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LANGUAGE CHOICE AND CHANGES IN SPEECH BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF BILINGUAL UKRAINIANS' DURING THE WARTIME

The sociolinguistic landscape of Ukraine is characterized by the simultaneous presence of Ukrainian and Russian languages, which has made language preferences among its populace a complex phenomenon. The incursion of Russian forces into Ukraine in 2022 precipitated a significant transformation in the linguistic behaviours of the Ukrainian people, prompting a reassessment of the role of language in everyday communication for both adults and children. This study examines the peculiarities of language selection and its effects on linguistic behaviours among Ukrainians against the background of the specific social-political dynamics. In other words, it investigates how the Ukrainian people have tended to adapt their use of language within distinct domains, public and private, offering insights into the subtle dynamics of their linguistic identity: because the analysis particularly concerns the important psychological phenomenon of 'language shame' among bilingual Ukrainian-Russian speakers, it tackles the issue of language choice in bilingual and multilingual contexts, especially when influenced by emotional factors. The employed methodological framework integrates both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to assess language preferences among bilinguals across various social contexts. As such, it incorporates an extensive survey of Ukrainians in Poland and a targeted survey of parents of Ukrainian preschoolers, coupled with interviews with Ukrainians under temporary protection in Poland. However, it also elucidates emerging trends in language selection and investigates societal attitudes towards language issues in Ukraine through a content analysis of social media discussions.
Keywords: bilingualism, language choice, language attitude, speech behaviour, language shaming

BACKGROUND

The global population increasingly engages in multilingual communication, which necessitates frequent and nuanced decisions regarding the use of language when individuals proficient in multiple languages interact. This selection process is complex and influenced by a multitude of factors that may either lead to synergy or conflict,

which results in an intricate web of linguistic interactions. Language choice involves the deliberate selection of words, phrases, or sentences from a speaker's linguistic repertoire. For bilinguals and multilinguals, this process often occurs instinctively, without careful deliberation. Speakers dynamically adjust their register, genre, style, medium, and tone based on such considerations as the interlocutor, topic, context, and the medium of the particular conversation.

Fasold and Gal[1] regard multilingualism as an invaluable resource, with different languages fulfilling distinct functions. Susan Gal underscores the importance of scrutinizing language choice within multilingual settings, critically discussing previous attempts by linguists and sociologists to quantify language usage uniformly across diverse communities, individuals, and contexts. The complexity of language choice reflects the sociolinguistic principle that a speaker's preference for linguistic varieties is systematically linked to social relationships, events, or situations. Gumperz[2] conceptualizes the linguistic repertoire as a spectrum of styles that are essential to meet an individual's communicative needs. The ability to select the appropriate linguistic variety is integral to communicative competence, which is closely tied to social organization and situational contexts. Bilingual or multilingual speakers face choices not only between variants of the same language but also between distinct languages. Factors influencing language choice, as identified by David[3] and supported by, e.g., Coulmas,[4] include social status, gender, education, ethnicity, age, occupation, origin, topic, place, media, and formality. Various researchers show also how dominant languages influence linguistic preferences of speakers across various domains and situations[5]

[1] R. Fasold, *Sociolinguistics of Language*, Balckwell, Oxford 1990; S. Gal, *Linguistic repertoire,* in: R. Schjerve and E. Vetter (eds.), *European multilingualism: Current perspectives and challenges* (pp.), Multilingual Matters, Bristol 1987, p. 286–292.

[2] J. J. Gumperz, *Linguistic and social interaction in two communities*, "American Anthropologist" 1964, no. 6 (66), p. 137–153.

[3] M. David, *Language policies impact on language maintenance and teaching: Focus on Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and the Philippines,* "The Linguistics Journal" 2006, Sep. 2009, p. 155–191.

[4] F. Coulmas, *The handbook of sociolinguistics,* Blackwell, Oxford UK 1997.

[5] See, among others, R. C. Ferrer, and D. Sankoff, *The Valencian revival: Why usage lags behind competence*, "Language in Society" 2004, no. 1 (33), p. 1–31; J. Holmes, *Introduction to sociolinguistics*, Longman, London 2008; S. Pillai, *Malaysyian English as a first language*, in: David, Maya Khemlani (ed.), *Language choices*

while Thomason[6] explores how language contact affects language change, emphasizing that a speaker's language choice is influenced by multiple factors including topic, social context, speaker status, aspirations, and identity. Language attitudes, as defined by Petty and Cacioppo[7] and Crystal,[8] can significantly shape language choice and maintenance as well, reflecting perceptions of linguistic difficulty, importance, and social status. For instance, Janet Holmes notes that attitudes towards languages are affected by societal categorizations and associations, leading to positive or negative inclinations towards specific languages; these attitudes critically influence language preference and usage patterns.

According to Ruiz,[9] linguistic diversity is nowadays construed as a problem, a right, and a resource, with the preservation of minority languages recognized both as a right and as a resource that enriches societal experiences.[10] Multilingualism is lauded for its potential benefits, including enhancing international relations, fostering cultural enrichment, and promoting social inclusion.[11] However, in specific contexts such as Ukraine, linguistic dynamics are intricately intertwined with political and historical developments, profoundly influencing language preferences and identities.[12]

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has catalyzed shifts in language attitudes and behaviors among Ukrainian-Russian bilinguals, underscoring the need for a comprehensive investigation into the motivations and patterns of language choice within this complex socio-political context. A nuanced examination of language atti-

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and discourse of Malaysian families: Case studies of families in Kua la Lampur, Malaysia, Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, Petaling Jaya 2006.

