

Title: A Look at Russian-Speaking Ukrainians' Attitudes to Ukraine's Language Regulation: Between Territoriality and Personality

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Abstract: This paper explores how Russian-speaking Ukrainians' varying interpretations of the role of language in a nation-state influence their attitudes to Ukrainian language regulation in the wake of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which was initially sparked off by a potential language legislation change. Empirically, the paper is based on a 2018 field study carried out in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-biggest and predominantly Russophone city situated in the east of the country, thirty kilometres from the border with Russia.

One of the recurrent themes in the study's in-depth interviews was the discussion of the national and regional status of the Russian language in Ukraine. The principles of territoriality and of personality in the official management of bilingualism are used as a prism through which I analyze the participants' views on how Ukraine should approach its language regulation. The oft-made comparison of Ukraine's language planning with that of Western countries cast light on the speakers' political allegiances and ideological choices.

Key words: *Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, nationalism, linguistic ideologies, language policy, principles of territoriality and personality*

Discipline area: Sociolinguistics

Topic: Language policy in Ukraine

1. Introduction

Ukraine is a young post-Soviet country that gained its independence from the USSR in 1991. It is a unitary country with one official language – Ukrainian. However, according to different sources, from 30 to 40 % of its population is Russian-speaking, especially in the east and south of the country (State Statistics Committee 2003-2004; Khmelko 2003, 4). During the Soviet period, Russian was the dominant language in Ukraine, and it was not until 1989, just before the collapse of the Soviet Union, that the Ukrainian language was granted the status of official language in Soviet Ukraine. The linguistic debate on the status of Russian has raged ever since, stoked up by the interested political forces.

Ukraine's geographical and political location between Russia and the European Union (or the ideological "West") has made it the object of a constant tug-of-war between the two competing worlds. Since its sovereignty, the foreign policies of Ukraine have oscillated between an alliance with Russia and integration into the European Union. In winter 2013, Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich refused to sign the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement, much to Moscow's satisfaction (Liebich 2013) and to the disappointment of Western European countries and the United States. This decision blocked the project of rapprochement between the EU and Ukraine, provoking massive protests in Ukraine, called the (Euro)maidan, which toppled the regime of Yanukovich and led pro-Western forces to power in Kyiv.

In 2014, the new government announced the repeal of the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko language law of 2012 adopted by the overthrown pro-Russian president Yanukovich, which granted official status to minority and regional languages of Ukraine in regions where speakers of these languages constituted 10 % of the regions' populations. Some politicians and pro-Ukrainian activists considered this law as the "Kremlin's Trojan horse", which de facto legalized the already dominant position of the Russian language in the east and south of Ukraine, "blocking implementation of Article 10 of the Constitution of Ukraine, serving as a tool for Russification, and threatening Ukraine's national security" (*Euromaidan Press*, November 9, 2016). Condemning the change of power in Kyiv as an illegal coup d'état, Russia took advantage of the revocation of the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law to "protect the Russian-speaking compatriots" in Ukraine, annexing Crimea and starting a hybrid war in the Donbas (Kuzio 2017, 110).

This paper explores the Russian-speaking Ukrainians' perceptions of the role of language in a nation-state and their attitudes to Ukraine's language management in the wake of the

Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Relying on data from a 2018 field study in the eastern-Ukrainian Russophone city of Kharkiv, this project examines the positioning of the study participants of different political views in relation to the contesting notions of Ukraine's official monolingualism and of the city's predominant Russophony. I use the principles of territoriality and of personality in the management of bilingualism as a prism through which I analyze the speakers' views on how Ukraine should approach its language planning.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Nation-state and language management

Many political scientists disagree with the near-synonymous use of the terms of 'nation' and 'state' (Blommaert 2006, 238; Connor 1994, 90-113; Gellner 2006, 6-7). Gellner (2006) gives separate definitions to the state and the nation. The 'state' is the elaboration of the social division of labour and the specialization and concentration of order maintenance (police, courts, etc.) (4). The 'nation' is a group of individuals who share the same culture (a system of ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving and communicating) and who recognize each other as belonging to the same nation (6-7). Thus, we can conclude that the state is an objective entity which imposes a certain order on a given territory, whereas the nation is a subjective notion existing in the minds of citizens of the state, who identify themselves as a group of people living on this territory and respecting the order of the state. The idea that the nation and the state are one is often linked to the industrialization of Europe in the 18th-19th centuries, which demanded the creation of states with fixed borders and national markets to control the production and circulation of goods and trade with other countries (Hobsbawm 1990; Heller 2011, 7; Kedourie 1960, 68; Blommaert 2006, 241). The nation-state seeks to uniformize culture and production of knowledge to create 'citizens' identifying themselves emotionally with a nation. This feeling of

