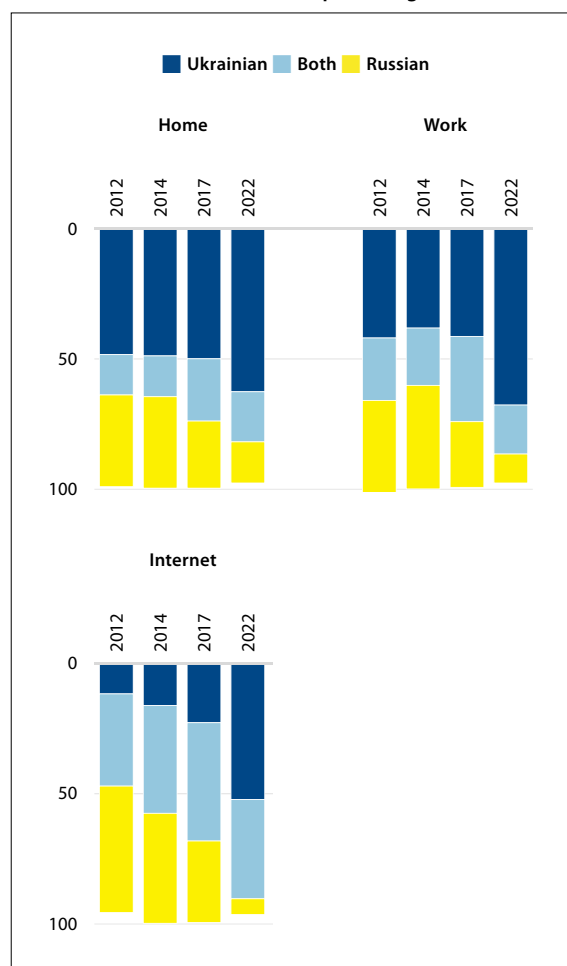
The figures on which the chart is based can be found in Table 3 on p. 11.

ian speakers had to switch to Russian in the workplace more frequently than Russian speakers to Ukrainian. In contrast, in 2022, Ukrainian has become even more prevalent at work than in families, not least due to the adoption of a new language law in 2019, which made the use of Ukrainian mandatory in all social domains and thus urged the regular use of it by many people who work not only in state establishments but also in private businesses. In turn, the new role of Ukrainian as the main language of the public domain later facilitated its performance of another role, that of the language of resistance to full-scale Russian aggression: many people who wanted to speak Ukrainian in defiance of the aggressor found a suitable environment for doing so. (Kulyk 2022)

Also remarkable is the much less active use of Ukrainian on the internet, where the norm was the reliance on either Russian or both languages since there was much more

material in Russian than in Ukrainian in this transnational network. (Kulyk 2017) Now the predominance of Russian is gone, and the prevailing use of Ukrainian appears to be more widespread than the equal use of both languages, which has partly to do with the switch from Russian to Ukrainian (or to bilingual versions) on many popular websites as required by the 2019 language law. Nevertheless, it is not clear how much the reported reliance on Ukrainian is exaggerated because of social desirability. Notably, apart from the country's two main languages, Ukrainians increasingly use other languages—presumably, first and foremost English—for the consumption of internet materials, the share of those languages being particularly high among most highly educated and well-to-do people.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the language practice of the Ukrainian population is undergoing profound change. Ukrainian is becoming the main language of most public domains and most people's everyday lives. Even in the traditionally Russian-speaking east and south of the country, many people responded to Russia's full-blown invasion of 2022 by switching to Ukrainian in private and/or public communication, and many more started using it more often while still predominantly relying on Russian. These regions are thus becoming more similar to the centre and the west, which contributes to greater unity and the resilience of the Ukrainian nation. However, the question remains how large-scale the language shift really is, which is related to the question of how truthful the responses to the survey questions are. There are reasons to believe that some people inadvertently report what they wish to be true rather than what truly is, and some intentionally falsify their preferences for a language that has become "politically incorrect" in the context of war. What consequences their current declarations will have for their actual language usage will depend on the Ukrainian state's policies, Ukrainian speakers' sensitivity towards the difficulties and pains of a radical change in the language practice of their (previously) Russian-speaking compatriots, and the duration and outcome of the current Russian–Ukrainian war.