[6] S. Thomason, *Language contact: An introduction*, EUP, Edinburgh 2001.

[7] R. Petty, and J. Cacioppo, *Attitudes and persuasion: Classic and contemporary approaches*, Dubuque, Iowa 1981.

[8] D. Crystal, *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*, Blackwell, Oxford, UK 1997.

[9] R. Ruiz, *Orientations in language planning,* "NABE Journal" 1984, no. 8, p. 15–34.

[10] D. Zhang Donghui, and D. Slaughter-Defoe, *Language attitudes and heritage language maintenance among Chinese immigrant families in the USA,* "Language, Culture and Curriculum" 2009. no. 2 (22), p. 77–93.

[11] J. McPake, T. Tinsley, and C. James, *Making provision for community languages: Issues for teacher education in UK*, "Language Learning Journal" 2007, no. 1 (35), p. 99–112.

[12] A. Ozhohan, S. Derevianko, O. Karchevska, L. Pavlova, and N. Pashyna, *Language as a political manipulation tool,* "Amazonia Investiga" 2023, no. 12 (64), p. 237–248, https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2023.64.04.23 (28.10.2024).

tudes, manifested through observable behaviors and speech adaptations, is essential to understand these shifts. This study aims to explore the factors influencing changes in the speech behavior of Ukrainian-Russian bilinguals against the backdrop of the current military conflict. Such an investigation promises to yield insights into the intricate relationship between language, attitudes, and societal transformations.

THE STATE OF RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

The linguistic landscape of independent Ukraine poses significant challenges, characterized by a populace with diverse levels of bilingualism in Ukrainian and Russian. Current state language policies regard this widespread bilingualism as a transitional phase that necessitates active intervention. Proposed strategies might include reshaping the attitudes of bilingual individuals, diminishing the use of Russian and encouraging shifts in linguistic behavior among those proficient in both languages. Masenko,[13] Hentschel and Palinska,[14] Danilevska,[15] Levchuk,[16] Shevchuk-Kliuzheva[17] and others have extensively examined the sociolinguistic dynamics within this context, underscoring the backdrop of persistent Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism. In the post-Soviet era, the status of the Russian language has remained a critical issue on the political agendas during nearly all elections. Monakhova and Tuluzakova[18] and

[13] Л. Масенко, *Суржик: між мовою і язиком,* Кієво-Мохилянская Академія, Київ 2011.

[14] G. Hentschel, O. Palinska, *The linguistic situation on the Ukrainian Black Sea coast — Ukrainian, Russian and Suržyk as "native language," "primary code," frequently used codes and codes of linguistic socialization during childhood,* "Russian Linguistics" 46, p. 259–290, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11185-022-09259-4 (28.10.2024).

[15] O. Danylevska, *Typy movnoï povedinky kyïvskykh shkoliariv. Ukraïnska mova* 2013, 2: p. 56–67.

[16] P. Levchuk, *Trójjęzyczność ukraińsko-rosyjsko-polska uczniów szkół lwowskich z polskim językiem nauczania.* "Poradnik Językowy" 2022, no. 4, p. 74–91, https://doi.org/10.33896/PorJ.2022.4.5 (28.10.2024).

[17] O. Shevchuk-Kliuzheva, *The sociolinguistic aspect of Ukrainian Russian child bilingualism on the basis of survey of Ukrainian families,* "Cognitive Studies | Études cognitives" 2020, no. 20, https://doi.org/10.11649/cs.2323 (28.10.2024).

[18] T. Monakhova, O. Tuluzakova, *Hate speech in Ukrainian media discourse.* "Cognitive Studies | Études cognitives" 2022, no. 20, https://doi.org/10.11649/cs.2624 (28.10.2024).

Kuznietsova[19] have observed predominantly negative attitudes towards Ukrainian, particularly in the eastern and southern regions, even following the Euromaidan events. However, it is crucial to highlight the ongoing transition from Russian to Ukrainian as the primary functional language, a shift evidenced by evolving practices among Ukrainian military personnel.[20] The wartime period has catalyzed changes in linguistic dynamics, marked by an increased usage of Ukrainian across various domains. This study focuses on the emotional responses of Ukrainian bilinguals to their languages, reevaluating their bilingualism and its impact on their daily linguistic choices and preferences. In the particular military context, the influence on various groups of Ukrainian citizens, each with distinct linguistic repertoires and dominant languages, becomes apparent, underscoring the need for further exploration and detailed analysis of the emerging trends in language usage.

The research methodology employs a sophisticated blend of quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate language selection among bilingual individuals across diverse social contexts. As concerns the quantitative approach, the study leverages two targeted sociolinguistic surveys: a large-scale survey focusing on Ukrainians in Poland, which collects numerical data on language preferences across a broad demographic spectrum, and a specific survey targeting parents of Ukrainian preschoolers, which examines language use within family settings and anticipations concerning language choices in education. These surveys provide crucial statistical insights, delineating patterns and trends in language utilization among various groups. The qualitative approach is based on in-depth interviews with Ukrainians residing in Poland under temporary protection. These interviews are essential for capturing nuanced personal narratives and emotional responses that statistical data alone cannot convey, offering deeper insights into how identity and cultural affiliations influence language behaviour amidst conflicts. Additionally, qualitative data is gleaned from respondents' comments within the

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[19] Т. Кузнецова, *Ставлення до української мови крізь мас-медійні окуляри: погляд із Одеси (2014–2021)*, "Вчені записки ТНУ імені В.І. Вернадського. Серія: Філологія. Журналістика" 2022, вып. 33 (72), no. 6, ч. 2, p. 182–190.