belonging to a national group is termed 'national identity', which Anthony D. Smith (1991) describes as "a powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world, through the prism of collective personality and distinctive culture" (Smith 1991, 17). Language is the "external and visible badge" of differences distinguishing one nation from another (Kedourie, 1960, 64). In the ethnocultural interpretation of nationalism, the world is naturally divided into nations, which speak an original language, and "to speak an original language is to be true to one's character, to maintain one's identity" (Kedourie 1960, 67). In the civic model of nationalism, language is seen as a powerful nation-building tool, unifying the citizens of state into an 'imaginary' nation and giving them access to the democratic process (Anderson 2006; Blommaert 2006, 241; Heller 2007, 4). From the linguistic point of view, the monolingual ideology of the nation-state can be defined as 'one state – one nation – one language'. However, very few nation-states are homogeneous and monolingual (Connor 1994, 96; Blommaert 2006, 238), hence the need of states to manage their multilingualism by pursuing a particular language policy. Spolsky (2004, 5; 2012, 5) distinguishes three inter-related components in the field of language policy: 1) actual language practices of the members of the speech community; 2) values and beliefs about speech varieties shared by certain members of the community, which may be organized into ideologies; 3) efforts by some members of a speech community who have authority over other members to modify their language practice, also known as language planning or management.

Here, we will concentrate on the second component - language ideologies, which may be defined as language users' conceptualizations about languages, speakers and language use, such as beliefs about "quality", value, status, norms, functions, ownership, etc. (Blommaert 2006, 241;

Irvine 2012). Russian-speaking Ukrainians' beliefs about Ukraine's language legislation and citizen language rights can inform language planning choices.

2.2. The principles of territoriality and personality

To ease tensions between various linguistic groups living on the same territory, the state may offer the latter concessions through language legislation in the form of certain language rights. This language management is often guided by two principles - that of territoriality and that of personality.

The principle of territoriality ties language to a territory, recognizing territorial linguistic rights, which become anchored in unilingual institutions that are themselves anchored in geographical space (Loubier 2002, 2; Laponce, 1987). The personality principle, on the other hand, grants citizens individual linguistic rights (Loubier 2002, 2). According to the second principle, every person is free to obtain services in the language of his or her choice throughout the nation or designated area within a nation (Cartwright 2006, 202-03). Both principles have their benefits and detriments; and the choice of a principle guiding language planning depends on a particular context.

The territoriality principle is often used when there is a very high level of linguistic homogeneity within a country or region (Patten 2003, 302). Switzerland is an example of a country where the territoriality principle is applied in the public institutions of its cantons, which can be divided along the linguistic lines. However, it must be noted that some Swiss cantons are multilingual, in which linguistic minorities have also had to fight to obtain language rights (Stojanovic 2010, 235). The personality principle prevails in countries where linguistic populations are more dispersed geographically, as is the case of South Africa with the English and Afrikaans languages (Cartwright 2006, 203). Canada also applies the personality principle at

the federal level, but, at the provincial level, languages are managed through the territoriality principle.

When analyzing the two principles, in addition to the geographical factor, Patten (2003) takes into account such crucial factors as public access, social mobility, democratic participation and identity. Réaume (2003) names such justifications of the choice of principle as economic efficiency, administrative convenience, and national unity (272). Cardinal (2008) also raises the question of minority language survival as a factor in the choice of language policy (135). Below I have summarized the arguments of Patten (2003), Réaume (2003) and Cardinal (2008) in a table of characteristics of the principles of territoriality and of personality.

Table 1. *Characteristics of the principles of territoriality and of personality*

Principle of territoriality	Principle of personality
Links language to territory	Focalizes on the portability of language rights
Favours unilingualism on a given territory	Encourages bilingualism at state level
Reinforces linguistic frontiers between countries (regions), contributes to social cohesion within a territory	Satisfies individualistic rights to speak a certain language; no necessity to adapt to the languages of other speakers
May feed separatist ambitions in the regional case	Conflictual interests of various individuals may provoke contention
Includes the whole population in a democratic process	Contributes to individual autonomy
Guarantees the survival of a minority language if the latter is official	Does not guarantee protection for minority languages
Less costly to implement when territoriality is applied to the whole territory of a country	More costly to implement because it involves the creation of a big number of bilinguals throughout the country