About the Author
Volodymyr Kulyk is a head research fellow at the Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. He is the author of four books and numerous articles and book chapters in Ukrainian, English, German and other languages dealing with the topics of language politics and ethnonational identity in Ukraine.

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Table 1: Responses to the question "In what language do you communicate in everyday life", for Ukraine as a whole and for particular macroregions (KIIS surveys of February 2012, September 2014, May 2017 and December 2022; in percentages)

Year	Ukraine			West			Centre			East and South		
	Ukrain-ian	Both	Russian	Ukrain-ian	Both	Russian	Ukrain-ian	Both	Russian	Ukrain-ian	Both	Russian
2012	44.0	21.3	34.0	88.4	6.3	4.8	61.3	24.1	14.3	8.6	26.4	64.0
2014	45.9	18.7	35.1	89.9	4.8	5.2	57.9	21.4	20.6	10.0	24.1	65.3
2017	48.7	24.9	25.8	89.2	4.8	4.9	59.7	25.7	14.2	12.9	36.6	50.4
2022	57.4	23.8	14.8	90.6	5.6	2.3	64.9	21.1	10.1	29.5	37.8	27.2

Table 2: Language chosen by respondents for survey interviews, for Ukraine as a whole and for particular macro-regions (KIIS surveys of September 2014 and December 2022; in percentage)

Year	Ukraine		West		Centre		East + South	
	Ukrainian	Russian	Ukrainian	Russian	Ukrainian	Russian	Ukrainian	Russian
2014	54.3	45.7	98.3	1.7	72.8	27.2	12.4	87.6
2022	86.5	13.5	99.4	0.6	91.7	8.3	73.6	26.4

Table 3: Responses to the questions "In what language do you usually communicate at home with your family/at work (in educational establishment)/read materials on the internet" (KIIS surveys of February 2012, September 2014, May 2017 and December 2022; in percentages)

Survey	Home			Work			Internet		
	Ukrainian	Both	Russian	Ukrainian	Both	Russian	Ukrainian	Both	Russian
2012	48.3	15.5	35.2	41.9	24.0	37.5	11.6	35.4	48.6
2014	48.8	15.7	35.1	38.1	22.0	39.8	16.1	41.4	42.2
2017	49.9	23.9	25.8	41.3	32.8	25.2	22.7	45.4	31.3
2022	62.6	19.2	15.8	67.7	18.8	11.1	52.2	38.1	6.0

Ukrainian macroregions as defined for the above surveys

Map created by the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen; data sources: OSM contributors and, for the areas controlled by Russia on 18 December 2022, liveuamap (https://liveuamap.com/); data from liveuamap are available from https://github.com/conflict-investigations. Neue Zürcher Zeitung uses the data to create an interactive map which is updated on a daily basis (https://www.nzz.ch/english/ukraine-war-interactive-map-of-the-current-front-line-ld.1688087).

Motivations for Embracing the Ukrainian Language in Wartime Ukraine

Natalia Kudriavtseva (Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University)

Abstract
Prominent since 2014, the language shift from Russian to Ukrainian intensified in Ukraine after the full-scale invasion of 2022. Although perhaps the most obvious reason, Russian aggression is, however, not the only driver of the shift to Ukrainian. Practical reasons are also found to feature in the switchover.

The Use of Ukrainian in 2022
An embrace of the Ukrainian language has been a vivid response to the Russian war in Ukraine. Learning Ukrainian was the most prominent trend of 2022, according to the language report by Duolingo. In Ukraine itself, the period since the full-scale invasion has seen an unprecedented revival of the Ukrainian language, with a strong decline in Russian, particularly in the southeast.