[20] L. Pidkuimukha, *The influence of language behaviour on the identity formation of the Ukrainian military,* "Cognitive Studies | Études cognitives" 2022, https://doi.org/10.11649/cs.2643.

surveys, shedding light on the motivations and social influences that guide language decisions. The study also employs content analysis of social media discussions to assess public sentiment and discourse regarding language issues in Ukraine. This analysis examines posts, comments, and shared content on social media platforms, identifying prevalent themes such as practical language applications in daily interactions and language choices. By instegrating these diverse methodologies, the study thoroughly explores both the empirical trends and individual experiences that shape language use among bilingual Ukrainians in the context of wartime upheaval.

Quantitative data were collected through the survey titled "Linguistic Awareness and Multilingualism of Ukrainians in Poland During Russian Aggression." This survey was conducted online by researcher P. Levchuk from May to June 2023 and included 1,300 respondents from the Kyiv, Chernihiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kharkiv regions, who are currently residing in Poland due to the ongoing conflict. Notably, a portion of the participants, identified as internally displaced persons, opted not to disclose their places of residence in Ukraine. The demographic profile of the survey participants ranged in age from 15 to 70 years, with a majority of 74.4% women and 25.3% men. Additionally, quantitative data were also gathered from another sociolinguistic survey conducted by P. Levchuk, titled "Multilingualism of War Migrants from Ukraine in Poland," which ran from March to July 2022. This subsequent survey involved 1,502 respondents who relocated to Poland following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

For a more detailed exploration of specific topics, responses from a focus group titled "Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland" (2023) were utilized. This group, predominantly comprising women (98.5%), consisted of 65 respondents residing in Kraków, Poland. The focus group forms a part of the project "Early Stages of Development of Bilingualism in Ukrainian Children in Polish Kindergartens," which is supported by the National Agency for Academic Exchanges of Poland through the Term Grants Program (Agreement No. BPN/GIN/2022/1). The group engaged with 28 structured questions that probed the dynamics of language use within family communication. These questions explored the use of Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, and other languages in family settings, and examined changes in communication with children subsequent to the onset of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. From this focus group, 10

bilingual women aged between 25 and 44 were selected for in-depth interviews to qualitatively explore the motives behind changes in language behavior. Consequently, all data related to respondents' answers, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative aspects, were collected in Poland from Ukrainian forced migrants who had fled their homeland due to the conflict.

Contextual analysis of content from social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Instagram, provides insight into the psychological underpinnings of "language shame." In this study, we examine a total of 34 posts — 20 from Facebook and 14 from Instagram — along with over 100 associated comments from both social networks. These posts and comments address the contentious issue of using the Russian language in Ukraine's public and unofficial communication spaces during the war. The analyzed content is categorized into several thematic groups based on the purpose and sentiment of the messages. The first group of posts expresses strong emotional reactions towards the Russian language. These reactions are often visceral, highlighting the psychological impact of the language on individuals:

> A Facebook post from May 17, 2024, encapsulates the sense of threat felt by some users: "The Russian language now causes me a feeling of danger. I physically cannot hear it."
> A comment from the same date on Facebook conveys similar discomfort and anger: "I hear it [Russian language], I shrink inwardly, and then I get angry at those language-hostile people. I can't find an excuse for them."
> Another comment on Facebook from January 10, 2023, bluntly states, "I hate being around people who speak Russian. I make a comment."
> On Instagram, a comment from March 23, 2024, equates the language with the enemy: "For me, the Russian language is the language of the enemy."
> A post from November 2, 2023, on Instagram expresses disgust and frustration: "It is disgusting to see all this and understand that even war, occupation, and refugees did not force people to start changes from myself."

The second group of posts is marked by direct condemnation of Russian-speaking Ukrainians who continue to use the language during the conflict. These messages are more radical and unforgiving:

> A Facebook comment from November 28, 2023, advocates for extreme measures: "I believe that the enemy's language should be banned."
> Another comment from November 27, 2023, on Facebook suggests significant restrictions: "Moscow language must be significantly limited in Ukraine as a carrier of the ideology of the Russian world."

A Facebook post from November 13, 2023, states, "Russian speakers in Ukraine should be ashamed."

An earlier post from November 27, 2022, uses harsh language: "They [Russian-speaking Ukrainians] should shut up forever and no longer bark in Russian."

This content analysis reveals the depth of negative sentiment associated with the use of Russian in Ukraine amidst the war. The emotional intensity in the posts and comments underscores a profound sense of betrayal and hostility towards the language and its speakers. This linguistic phenomenon reflects the complex socio-political landscape and highlights the significant impact of language as a symbol of identity and allegiance in times of national crisis.

To illustrate the influence of social pressure on the choice of language, we will demonstrate two highly popular posts from public figures, which received the most reactions from readers. They contain direct condemnation of Russian-speaking Ukrainians for using the Russian language during the war. The full texts of these posts — one from Facebook and the other from Instagram — highlight how the authors appeal to the emotional component of Russian-speaking [...] their behaviour. For instance:

186 294 likes

[username] Шановні українці в тимчасовій еміграції, я вчора мала радість пройтися ввечері гарним варшавським парком і була приголомшена кількістю російської мови. Кожна друга людина. Ніби я гуляю десь по москві. Тож є два варіанти. Варшаву непомітно окупували росіяни. Або це були українці з похибкою на поодиноких білорусів. Схиляюся до другого.