The principle of territoriality ties language to a particular territory, which is anchored in an idea that, in order to thrive, a language is in need of a territory (Cardinal 2008, 135). Granting the official status to one language, it favours monolingualism inside a given territory, be it a country or a particular region within a country. The territoriality principle nourishes a distinct

linguistic and cultural identity as a criterion of belonging to a nation when it is applied to the whole territory of a state, but it may also feed separatist ambitions when a country has several monolingual territorialities in its midst which operate exclusively in the language spoken in their respective region (Patten 2003, 301). The principle of territoriality within a country aims to include the whole population in a single democratic process and is cheaper to implement than when several official languages are adopted in education, courts and other state institutions. When an endangered language is raised to the level of official on a given territory, it strengthens its position and greatly increases its chances of survival. Nevertheless, the principle of territoriality is criticized for creating injustices within linguistically mixed territories or those with a considerable percentage of bilinguals (Stojanovic 2010, 233).

The principle of personality ensures the individual portability of linguistic rights, that is both a minority and a majority language speaker will “have their interest in public access satisfied” on all the territory of a country (Patten 2003, 305). This requires a high level of state bilingualism, which the principle of personality encourages. On the negative side, this arrangement demands plenty of resources to implement, such as translation and education expenses. On the positive side, this will motivate majority language speakers to learn a minority language to become more socially mobile, for instance to find jobs in government structures and services. However, this depends on the attraction of the minority language. This situation would create competition between the stronger language and the vulnerable language, a battle in which the latter will inevitably lose, as most speakers would prefer to communicate in a more secure language (Patten 2003, 309-10). According to other authors (Réaume 2003, 287; Stojanovic 2010, 234), the principle of personality also relieves individuals of any necessity to adapt to the language of their interlocutor, which may potentially provoke a discord between individuals with

conflicting interests and may create an anarchical situation in which each citizen will have the liberty to use their language in the public domain, irrespective of the social and historical context in which they find themselves.

3. Ukrainian sociolinguistic landscape

3.1. Ukraine's state language policy

Emerging from the Soviet Union as an independent state, Ukraine opted for the nation-state monolingualism, where Ukrainian, the language of the titular ethnic group, became the official language of the country. As the Russian language was de facto official and dominant in the ex-Soviet Union, Ukraine insists on the linguistic criterion as crucial for national identification and the “rallying point in a national struggle”, which will be lost if the national language is not preserved (Connor 1994, 105). This emphasis on the ethnocultural national dimension, based on a common ethnic origin, language, culture and traditions (Smith 1991, 15), is combined with the civic model of the European nation-states (Kulyk 2014, 123), where language is understood as an instrument giving access to the democratic process.

According to Article 10 of the Ukrainian Constitution (Konstytutsia Ukrainy 2016),

The state language in Ukraine is the Ukrainian language. The state ensures the comprehensive development and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all domains of social life on the entire territory of Ukraine. In Ukraine, the free development and protection of Russian and other languages of national minorities of Ukraine are guaranteed.

Therefore, language is linked to territory, as in the territorial principle of state language management. The country's national minority languages are not given any official status, but they are guaranteed “free development and protection”. Russian is mentioned separately from other minority languages because, in reality, it is a dominant language in eastern and southern regions of Ukraine and can be considered a “minority language” only in legal terms but not in

regard to its actual prevalence (Kulyk 2014, 123). Although the Ukrainian Constitution applies the territoriality principle to the entire territory of Ukraine, in practice, in many institutions, language choice is left to individual negotiation, as is often done when the personality principle is adopted, and Russian speakers end up being accommodated.

As a country aspiring to European integration, Ukraine signed and ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, designed for monolingual European countries which do not recognize any minority on their territory. According to Bowring (2014, 65), the European Charter is a “unique instrument which does not protect minority groups, or even members of minority groups, but rather languages as such”. It would be stretching a point to call Russian, a transnational language, still widely spoken in the ex-Soviet Union, a “minority language” that needs protection. Therefore, some Ukrainian language experts argue that the European Charter cannot be applied to the Ukrainian context, and that democratic principles of rights and liberties are used as a smokescreen for anti-Ukrainian propaganda and continuous promotion of Russian (Masenko 2004, 133).