A nationwide survey from December 2022 by Volodymyr Kulyk (cf. Kulyk's article in this issue) showed a massive increase in the use of Ukrainian, making language practices in different parts of Ukraine look less dissimilar than ever before. Last year's change in everyday language use is even described as a "drastic shift" from Russian to Ukrainian. In the whole of Ukraine, the use of Ukrainian increased by 8.7 percentage points from linguistic surveys in 2017 (48.7%), and the language is now reported to be the primary means of communication for 57.4% of respondents. The use of Russian decreased by 11.0 percentage points, from 25.8% of respondents reporting its use in 2017 to only 14.8% still speaking Russian in 2022. A dramatic decline in the use of Russian characterizes Ukraine's southeast, traditionally seen as more Russian-speaking. The reliance on Russian decreased from 50.4% in 2017 to 27.2% of respondents reporting Russian to be the main means of communication after the full-scale invasion. While it may be believed that the reported shifts, to a certain extent, testify to a desirable, rather than real, state of affairs, qualitative research shows that there are multiple reasons for switching to the use of Ukrainian in Ukraine.

The research reported on in this article deals with individuals in Ukraine who have voluntarily started to learn Ukrainian outside the country's school system as most of them have long been beyond the school age. The article is based on qualitative data obtained from three-year-long ethnographic research conducted over the course of 2020–2023, comprised of the following components: a 12-month participant observation of adults attending Ukrainian language classes in Kherson, a regional centre of Kherson oblast in Ukraine's south (conducted from 2020 until the beginning of 2022); 11 interviews with the initiators and teachers of Ukrainian language classes, located in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Odesa and Lviv (collected over 2020–2023 and in progress); and 30 interviews with the participants of the language classes from Kyiv, Chernihiv, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipro, Kherson, Novovolynsk and Moscow (collected over 2021–2023 and in progress). The names of the participants quoted in this paper are pseudonyms, as required by the ethics of ethnographic research.

Motivations for Learning and Switching to Ukrainian
A visible shift from Russian to Ukrainian began after Euromaidan and the beginning of Russian aggression in the Crimean Peninsula and the easternmost parts of the country. These events were perceived as a turning point that stimulated many more people to learn Ukrainian, or if already bilingual, to switch to it in everyday life. Their main motivation was personal patriotism and contribution to nation-building, which emphasized the link between linguistic practices and national belonging. The narrative that "real Ukrainians speak Ukrainian" was identified as the main motivation for the language shift whereby use of the Ukrainian language has become a symbolic sign of Ukrainian national identification.

In addition to those motivated by the view of Ukrainian as a symbol of their identity, there has been another recognized group of people who speak Ukrainian because they are learning it and not for political reasons. This view of Ukrainian as a means of communication was also promoted in the first round of free Ukrainian language courses launched in 2013 as a volunteer initiative.

Free Ukrainian Language Courses (Безкоштовні курси української мови) have since become a nationwide grassroots initiative to meet a growing demand for accessible opportunities to learn Ukrainian, which significantly increased after 2014. Having spread to more than twenty-five cities and towns, the courses also provided a space where internally displaced people from Crimea and Donbas could integrate into new local communities at the time. An increasing demand for Ukrainian

among Ukraine's speakers of Russian encouraged some of the course instructors to develop online learning resources and launch a separate project—the platform Ye-Mova (Є-Мова) designed to teach the Ukrainian language online. The courses continued offline and online during the period since the full-scale invasion, and these classes were perceived by many Russian-speaking Ukrainians as a way to defy Russian invaders in the ongoing war.

The full-blown war called into being another large-scale motivational volunteer initiative—the network *United* (Єдині), launched in April 2022. Since then, the project has gathered approximately 70,000 people, having generated 307 Ukrainian-speaking clubs in twenty-five cities and towns throughout Ukraine, as well as in Poland, Lithuania, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic. The project unites participants from all over Ukraine, including those residing in the currently occupied mainland territories and Crimea. Their participation is made possible via the online component of *United,* whereby language learning materials are distributed through popular social media platforms, such as Telegram. The project holds out Ukrainian primarily as an instrument of solidarity and aims at supporting those switching from Russian during wartime. The goal of the project is to involve one million Russian-speaking Ukrainians in the language transition, with the potential to target the audience of nine million people all over Ukraine.