На правах людини, яка півтора року працює з міжнародними партнерами і залучає на підтримку України всіх, кого тільки можна, маю до вас одне просте питання — ви йоб****ся? Ви не усвідомлюєте, що йде екзистенційна війна? Війна за право українців існувати як нації, а не бути частиною імперії. Що мова — це ATACMS помножена на F16? Що вивіску Маріуполь замінили на Мариуполь одразу після захоплення міста не просто так?

Я не розумію, що тут треба пояснювати, правда.

За півтора року війни ваші діти ідеально повивчали польську, німецьку, нідерландську, французьку і ще купу мов. З поваги до країн, які вас прихистили. То майте совість, не заважайте нам працювати. Вивчіть свою рідну мову, хай на базовому рівні. 100 найпоширеніших українських слів. Без знання, що таке «манівцем», «млосний» чи «абищиця». Тільки б без крику в парку: «Ванєчка, смотрі под ножкі!».

Здається, що це ваша особиста справа, але все значно гірше, ніж ви думаєте. Кожен Ванєчка впливає на крихту міжнародної підтримки. Окремо один Ванєчка нічого не змінить. Але маса Ванєчек це вже вибачте, пездець. Неможливо пояснити іноземцям у чому різниця між українцями та росіянами, якщо у нас одна мова. Якщо через 568 днів великої війни мільйони людей в усьому світі вивчають українську, а самі українці — ні. Я чула це питання безліч разів. І кожного разу це довгий екскурс в історію про те, як Україну століттями накачували рос мовою, контентом і т.д. і тп. І власний приклад, як вся родина від бабусі 85 років до дитини 6 років переходить на українську.

Translation
Dear Ukrainians in temporary emigration, yesterday I had the pleasure of walking through a beautiful Warsaw park in the evening and was stunned by the amount of Russian spoken around. Everybody [seem to use it]. It's like I'm walking somewhere in Moscow. So there are two options. Warsaw was imperceptibly occupied by the Russians. Or they were Ukrainians with a margin of error for few Belarussians. I am leaning towards the latter option.

*As a person who has been working with international partners for a year and a half and is attracting everyone possible to support Ukraine, I have one simple question for you — are you f*****g mad? Don't you realize that there is an existential war going on? That the war is for the right of Ukrainians to exist as a nation and not as a part of the*

pressures that contribute to language shame and influence linguistic behaviors among the Ukrainian diaspora.

...multiplied by F16? That there is a reason why they changed the name of Maripol to Maryupol right after they captured the city?
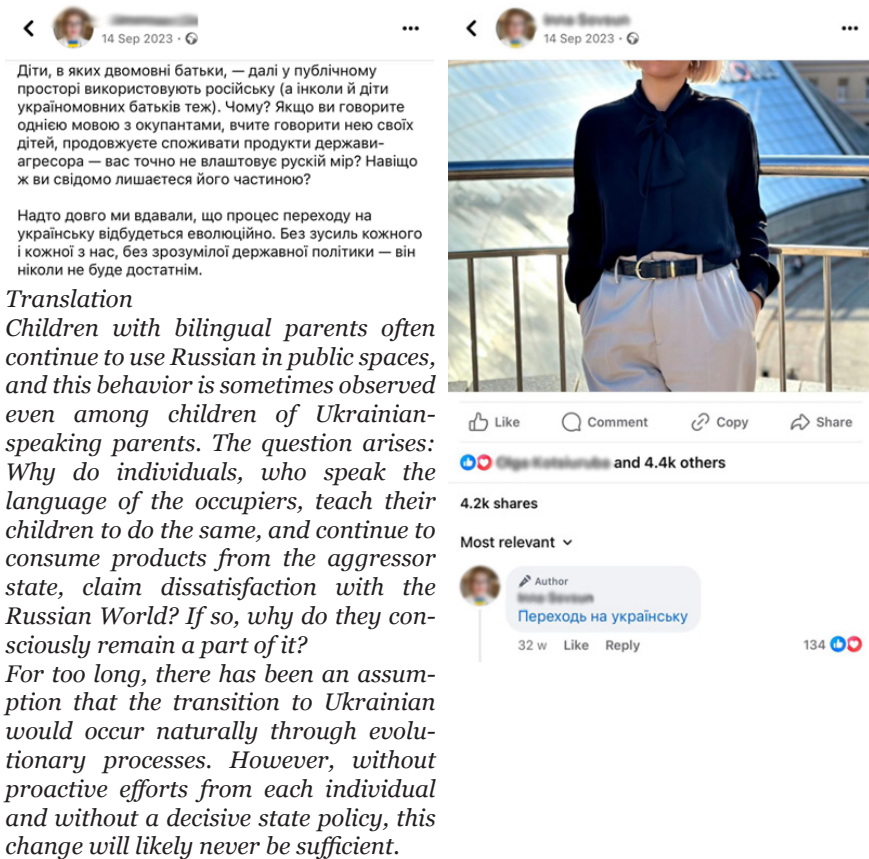
I don't understand what else there is to explain here.

During the year and a half of the war, your children perfectly learned Polish, German, Dutch, French and many other languages. We appeal to your consciences: do not interfere with our work. Learn your native language, even at a basic level. 100 most common Ukrainian words. Without knowing what a «manivtsem», «mlosny» or «abishchytsia» is. Only without shouting in the park: « Little Vanya, watch your step!».