It is ostensibly in compliance with the European Charter that the Kivalov-Kolesnitchenko Law of 2012 was designed. The law allowed the use of a “regional” or “minority” language in regions where ethnic or linguistic minorities exceeded 10% of the region’s population. After the adoption of the law, 13 out of 27 Ukrainian regions became officially bilingual, declaring, first and foremost, Russian but also Hungarian, Romanian and Moldovan as their second official languages. It is also worth mentioning that, in 2012, the draft law was studied by the Main Scientific and Expert Committee of Ukraine, which concluded that some of its clauses contradict the Constitution of Ukraine as well as the international documents ratified by Ukraine because they allow regional languages to be used instead of the official language of the country rather

than alongside it (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy 2011, 3). Furthermore, the law presents language not as “one of the most important ethnonational characteristics, but as just a territorial attribute” (2). The management of regional languages as “territorial attributes”, that is connected to distinct territorial units within Ukraine, contradicts the Ukrainian Constitution as the latter guarantees the “functioning of the Ukrainian language on the entire territory of Ukraine”. Thus, in Ukraine, language is connected to its territory, ethnicity and nation (“ethnonational characteristics”), which is typical of the territoriality principle. However, the same principle is denied to its regions for fear that such regional language rights might officially demarcate linguistically separate territories within Ukraine. In addition, according to the Constitution, Ukraine is a monolingual and unitary state, but the principle of regional territoriality is used in language management of officially multilingual countries, which Ukraine is not. Finally, the Russian language is not an endangered language in need of preservation, as stated in the European Charter. In reality, it is the Ukrainian language that is minoritized in the east and south of Ukraine. Unlike the Russian language, Ukrainian is not a dominant language widely spoken and understood in many post-Soviet countries or used in international contexts, such as the United Nations Organisation, but a locally used tongue, which is itself in need of protection. The Venice Commission also found that the 2012 Language Law did not sufficiently guarantee the promotion of the Ukrainian language as the only official language of Ukraine (European Commission, December 19, 2011, Para. 66).

In 2019, Ukraine passed a new law “On Provision of the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language” in accordance with the Ukrainian Constitution, according to which schools were to transition to the Ukrainian language of instruction starting from

September 2020 and since January 2021, all service providers were to start serving consumers and providing information on goods and services in the state language.

3.2. Linguistic ideologies of Ukrainians

Kulyk (2014, 124-5) as well as Maiboroda and Panchuk (2008, 205-6) distinguish three competing ideologies among different Ukrainian political and intellectual groups, each of which claims to represent the interests of corresponding language groups among the Ukrainian population: (1) Ukrainophone, which corresponds to the discourse of the monolingual nation-state, where the official language is considered to be the soul and cement of a nation; (2) Russophone, which defends the language rights of Russian-speaking Ukrainians and demanding equal status for Russian alongside Ukrainian, and (3) centrist, whose adherents accept Ukrainian as the only national language but advocate the official acceptance of Russian as the language of one part of Ukraine's population. Those belonging to the two latter ideological groups normally support the formal recognition of Ukrainian bilingualism at the state or at the regional level.

In 2014, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict polarized Ukrainians into those who supported Ukraine and those who sided with Russia, which strengthened the already existing opposing attitudes to the state accommodation of the Ukrainian and Russian languages. Bilaniuk (2016, 139) termed Kulyk's (2014) Ukrainophone and centrist ideological groups as "language matters" (referring to those who stress the importance of Ukrainian for national unification) and "language does not matter" (referring to those who defend their right to use whichever language they like and support state multilingualism). These concepts are based on ethnocultural and civic interpretations of the role of language in a nation. On the opposite side of the ideological spectrum, the "Russophones", instigated by Russia's reaction to the possible abolishment of the

Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law, had become more vociferous in their demands of language rights and developed a more hostile attitude towards the Ukrainian language.

3.3. Examples of European countries' language legislation as justification of language ideologies

Ukrainian élites of opposing political persuasions widely use the examples of language policies of different European countries to justify the choice of language policy for Ukraine in which they have vested interests.

Pro-Ukrainian “language matters” élites, including Ukrainian sociolinguists, have always focalized on a single language as an instrument of national consolidation. In this discourse, bilingualism is perceived as a threat to the unity of the Ukrainian state and as a deformity (Masenko 2007, 2014; Zbyr 2015).

In case of bilingualism two languages compete on the whole territory of the country, and as a result, one of the languages gradually weakens and disappears. Linguists have proved that two languages cannot be functionally equivalent on the same territory. For this reason, bilingualism does not usually last long (Zbyr 2015, 48).