Ukrainian as an Identity Marker

Prominent since the Euromaidan, motivations for learning Ukrainian underpinned by its view as an identity marker have not only intensified but also diversified with the outbreak of full-blown war. Qualitative ethnographic research into the motivations of the participants of both *Free Ukrainian Language Courses* and the *United* project shows that switching from Russian to Ukrainian is still primarily prompted by national identification whereby speaking Ukrainian symbolizes affiliation with the Ukrainian nation and state. Ukrainian is no longer declared to be merely *ridna mova* (native language), and there may even be a different language recognized as native instead. The idea is that native languages may vary, but if one lives in Ukraine, one should also be able to speak the Ukrainian language. Participants of ethnic origins other than Ukrainian also express this motivation as a desire to distance from the Russian identity they see as "offensive". Not necessarily Russians themselves, they do not want to be associated with those "from Moscow" and are attending the language courses to speak Ukrainian well.

The affiliation of language with the nation-state often goes along with a perception of language as a "weapon",

which is the motivation called forth by the ongoing war. This perception foregrounds the identity of the speaker as a defender of Ukraine. Ukrainian is perceived as an intellectual weapon, while the absence of Ukrainian in Crimea and Donbas is considered their "disarmament" and seen as the reason that these territories were occupied back in 2014. Ethnolinguistic identification as a motivation for the language transition often also relates to the war—for many, the realization of being Ukrainian came with the start of the Russian aggression in 2014; for others, this awareness came with the beginning of the full-blown war.

In most cases, the motivations for switching to Ukrainian are mixed, as for a participant who joins online courses from Russia. "No one wants to be Russian anymore" says 55-year-old Nikita from Moscow. For him, switching languages is also a way to switch his identity from Russian to Ukrainian, which is a motivation augmented by his cultural heritage and a desire to follow Ukrainian news. "I began listening to Ukrainian channels with the start of the war […] because we had no information, no information in Russia […] and I wanted to understand better what they were saying," he says.

For some of the course participants in Ukraine, especially for those who grew up in the country, Ukrainian was the language that they used to speak in their childhood before abandoning it for Russian as spoken in large urban areas in Ukraine. "I had to switch to Russian when I moved to study in Kharkiv," says 46-year-old Liudmyla, raised in a village in the region of Zaporizhzhia, who switched back to Ukrainian in March 2022. These people are now regaining their cultural heritage as they realize that the "language of their childhood" is no longer second-rate.

Ukrainian is now increasingly associated with youth and the present and future. "Ukrainian is the language of youth and culture," says 14-year-old Katia who attended *Free Ukrainian Language Courses* in Kherson before the full-scale invasion and is now following the classes online. Before 2014, the use of Ukrainian was rarely linked with younger people but was rather projected onto the coming generations as a desirable prospect that future Ukrainians would somehow fulfil. Today, "speaking Ukrainian is cool, today it is fashionable to speak Ukrainian," says 61-year-old Olena from Chernihiv, meaning that it is the language a young, cool person would use.

While some of the course participants still retain Russian in use, they sometimes express the feeling that Russian is now not "timely". In response to the question whether the domains where Russian is used have had any shrinking, 57-year-old Kherson resident Olha answered that those were changing: "The more of us elderly people die, the more Ukrainian language is

there," she said. With the perception that Russian is now outdated, an association of the future has become attached to the Ukrainian language, which makes even older people consider mastering it. "It occurred to me that, considering my preretirement age, I could work as a copywriter when I retire. But everything is switching into the Ukrainian language these days, that's why I decided to start with, let's say, reviving my writing skills [in Ukrainian]," said a participant of Ukrainian language classes held offline in Kherson before the full-blown war.