It seems like it's your personal business, but it's much worse than you think. Every little Vanya attracts a crumb of international support. But alone they will not change anything. The swarm of Little Vanyas, is, pardon my French, a cr*p. It is impossible to explain to foreigners what is the difference between Ukrainians and Russians, if we have the same language. If after 568 days of the great war, millions of people all over the world are learning Ukrainian, but Ukrainians themselves are not. I have heard this question many times. And each time it is a long excursion into the history of how Ukraine was inflated with Russian language, content, Rus-lingo, Rus-content and Rus-etcetera and-so-on for centuries. And there is my own example, how the whole family, from an 85-year-old grandmother to a 6-year-old child, switches to Ukrainian.

Fig. 1. Social network Instagram, post from 09/14/2023

This post exemplifies the direct condemnation of the use of the Russian language by Ukrainians in forced migration. The author appeals to the conscience of the Ukrainian diaspora, urging a reevaluation of language choices. The significant number of likes indicates substantial support for this viewpoint, underscoring the relevance of such discussions in understanding the complexities of language choice for Ukrainians. This analysis highlights the emotional and societal

Діти, в яких двомовні батьки, — далі у публічному просторі використовують російську (а інколи й діти україномовних батьків теж). Чому? Якщо ви говорите однією мовою з окупантами, вчите говорити нею своїх дітей, продовжуєте споживати продукти держави-агресора — вас точно не влаштовує рускій мір? Навіщо ж ви свідомо лишаєтеся його частиною?

Надто довго ми вдавали, що процес переходу на українську відбудеться еволюційно. Без зусиль кожного і кожної з нас, без зрозумілої державної політики — він ніколи не буде достатнім.

Translation
Children with bilingual parents often continue to use Russian in public spaces, and this behavior is sometimes observed even among children of Ukrainian-speaking parents. The question arises: Why do individuals, who speak the language of the occupiers, teach their children to do the same, and continue to consume products from the aggressor state, claim dissatisfaction with the Russian World? If so, why do they consciously remain a part of it?
For too long, there has been an assumption that the transition to Ukrainian would occur naturally through evolutionary processes. However, without proactive efforts from each individual and without a decisive state policy, this change will likely never be sufficient.

Fig. 2. Social network Facebook, post from 09/14/2023

As demonstrated by this post, the author seeks to engage the emotions of bilingual Ukrainians who frequently use Russian, attempting to induce a sense of shame associated with using "the language of the invaders." The presence of similar content on social networks, particularly those authored by public figures who urge the public to refrain from using Russian, significantly influences language choices. This phenomenon encourages Ukrainians to use Ukrainian more actively. The findings from the above posts suggest that language shame and condemnation are potent tools used by some Ukrainians to navigate and assert their identities in wartime. These expressions of language shame and hostility provide critical insights into how language dynamics are evolving in Ukraine and the broader implications for social cohesion and national unity. Language,

in this context, becomes more than a means of communication; it transforms into a symbol of allegiance and resistance. The public condemnation of Russian-speaking Ukrainians underscores a significant societal pressure to conform to the national language, Ukrainian, as a demonstration of patriotism and solidarity. This pressure is not merely about linguistic preference but is deeply intertwined with the emotional and psychological landscape of a nation under siege. The posts analyzed reveal a complex interplay between language and identity, where the choice of language is seen as a reflection of one's loyalty and commitment to the national cause. The use of emotionally charged rhetoric in these posts aims to invoke a sense of guilt and betrayal among Russian-speaking Ukrainians, pushing them towards adopting Ukrainian to align with the collective struggle against the aggressor. Given these developments, it is crucial to focus more on the concept of linguistic shame, a topic that remains underexplored in Ukrainian linguistics. Moreover, the dynamics of Ukrainian-Russian language use deserve further investigation.

In this study, we delve deeper into the concept of language shaming as a form of stigma,[21] examining it from two perspectives: 1) understanding the motives behind those who engage in language shaming within society; 2) analyzing the experiences and emotions — such as disrespect, humiliation, and alienation — of those targeted by such actions. Special attention is given to the aspect of self-shaming and the tendency of individuals to apologize for their language use within the group experiencing shame due to their speech behavior. The notion of "language shame" is situated within the broader scope of emotions tied to languages, particularly in relation to language selection within bilingual or multilingual contexts. Bloom and Beckwith explored socialization during primary language acquisition, suggesting that the first language often carries more emotional weight than subsequent languages due to the intertwining of emotive regulation and linguistic systems.[22] This emotional significance may stem from highly emotional early childhood contexts, potentially linked to caregiver bonding.[23] Pawliszko delves

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[21] I. Piller, *Explorations in language shaming*, 2017, https://www.languageonthe-move.com/explorations-in-language-shaming/ (28.10.2024).

[22] L. Bloom, R. Beckwith, *Talking with feeling: Integrating affective and linguistic expression in early language development*, "Cognition and Emotion" 1989, vol. 3, p. 315–342.

[23] C. Harris, J. Gleason, A. Ayiceği, *When is a first language more emotional? Psychophysiological evidence from bilingual speakers*, in: A. Pavlenko (ed.),

into the intricate emotional aspects of first and second languages, highlighting how bilingual individuals tend to switch between languages based on the ease of conveying specific content.[24] Yet, the key question remains: what influences the selection of a language tied to emotions? Research notes that code-switching primarily arises from emotional contexts, termed emotion-related language choice by Kim and Starks.[25] Bilinguals consciously or unconsciously select a language based on their subjective preferences rather than the immediate environment of work, study, or residence. This analysis provides a foundational understanding of the role of emotions in bilingualism and multilingualism.