Pro-Ukrainian élites often cite modernist nation-states such as the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland as successful examples of linguistic normalization and national edification, which Ukraine should follow (Masenko 2014). Besides that, according to Masenko (2014), the most developed and thriving countries are those where the first language of the majority of the population corresponds to the state language of the country, namely France, Germany, Italy, etc. Bilingual countries, such as Canada or Belgium, are considered to be unstable and doomed to collapse (Lukyanchuk 2011). Describing the Canadian “linguistic conflict”, the Ukrainian sociolinguist Larysa Masenko (1999) speaks in favour of the English-only monolingualism in Canada, which is surprising given that the dominance of English is similar to that of Russian in the ex-Soviet Union. By contrast, North American scholars, such as

Bilinsky (2010), tend to compare Russian speakers in post-Soviet countries to English speakers in Quebec. Like Ukraine, Quebec is an officially monolingual province, which implements the territoriality principle in its language policy to save their native French from being overwhelmed by English (Bilinsky 2010, 199). Also, from the Ukrainophile point of view, the Ukrainian language must be promoted as the language of interethnic communication between citizens speaking different languages, the way English is promoted in the United States. Linguistic minorities will be given rights to their own mass media, cultural centres and schools (Masenko 2014).

In the opposing camp, partisans of the Russophone ideology, such as the author of the 2012 Language Law Vadym Kolesnichenko, often compare the possible granting of official status to the Russian language with the ostensibly similar experience of officially bi- and multilingual countries, such as Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, which are represented as examples of successful state bilingualism, even though the two state languages are more distant than those of Ukraine (Kolesnichenko 2013). Proponents of the Russophone ideology describe monolingualism at the state level as “prehistoric” justifying it by examples of “civilized” European countries where the rights of all citizens are respected (Medvedchuk 2013; Dumskaiia 2012). However, their Ukrainophile adversaries point to linguistic conflicts in Belgium and Canada as arguments that official bilingualism is bound to separate the country (Masenko 2010,100). In addition, they argue that official languages in Belgium and Canada are not as closely related to each other like Russian and Ukrainian, which makes it harder for one language to replace another (Vagner and Koalson 2014). By contrast, in Ukraine, Russian can easily supercede the weaker Ukrainian language the way it happened in officially bilingual country

Belarus, where Russian has already prevailed over Belarussian (Potapenko 2018; Sliashynskaya 2019).

Adherents of the centrist ideology “Language does not matter” tend to stand away from the ardent linguistic debate of the two former groups. They insist that it is not important which language a citizen speaks; what matters is the desire to live together in a European country (Matsuka 2018). This ideology of civic nationalism is in line with Ernest Renan’s oft-cited speech *What is a Nation?*, in which he asserts that the most important characteristic of a nation is not common language or culture, but the desire to live together (Renan 2011). The centrists feel a strong sense of belonging to the Ukrainian nation despite not speaking the state language of the country. They share the Russophones’ admiration of multilingual European countries, but, unlike the latter, they often accept the official monolingualism of Ukraine.

These contesting linguistic ideologies expressed by the Ukrainian elites through mass media, social networks and literature influence the sympathizers of different political beliefs among the Ukrainian population, shaping their attitudes to Ukraine’s language regulation. Below I present popular views on how the Ukrainian language situation should be officially managed based on the field study carried out in 2018.

4. Methodology

For the current paper, I use data collected in a field study, which I conducted in the city of Kharkiv in summer 2018. Relying on qualitative research methods, I utilized semi-structured interviews as the main tool of data collection as they enabled me to ask broad open-ended questions and obtain varied in-depth answers. During the field study, I interviewed thirty-two participants, an equal number of men and women, aged between 18 and 67, of different occupations. The participants, who speak Russian as a first language, were recruited through

snowball sampling. In an attempt to cover a wide range of perspectives, I sought participants from three different ideological groups described in the previous section of this paper. Borrowing the terms introduced by Bilaniuk (2016), I called the ideological groups into which I conditionally divided my participants: 1) pro-Ukrainian “language matters”, 2) pro-Ukrainian “language does not matter”; and 3) pro-Russian. It is worth noting, however, that although I draw on three separate ideological groups to categorize the participants, I am perfectly aware that, in practice, these ideologies are a continuum of opinions rather than separate clear-cut groups.

Although the participants answered a wide range of questions in the course of the interviews, here, I will focus exclusively on their responses pertaining to the Ukrainian language management and legislation. To avoid influencing the participants with my own points of view, I asked them broad questions about the status of Russian and Ukrainian languages in Ukraine and in the Kharkiv region. Their opinions on the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law and comparisons with other countries’s language policies are topics brought up by the participants themselves. In the following section of the paper, I present my arguments and conclusions on the basis of the study interview excerpts, which I translated from Russian and Ukrainian into English myself.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. “Language matters”: Territorial principle with one official language in all of Ukraine

Pro-Ukrainian participants of the “language matters” ideology fully supported the official monolingualism on all the Ukrainian territory as well as Ukraine’s refusal to give the Russian language any status at state or regional level. They justified their opinion by the fact that the official language of many countries is the eponymous language of their largest titular national groups. The pro-Ukrainian participants compared Ukraine’s adoption of Ukrainian as the only state language with the language regimes of other European nation-states, notably Poland and

France, where titular eponymous languages are also recognized as the only official state languages. These participants deemed it important for a particular territory to have a symbolic language that represents it and distinguishes its citizens from other national groups.