Ukrainian as a Means of Communication

Such practical motivations for learning Ukrainian are quite frequent among the participants of the language courses. These motivations reveal that, in addition to the link to ethnolinguistic and national identity, language is also perceived as a valuable part of one's cultural capital and a useful resource. The practical need for proficiency in Ukrainian arises from the necessity to speak the language at work, which, in turn, was stipulated by the provisions of the *Law on Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language* passed in 2019. Communication for work is one variety of the view of language as a means of communication, with the other view being the perception of language as a key to understanding and communicating with other cultures.

In Ukrainian language classes, as well as in interviews, the participants often speak about the necessity of speaking the language at work together with the motivation to embrace it as a symbol of their identity. "I am a teacher at an art school [teaching] painting, design, drawing. It is necessary, the [Ukrainian] language is necessary for a teacher and a patriot," says 70-year-old Anna from Kherson, explaining her reasons for learning Ukrainian. Anna is one of those participants who never learned Ukrainian during her formal education, having moved to Ukraine from Russia after she finished her studies long time ago. "At the beginning, I had one aim—to know the Ukrainian language, to be able to speak it because I have always been Russian-speaking. And now I very much need [the language] for work because my work is all about communication," says a recent migrant from Russia who came to Ukraine with her family shortly after 2014.

In the language courses, there are quite a few migrants from Russia or other former Soviet republics who say that, after the law on language came into force, they encountered a need for speaking Ukrainian. They often say that they lived in Ukraine easily for many years relying on Russian and now the time has come for them to also be able to communicate in Ukrainian. Some of these people also perceive Ukrainian as enriching their linguistic repertoires and mediating communication with other cultures; some even see Ukrainian as a bridge to a better knowledge of Russian. A Crimean-Tatar participant, who is learning both the Crimean-Tatar and Ukrainian languages, alludes to the view of Ukrainian as a key to other cultures, as adapted from the motivational framework for Crimean-Tatar: "Well, there is such a stimulus for [learning] Crimean Tatar that, if you know Crimean Tatar, you can understand other Turkic-speaking peoples. And there are so many of them. And they will also be able to understand you." At the same time, she also emphasizes the need to speak Ukrainian as Ukraine's national language: "But there is also the state language that we all should speak and know. I live in a state, there is a state language. And there is my native language which I should by no means forget." For her, as for most of the other new Ukrainian speakers, the motivations of communication and identification go hand in hand.

Conclusion

Perhaps the most obvious motivation for learning Ukrainian, the Russian war in Ukraine, is not the only immediate cause for people in Ukraine to speak the Ukrainian language. Even when the war is the leading cause, the study of Ukrainian rarely comes with a single explanation. The analysis of the ethnographic data suggests that it is more often the case for the language course participants that a combination of reasons serves as motivation. While the wartime foregrounds the link of language to patriotism, security and nation-building, other factors, such as the legislation on language use in official spaces, are also revealed as factors contributing to the wider embrace of the Ukrainian language. The full-scale invasion seems to have catalysed the language shift that has been developing in Ukraine since independence. However, while in the early years, the process of Ukrainianization was mostly top-down, since 2014, it has also become bottom-up, inspired and maintained as grassroots efforts by regular people. The sustainability of the process is dependent on the tenacity of the combination of two primary motivations—the views of Ukrainian as an identity marker and as a communication tool. These will be strengthened by the perception of Ukrainian as the language of the youth and the link to the present and future, as well as by the view that speaking Ukrainian is trendy today.

About the Author
Natalia Kudriavtseva is Professor of Translation and Slavic Studies at Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, Ukraine, and a fellow at Hanse Institute for Advanced Study in Delmenhorst, Germany. Her recent work explores the shift to

Ukrainian among Ukraine's speakers of Russian. Natalia has published internationally and written for the US Kennan Institute's *Focus Ukraine* blog on Ukraine's language policies and grassroots Ukrainianization.