Thus, the data from this study indicate changes in language behavior — primarily beyond the confines of family speech practices — pertaining to the reassessment of Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism and a more deliberate language choice in this context. One factor influencing these changes is the manifestation of negative emotions towards the Russian language, stemming from the traumatic experiences of the war and the association of the above language with military actions against Ukraine in certain segments of its population. While language shame and negative emotions are identified as significant factors, they are treated in this study as hypotheses correlating with qualitative data from interviews and respondent comments in questionnaires. It is important to note that we do not overstate the importance of this emotional aspect of bilingualism; rather, we consider it one of several influential factors. Changes in language choice may also be linked to the recent efforts of the state language policy of Ukraine.

RESULTS

The quantitative and qualitative data from this study reveal two principal findings: firstly, Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism is preva-

Bilingual minds: Emotional experience, expression, and representation, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon 2006, p. 257–283.

[24] J. Pawliszko, *Emotion-Related Language Choice theory in the cross-fire: Evidence from Mexican-American bilinguals*, "Topics in Linguistics" 2022, vol. 23, no. 1, p. 15–23, https://doi.org/10.2478/topling–2022-0002 (28.10.2024).

[25] S. H. O. Kim, D. Starks, *The role of emotions in L1 attrition: The case of Korean English late bilinguals in New Zealand,* "International Journal of Bilingualism" 2008, vol. 12, no. 4, p. 303–319.

lent among Ukrainians; secondly, there are notable shifts in the speech behavior of Ukrainian migrants; driven by social pressures and a reevaluation of language attitudes, they affect later language choices. However, it is crucial to recognize that these observations may not necessarily indicate enduring trends.

Ethnic identity is significantly influenced by language, although it is not the sole determinant.[26] Ukrainian society presents a compelling case study: many individuals who speak Russian do not identify as Russians but rather associate their ethnic identity with being Ukrainian. This complexity is crucial to understand, as evidenced by findings from the "Linguistic Awareness and Multilingualism of Ukrainians During Russian Aggression" survey, which involved 1,300 respondents. The survey revealed that 44.3% identified solely as Ukrainians, 36.6% as both Ukrainians and Russians, 4.2% as Ukrainians and Poles, 2.9% as Russians, and 12% as other. Notably, ethnic Russians constituted only 3% of the respondents (Tab. 1). Those with both Ukrainian and Russian heritage deserve particular attention, as they likely influence language preferences without strictly determining them. The historical policy of Russification in Ukraine during the Soviet era has had a noticeable impact, evident in the language choices despite the lack of a direct ethnic correlation. Over 87% of respondents regard themselves as Ukrainians, highlighting the disconnection between the Russian language and the nationality of its speakers.

Tab. 1. Survey *'Linguistic Awareness and Multilingualism of Ukrainians During the Russian Aggression'* (2023), 1,300 respondents. Own research

What is the ethnic background of your parents?	
Ukrainians	44.3%
Ukrainian and Russian	36.6%
Ukrainian and Polish	4.2 %
Russians	2.9%
Another option	12%

The clear understanding of the ethnic identity among Ukrainian citizens predominantly using the Russian language brings to the fore-

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[26] C. Fought, *Language and ethnicity,* in R. Mesthrie (ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics, Cambridge University Press, New York* 2011, p. 238–258.

front the challenge of defining its status, role, and position in public communication. This arises because regulating its usage in Ukraine in a way typical of language legislation for national minorities seems unfeasible. In fact, establishing the the role of Russian language in public communication gains significance exactly due to its prevalence as the primary language for many Ukrainian citizens. Even amidst the ongoing military conflict, it remains actively employed as a home language for family communication.

Following the onset of the full-scale invasion, the categorization of Ukrainians based on their primary language intensified, acquiring a heightened emotional dimension. Ukrainian citizens whose first language is Russian, often the dominant language in informal settings and their homes (as a home language), still receive minimal attention from Ukrainian researchers. Most linguistic studies by them merely acknowledge the trend of an increasing number of Ukrainians identifying Ukrainian as their native language, focusing on the sociolinguistic aspects of the country and its populace. Responses to the question 'What is your first language?' (Tab. 2) highlight significant linguistic diversity with a noticeable predominance of bilingualism. The majority of respondents, 62.5%, identified Ukrainian as their first language, underscoring a gradual restoration of its comprehensive functions and its prioritization in everyday use. It is crucial to note that within Ukrainian linguistics, there is some inconsistency regarding the definitions of "native language" and "first language," which are not always synonymous. Ukrainian scholars argue that there is not always a direct correlation between an individual's first language and their native language, or between a second language and a foreign language. The terms "first language" and "native language" are often used interchangeably by them, leading to a lack of consensus about the definition of "native language." This term is particularly complex as it relates to the stages and terms[27] of language acquisition, as well as the language's significance to its speakers.[28] Typically, language acquisition does not occur in adulthood, reflecting a conscious appreciation of the language's importance. In this study, we define the first language as

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[27] *Українська мова. Короткий словник лінгвістичних термінів. Рідна мова*, Київ 2001, p. 92.