Speaker 1: You can be the speaker of any language, but if you work or study in Ukraine, you have to know the state language. There is nothing surprising about it. If you go to Poland, you have to know their language, Polish, and you can't say "I am a Russian speaker, and everyone has to answer me in Russian" (*phrase uttered in Russian with an exaggerated Russian accent*) (*in Ukrainian, male, 39, programmer*).

Speaker 1 is radically opposed to the personality principle at the state level, which may encourage Russian speakers to further insist on being accommodated in the Russian language. He compares Russian-speaking Ukrainians to international students or workers who arrived in a different country and have to master their language to be able to function there. He views them as foreigners who have to adapt and assimilate because they are not in their native Russia. Ideologically, Speaker 1, who speaks Russian as a first language himself, can only accept Ukrainophones as legitimate native citizens of Ukraine, whereas Russian speakers belong to Russia. Based on this conviction, he reported making conscious attempts to switch to the Ukrainian language in his daily life.

Furthermore, the idea of granting regional status to the Russian language in Kharkiv caused outrage among "language matters" Kharkivites although most of them speak Russian themselves. They explained their inacceptance of the official status of Russian by the willingness to protect the Ukrainian language in their region, which might in that case be superseded by Russian completely.

Speaker 3: We need to maintain a certain balance in which there will be a preference for Ukrainian. [...] I wouldn't like the protection of the Russian language to lead to the attack on Ukrainian (*in Russian, male, 30, manager in IT*).

Although Speaker 3 envisions a compromise between the two languages, he is also aware that Russian is a dominant language and may menace Ukrainian. Speaker 3 also mentioned that Ukraine is the only place in the world, which “cares” about the protection of the Ukrainian language and where it can flourish, and the Ukrainian language policy should promote it. It is obvious that Speaker 3 favours the territorial principle for the entirety of Ukraine’s territory, just as it is stated in the Ukrainian Constitution.

It is also worth noting that all “language matters” participants pointed to the danger of regional territoriality in the accommodation of bilingualism because this may negatively affect the Ukrainian statehood. Some of the participants mentioned that the 2012 Law, legalizing the regional use of Russian, had already caused political problems through Russia’s interferences with the city’s Russophony.

Speaker 4: We already see the consequences of that [the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law of 2012]. Now I feel like a foreigner here. It is very difficult for me to find a menu in Ukrainian or personnel that can serve me in Ukrainian. I don’t want to complain, but I think that at least those whose work is paid with state money must speak Ukrainian so that I, as a citizen of Ukraine who masters Ukrainian, do not feel discriminated (*in Ukrainian, male, 41, programmer*).

Speaker 4, who had switched from Russian to Ukrainian under the influence of the political events of 2014, sees the dominance of the Russian language in Kharkiv as a distortion of the “normal” situation, in which Ukrainian should be spoken everywhere in the country. Through his personal experiences with the language switch, Speaker 4 demonstrates how much the Ukrainian language is minoritized in the Kharkiv region. According to him, Ukrainophone citizens of Ukraine, who, as bearers of the ethnocultural characteristics of the nation, are the most legitimate participants of the national group, do not feel at home in Kharkiv. By saying that he feels like a “foreigner” in Kharkiv, Speaker 4 highlights the Ukrainian language as the main trait of “Ukrainianness”; that is why he does not consider a Russian-speaking region inside Ukraine to

be his “homeland”. This opinion is all the more stunning as, until very recently, this participant was a Russian speaker himself. Such is the influence of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on the patriotic Ukrainians, albeit Russian-speaking.

In summary, participants of the pro-Ukrainian ideology “language matters” are in favour of the territorial principle being applied to the whole territory of Ukraine, the way it is stipulated in the Ukrainian Constitution. They view the Ukrainian language as the only legitimate and “native” language of all Ukrainians and emphasize the importance of defending the rights of Ukrainian speakers in the Kharkiv region. Ukrainian is also deemed a crucial attribute of territorial identity which distinguishes Ukrainians from the Russians, demarcating the political border with Russia.

5.2. Centrists: State monolingualism, regional language status and personal multilingualism

By and large, just like the previous group, the centrists welcomed the official status of the Ukrainian language at the national level, but they explained their point of view with practical rather than political considerations.