ANALYSIS

Surzhyk in Ukraine: Between Language Ideology and Usage

Anastasija Kostiučenko (University of Greifswald)

Abstract
In Ukraine, 'Surzhyk' denotes a widely used language mixing Ukrainian and Russian, which has always been a source of debate both in the international academic sphere and among the Ukrainian public. Consequently, Surzhyk evokes a broad, and sometimes controversial, spectrum of opinions and feelings. The meaning and role of Surzhyk can be re-evaluated against the background of Ukrainian language policy in recent years and the drastic sociopolitical changes brought about by Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine. In the context of Ukraine's current language situation and the linguistic identity of the Ukrainian population, Surzhyk, especially 'Neo-Surzhyk', could accelerate society's linguistic transition to Ukrainian.

On the Mixing of Languages in Ukraine: the Surzhyk Phenomenon

In bilingual communities, mixed languages or idioms develop through constant, intensive language contact. In Ukraine, too, there is such a mixed idiom, which is very widespread (especially in the central, eastern and southern regions of the country) and is usually called 'Surzhyk'. It is a mixture of Ukrainian and Russian, traditionally referred to by the neutral term 'Ukrainian-Russian Mixed Speech' in German language academic discourse. Indeed, such a neutral term is needed because this mixed speech is not only a source of debate in academic discourse but is also particularly controversial in Ukrainian society. Its folk linguistic origins reveal that Surzhyk originally stood for a mixture of wheat and rye or flour of inferior quality. This designation was meant to imply that it was impure and less valuable. Therefore, depending on one's point of view, social attitudes towards Surzhyk imply revulsion, linguistic decay, provinciality and a 'lesser evil' than a complete transition to Russian or, instead, an association with everyday life, familiarity, creativity, skilful and comical play with words, and defeat of the rhetoric that divides society (this last association is especially strong since the protests on the Maidan in 2013/14). This spectrum is linked to

a host of extralinguistic factors, primarily in the social and political context but also to how people feel about language issues, language diversity and language policy in general. As a result, sociolinguistics distinguishes between different attitude types or speaker groups. These types or groups are, for example, language lovers, language admirers or language trivializers. According to research into attitudes on Surzhyk, these attitudes vary depending, among other things, on whether one generally agrees with language purists or not. Moreover, the covert prestige of Surzhyk (covert prestige refers to the highly respected but concealed image of a language among the speakers themselves, which then also becomes relevant for identification with a group) and its everyday use in private spheres cannot be dismissed, and both of these attributes evoke friendlier attitudes towards Surzhyk.

Surzhyk is an oral, noncodified mixed idiom, even though in Ukrainian literature and digital media discourse, there are isolated attempts to write Surzhyk down (e.g., for parody, satire or as an instrument of protest). An essential point in the linguistic problems surrounding Surzhyk is that the two East Slavic languages that flow into it are closely related and similar in their grammatical structures. Interferences, therefore, take place

at all levels and are variable, so some studies claim that distinguishing between the primary language and the embedded language (the one added) is highly problematic or even impossible because it is questionable whether the theoretical framework of a primary and an embedded language can be applied at all.

Therefore, one point of contention is whether this massive mixture is rather chaotic and uncontrolled and represents an individual form of expression or whether it in fact has a systemic character. The latter would mean that Surzhyk would then be (socio)linguistically more autonomous, and one could speak of three main languages in Ukraine. Surzhyk's systemic character or independence is also indicated in research by the fact that there are speakers in Ukraine who were first socialized with Surzhyk and for whom Surzhyk is, therefore, their mother tongue. Some speakers of Surzhyk are often not even aware that they speak Surzhyk. Researchers agree, however, that Surzhyk deviates from the norms of the two standard languages, Ukrainian and Russian, that form it, although these deviations are evaluated differently. The different evaluations of the deviations are connected, among other things, to the fact that the two standard languages of Ukraine also influence each other through permanent contact, leading to deviations on different linguistic levels and making the discussion about norms in each more complex. A sociolinguistic classification of Surzhyk is made difficult by the lack of consensus on how broadly or narrowly Surzhyk should be understood as a mixture of languages and whether it is then even permissible to speak of Surzhyk in the singular. Some relevant studies, therefore, point to the need to distinguish several types or regional variants of Surzhyk, considering both purely linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