[28] *Українська мова. Енциклопедія. Рідна мова*. В. Русанівський, О. Тараненко, М. Зяблик at all. "Українська енциклопедія імені М. Бажана," Київ 2007, p. 515.

the primary language (L1), due to its inherent priority in human life and based on the order of acquisition.

Table 2. Survey 'Multilingualism of war migrants from Ukraine in Poland' (2022), 1,502 respondents. Own research

What is your first language?	
Ukrainian	62.5%
Russians	25.5%
Ukrainian and Russian	10.8%
Another option	1.2%

According to the data, 25.5% of participants identified Russian as their first language, underscoring its widespread use and omnipresence in Ukraine, even among ethnic Ukrainians. Furthermore, 10.8% of respondents reported being bilingual, using both Ukrainian and Russian as their first languages, which reflects the bilingual or multilingual nature of many Ukrainian citizens' language profiles. A mere 1.2% of participants chose other languages, emphasizing the dominance of Ukrainian and Russian in the linguistic landscape of the region.

These findings are particularly noteworthy in light of the significant usage of Russian. They suggest a complex linguistic environment where, despite Ukrainian's official prominence, Russian maintains a strong foothold. This situation likely reflects the socio-political dynamics that influence language use and preferences in Ukraine, illustrating how historical and contemporary political contexts continue to shape linguistic identities.

The language spoken within one's household significantly influences an individual's identity and contributes to their psychological well-being.[29] The UNESCO Institute for Statistics defines the mother tongue as the language acquired during childhood in the home environment, which is often synonymous with the first language. In academic discourse within the Polish context, the term "home language" is interchangeably used with "heritage language," denoting the everyday spoken language in family life, often representing an ethnic

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[29] J.Berry, J. Phinney, D. Sam, P. Vedder, *Immigrant youth: acculturation, identity, and adaptation*, "Appl. Psychol" 2006, no. 55, p. 303–330.

language.[30] Surveys indicate a significant presence of Russian in Ukrainian households for day-to-day communication. Findings from a survey on Ukrainian migrants' family language practices in Poland revealed that 29.2% of respondents primarily use Russian at home, while 40% use Ukrainian. Additionally, 30.8% of respondents described their families as bilingual, adapting languages based on context (refer to Table 3). Notably, 60% of respondents either designated Russian as their primary family language or identified their families as bilingual in Ukrainian and Russian. Participants highlighted the crucial roles both languages play in family communication, serving both practical and cognitive functions.

Table 3. Focus group survey "Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland" (2022), 65 respondents. Own research.

What language do you use at home?	
Ukrainian / mostly Ukrainian	40%
Russian / mostly Russian	29.2%
It depends on the situation (Ukrainian and Russian)	30.8%
Another option	0.0%

Data from a sociolinguistic survey conducted among forced migrants ('Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland', 2022) reveals that 68.7% of respondents have altered their speech in public contexts to dissociate from Russian identity (refer to Table 3). This trend is particularly pronounced among internally displaced persons from eastern and southern Ukraine, regions where Russian is predominantly spoken. The aggression by Russia has significantly discredited the use of Russian in Ukraine, prompting many Russian-speaking Ukrainians to reconsider their speech behaviour. This shift suggests that Russian-speaking Ukrainians are increasingly making more deliberate language choices taking into account the ongoing political context and events.

Data from the focus group survey "Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland" (2022) indicate that 68.7% of respondents (with 56.1% changing, and 12.6% partially changing) altered their

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[30] E. Lipińska, A. Seretny, *Nauczanie kompetencji językowych w układzie zintegrowanym, czyli praktyka w praktyce*, "Postscriptum Polonistyczne" 2012, no. 2 (10), p. 165–176.

speech in public contexts to distance themselves from Russian identity (refer to Tab. 4). This trend is particularly evident in the interview excerpts from women in the focus group, who explain the motivations behind their speech behavior and their more deliberate language choices.

Table 4. Focus group survey "Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland" (2022), 65 respondents. Own research

Since February 2022, have you noticed any alterations in how you communicate verbally?	
Changed	56.1%
Partially changed	12.6%
Has not changed	18.6%
Another option	12.7%

Data from the focus group survey "Family Language Policy of Ukrainians in Poland" (2022) indicate that 68.7% of respondents (with 56.1% changing, and 12.6% partially changing) altered their speech in public contexts to distance themselves from Russian identity (refer to Tab. 4). This trend is particularly evident in the interview excerpts from women in the focus group, who explain the motivations behind their speech behavior and their more deliberate language choices.

The interviews were conducted throughout 2023 in Kraków, Poland, with young women aged 24 to 44 who had moved to Poland after February 24, 2022, following the full-scale Russian invasion. These respondents, being mothers of preschool and school-aged children attending local educational institutions, provided valuable insights to explore the nuances of family language policy in bilingual and multilingual environments. These interview excerpts provide qualitative evidence that highlight emotional responses to the Russian language and the motivations behind shifts in language choice.

From the interviews emerged a common experience among bilingual Ukrainians favoring the Ukrainian language due to negative sentiments toward Russian. Here are some perspectives:

"I never expected hearing Russian to be so unsettling, especially here in Poland. It's them [Russians]…" (39-year-old from Kherson, Ukraine).

"I'm hesitant to speak Russian now. I can't fully switch to Ukrainian, as I feel less fluent, having not used it much before... But I'm trying" (31-year-old from Dnipro, Ukraine).