Speaker 5: If we speak about state languages, let it be Ukrainian. Why not? One language is better than two. I am not biased, but for state languages, it’s more practical and useful, as, for example, in education – instruction in two or three languages is hard and expensive (*in Russian, male, 39, engineer*).

Speaker 5 did not express any negative attitudes to the Russian language, explaining that, at state level, especially in education, he preferred to see some unification for the sake of simplicity and economization of resources. He also admired the language situation in European states for their personal multilingualism and expressed hope that one day Ukrainians would also speak multiple languages. Interestingly, personal multilingualism is desired by this participant, but institutional

and national multilingualism is rejected and even feared due to the political consequences it may have.

When it comes to the regional status of the Russian language, participants of the centrist language ideology hesitated before answering definitively for fear of being taken for Russia sympathizers and because by default, official language management is not as crucial for them. Eventually, several participants responded that it might be reasonable to legalize Russian at the regional level, since people in Kharkiv speak Russian anyway.

Speaker 6: It is normal to give regional status to Russian. We really do speak Russian here. It is also normal to have Ukrainian as official and other languages at the regional level (*in Russian, female, 33, teacher*).

Speaker 6 sees no harm in recognizing the Russian-speaking reality of certain Ukrainian regions and, thus, adopting the territorial principle at regional level there while having Ukrainian as the only state language. Based on Speaker 6's response, both interpretations of the territorial principle – Ukrainian on all the territory of Ukraine and other languages in certain regions of the country – are not mutually exclusive and can peacefully coexist.

Another important recurring theme in the interviews with “language does not matter” participants is the division between the language of communication and the language of state identification.

Speaker 8: We can also look at language as a means of communication. Thankfully, here in Ukraine, almost 100 % of people understand Russian, and I am not against having it as a means of communication. If someone can express his thoughts clearer in Russian, why should he distort them with his lack of language knowledge? But from the state point of view, language is used as a means of identification. In any case, if the state is looking into something archaic, it will insist on it. I am for Ukraine becoming a multicultural country. I have never been to Switzerland but it's a wonderful example. They speak French, German, the part closer to Italy, Italian. And it works for them. In the case of Ukraine, I don't think this question should negatively impact the communication of people in our country. As for languages of education, I think one is enough. An ideal situation is if Ukrainians could speak two languages because it is shameful to be Ukrainian and not to know the Ukrainian language (*in Russian, male, 29, designer and musician*).

Speaker 8 obviously identifies himself with Ukraine and, as a citizen, wishes to master the Ukrainian language well. He distinguishes, however, institutional language usage, where monolingualism is acceptable for simplification, from individual language practices, where he aims for personal multilingualism. Just like the previous participant, Speaker 8 seeks to depoliticize the linguistic question, stressing that language is just a “means of communication”, which justifies the usage of Russian in interpersonal communication for “clarity of thought expression”. He recognizes the symbolic function of language for the Ukrainian state (“language is used as a means of identification”) and seems to accept the official monolingualism but admits that individuals should aspire to be multilingual. Switzerland is revered by Speaker 8 as a country with a high level of personal multilingualism. However, multilingualism is viewed as the responsibility of the speakers themselves, not that of the state, because in official education, “one language is enough”.

To conclude, “language does not matter” participants accept both state monolingualism and regional language status (the territorial principle both at the level of state and regions), but they prefer personal multilingualism at the individual level, the attainment of which should be the responsibility of Ukrainians themselves, not of their government.

5.3. Pro-Russian participants: Personality principle in accommodation of Russian speakers everywhere in Ukraine

The pro-Russian group fervently advocates the official status of the Russian language, not just at the regional level, but at the state level. Certain participants of this ideology reported not liking the description of Russian as a “minority” or “regional” language in the Ukrainian Constitution and legislation. As an argument in favour of this position, they cited the number of speakers who still use the Russian language as their mother tongue both in Ukraine and in other

post-Soviet countries. It is for that reason that the regional status of Russian does not suffice for the most radical Russophiles. In their opinion, Russian speakers should have special rights in Ukraine, different from those of speakers of other languages, because Russian is a “universal” language that everyone understands.

Speaker 9: Full official bilingualism everywhere in Ukraine! If in the west, for example, in Lvov¹, 10 % of the population is Russian speaking, they must have the right to study and use their native language. And in Kharkov, at the regional level, we can make Russian the only official language because it is a Russian-speaking region (*in Russian, female, 66, retired chemist*).