A German-Austrian group of researchers led by Tilmann Reuther and Gerd Hentschel made the most recent promising proposal to distinguish between two types of Surzhyk: Old Surzhyk and Neo-Surzhyk. This distinction reflects the history of Ukraine because Old Surzhyk originates from the time when Russian linguistically dominated the territory of today's Ukraine (which it did, with a short interruption during the early period of the Soviet Union from approximately 1860 until the Union's dissolution). Ukrainian speakers adapted to the Russian-speaking environment, which resulted in the form of Surzhyk—a Ukrainian-based one—that was also passed on to the next generations. Thus, it is Old Surzhyk that has been elevated to the status of a research object in numerous studies. On the other hand, Neo-Surzhyk is connected to the history of independent Ukraine and especially its language policy. As the researchers claim, Neo-Surzhyk is a mixed language spoken by those who primarily use Russian in everyday

life but have switched to Ukrainian as their main language due to language policy measures and language purist ideology (see Volodymyr Kulyk's analysis in this issue). As a result, their language is currently a kind of interlanguage with a Russian base or a higher proportion of Russian vocabulary. Against the current linguistic-political background, Neo-Surzhyk may be viewed even more negatively than the familiar Old Surzhyk by the Ukrainian population, as Neo-Surzhyk can function as a shibboleth, that is, as a characteristic feature that enables a precise social classification of speakers. With the rather Ukrainian-based Old Surzhyk, this shibboleth function would not be possible to the same extent.

Hybrid Language Practice in Everyday Life

Ukraine's previous linguistic situation was unique in that so-called dialogical bilingualism or semicommunication was practised in everyday life, at work, on television or even in parliament: each communicator spoke the language or language code that was easier for him or her, and he or she was still understood. This alternating use of language codes or this hybrid language practice hardly bothered the Ukrainian population. The use of Surzhyk also fell under and still belongs to this hybrid language practice, whereby Surzhyk appears as a compromise language. In this sense, a compromise language assumes a mediating role between the standard languages. Moreover, Surzhyk has great identification potential among a considerable part of the Ukrainian population. However, its use only occurs during certain informal communication situations, so it can be assumed that the context determines the choice of the three possible language codes. The discourse surrounding Surzhyk also exposes a discrepancy in the state-run sociological surveys in Ukraine regarding quotidian language use, in which Surzhyk rarely appears as an option. In contrast, it certainly does in scientific projects and surveys. This means that state institutions do not accept the existence of Surzhyk.

Changes after 2022

Since the Russian invasion in February 2022, a readjustment of linguistic relations in Ukraine has been taking place. The Ukrainian population is changing both language practices and attitudes towards their languages, especially towards the state language, Ukrainian, and the aggressor language, Russian. Ukrainian is supported not only by the state as the leading actor in language policy but also by the people themselves who actively use the language in all social domains so that harmonization between top-down and bottom-up language policy can be observed. Especially in the eastern and southern regions, there is a shift towards Ukrainian. Given these developments, the prognosis for Surzhyk is good, espe-

cially among those parts of the Ukrainian population who previously predominantly used Russian in everyday life. It is precisely this mixed idiom that will be able to form a (significantly shorter) bridge to transition from Russian to Ukrainian—and Surzhyk does not, as was previously claimed, accelerate the transition to Russian.

About the Author

Dr *Anastasija Kostiučenko* is a postdoctoral fellow at the Departments of Slavonic Studies and Baltic Studies at the University of Greifswald. Her research focuses on sociolinguistics, language policy, language contact and multilingualism.

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