The rights of Russian speakers of Ukraine and state bilingualism were the biggest concerns of Speaker 9. In her view, for some predominantly Russophone regions, like that of Kharkiv, it may even suffice to adopt Russian as the only official regional language and discard the Ukrainian language completely. When asked how, in that case, the region would provide for the linguistic rights of Kharkiv region’s Ukrainophones, Speaker 9 replied that they were in the minority in the region and should adapt to the will of the majority. In this example, we can see that although the speaker insists on the personality principle being adopted everywhere in the country to accommodate Russian speakers, she denies the same linguistic rights to Kharkiv’s Ukrainophones. To Speaker 9, “full official bilingualism” essentially means catering to the needs of Russian speakers everywhere in Ukraine, and in regions where they prevail in numbers, they should have the upper hand over Ukrainophones.

For pro-Russian participants, another crucial area of concern in relation to language management was the language of school instruction. They disapproved of Ukrainian state monolingualism because, in their opinion, it would banish the Russian language from Eastern Ukrainian schools completely, depriving Russian-speaking children of access to education in

¹ “Lvov” and “Kharkov” are the Russian versions of the names of the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv.

their first language and leaving them with limited writing and reading competencies in it. The pro-Russian participants complained about not having a choice of language of instruction for their children. From their perspective, if Ukraine wants to be a developed democratic country, it should respect the linguistic rights and needs of all of its citizens. In this regard, they point to the examples of officially multilingual countries such as Switzerland and Canada, echoing the propaganda of the pro-Russian elites described in Section 3.3.

Speaker 10: I like the politics of the French, I mean the Canadians, - two state languages. It's quite OK. And in education, not necessarily bilingualism. Parents should just have a choice whether to take their children to the Russian or to the Ukrainian school (*in Russian, male, 30, engineer*).

Speaker 10 mistakenly called Canada “France” possibly because he was concentrating on the French language as the second official language of Canada, a place which, in the case of Ukraine, the Russian language could take. Speaker 10 does not take into account historical and political differences between Ukraine and Canada. The prevalence of French in North America can hardly be compared to that of the Russian language in post-Soviet countries. In addition, Speaker 10 only wishes to see bilingualism at the state level, not at the individual level. He is not concerned with bilingualism in education, and merely wants to be given a choice of language, which is typical for the personality principle of language management.

In summary, most pro-Russian participants favoured the personality principle in Ukraine, but specifically to accommodate Russian speakers, ignoring speakers of Ukrainian. Their major concern was the language of school instruction as they feared that Russian-speaking children would not have access to education in their first language.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I applied the principles of territoriality and of personality to the analysis of Russian-speaking Ukrainians' attitudes to language management in Ukraine, conditionally

dividing participants according to three different language ideologies: two with pro-Ukrainian political positions – “language matters” and “language does not matter”, and one with a pro-Russian ideology.

Study data shows that two thirds of the participants of the two pro-Ukrainian linguistic ideologies accepted Ukraine’s current language policy, where one national language, Ukrainian, is tied to the whole of Ukraine’s territory, which corresponds to the territoriality principle in language management. To participants of the “language matters” ideology, Ukrainian was the only legitimate language for Ukraine, representing a symbolic value for the formation of national identity and having a political importance in demarcating cultural borders with Russia. The most ardent supporters of this idea had switched to Ukrainian in all domains of linguistic behaviour. What differed the participants of centrist “language does not matter” ideology from the previous group was that they were more hesitant in what they thought to be the right language policy for Ukraine, with some participants admitting that regional language rights might be legalized. One of the recurring topics for this group was the division of language of political representation and language of communication. Many centrists were willing to accept whatever the state decides at the official level but viewed bi- and even multilingualism as a personal issue rather than a matter necessitating state intervention.

The participants of pro-Russian ideology advocated official status for the Russian language at state level, demanding full accommodation of Russophones, including those living in Ukrainian-speaking regions, which is consistent with the personality principle and its portability of linguistic rights. Access to education and literacy in their mother tongue was their principal concern and argument against the new language law which was to be passed in Ukraine. Given that the new language law passed in Ukraine in 2019 after the interviews were conducted

guarantees the right to national minorities to study their first languages (Article 21), it would be recommended that language policymakers give a better practical explanation of this clause to Ukrainians in order to dissipate their fears as to the fate of languages other than Ukrainian in education.

Another recurring theme in the interviews was the comparison of the Ukrainian language management with that of various Western countries such as France, Belgium, Canada, etc. The participants' understanding of other countries' language regimes was fully consistent with discourses of different interested political groups which appeared in the media. Very often, it was clear that the participants did not fully grasp the complexities of language issues in other countries. Another recommendation might be for Ukrainian authorities to situate Ukrainian language policy in a wider European and international context when presenting linguistic measures to the Ukrainian population. A critical perspective on language policy around the world may also be part of history and law classes in high schools and universities.

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