"Things have changed. I converse in Ukrainian with my child, which I didn't prioritize before. Initially, my kid resisted speaking Ukrainian, influenced by Russian cartoons and conversations with grandmother. Now she's used to it. We might mix in Surzhyk, but that's better than being associated with these orcs. I avoid speaking Russian; I don't want to be mistaken for someone from Muscovy. Those images from Bucha come to mind..." (43-year-old from Kyiv, Ukraine).

"Our attitude towards the Russian language has shifted, especially in public conversations. I speak Ukrainian to Nikita on the tram, although he doesn't always respond in Ukrainian. However, in kindergarten, they use Ukrainian and Polish..." (29-year-old from Mykolaiv, Ukraine).

"I used to feel a connection to Russian... After February, we discussed and decided to fully switch to Ukrainian. It was harder with my older daughter, a teenager who was resistant to speaking Ukrainian at home because we always conversed in Russian. Yet, with certain friends, she switched. It became a matter of principle for some kids. My younger daughter adapted faster..." (42-year-old from Kyiv, Ukraine).

"I personally don't truggle with Russian, and we continue speaking it. It's my language. But I recognize the drastic changes in people's perceptions. There's aggressive backlash against Russian... Some find it challenging to speak Ukrainian, but they make an effort. We know a Crimean family attending Polish language courses; they're Tatars. They speak Russian at home but try to use Ukrainian when explaining things..." (34-year-old from Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine).

In the realm of bilingualism, the complex interplay between language and emotion reveals a nuanced and multifaceted landscape. Bilingual individuals navigate deftly between two or more languages, each imbued with distinct emotional connotations and expressions. Research underscores the importance of exploring this emotional realm from various perspectives.[31]

This study primarily focuses on emotions related to language choice as part of a broader emotional experience intertwined with life during wartime. Analysis of the conducted interviews reveals a significant pattern among female respondents, who predominantly express their sentiments regarding the use of the Russian language in their daily lives. This discourse is fueled by notable shifts within

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[31] See, among others, J. Altarriba, R. Morier, *Bilingualism: language, emotion and mental health*, in: T. Bhatia. and W. Ritchie (eds.), *The handbook of bilingualism*, Blackwell, Oxford 2004, p. 50–280. A. Panayiotou, *Switching codes, switching code: Bilinguals' emotional responses in English and Greek*, "Multiling Multicult" 2010, no. 2–3 (25), 124–139. A. Pavlenko, *Emotions and multilingualism,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK 2005.

Ukrainian society, particularly in the linguistic attitudes towards the public use of the Russian language. Negative emotional expressions by public figures and other users regarding the Russian language in Ukraine significantly influence the decision-making processes of bilingual Ukrainians.

In this context, some Ukrainian bilinguals, especially those with dominant proficiency in Russian, struggle with linguistic shame regarding their speech behavior. This emotional burden compels them to switch to another language, typically Ukrainian, in various social contexts. These dynamics underscore the intricate relationship between language, emotion, and societal shifts, highlighting the multifaceted experiences of bilingual individuals in Ukraine.

The data from the respondents reveals a significant proportion expressing strong negative sentiments towards the Russian language, as evidenced in both interview excerpts and the survey findings presented in Tab. 5. Specifically, 23% of Ukrainians associate the Russian language with notions of death and aggression, while 24.3% perceive it as a language that has been forcefully imposed and has evolved in an unsightly manner. It is important to note, however, that a substantial 32% of respondents exhibit a relatively neutral stance, recognizing Russian as their language of daily communication. Additionally, nearly 8% of respondents hold a positive view of Russian, considering it either an important language or the language of their ancestors.

Table 5. Survey "Linguistic Awareness and Multilingualism of Ukrainians During the Russian Aggression" (2023), 1,300 respondents. Own research

Attitudes Towards the Russian Language	
Language of death and aggression	23%
Imposed and evolved unsightly	24.3%
Neutral, daily communication	32%
Important language or language of ancestors	8%
Another option	12.7%

The final table underscores the complexity and tension surrounding language usage in Ukrainian society. It reveals a nearly equal division among respondents: one group views the Russian language with tragedy, deeming its use among Ukrainians as inappropriate. Converse-

ly, the remaining respondents perceive the language neutrally and continue to use it in their daily interactions.

To illustrate the complexity of language choice and the emotional tension associated with the use of Russian in public settings, this analysis aims to showcase selected comments made by respondents during the questionnaire process. Although the questionnaire consisted solely of closed questions, the option for respondents to add comments provided an additional layer of data, enriching the analysis and substantiating the diverse opinions expressed.

Respondents to the survey "Linguistic Awareness and Multilingualism of Ukrainians During the Russian Aggression" (2023) provided comments that vividly capture the complex emotional responses to the use of the Russian language in the context of ongoing conflict. These responses range from shame and rejection to a renewed affinity for Ukrainian, reflecting the profound impact of socio-political events on language preferences. Below are selected comments that illustrate these varied attitudes:

> "I am ashamed to use [the language], even though I know [Russian]."
> "Since February 24, I fundamentally do not understand Russian."
> "I do not use it! This is the language of a murderer!"
> "I do not use the language of the aggressor."
> "I try to forget Russian and not to hear it."
> "I speak Ukrainian and Russian equally well. Since the beginning of the war, I have been more drawn to the Ukrainian language."
> "Every time I speak Russian, I feel like I am ordering the killing of innocent people and standing next to Putin."

Despite its importance, the emotional attitude toward language has seldom been the focus of research in Ukrainian linguistics, particularly in the context of bilingualism. P. Levchuk has conducted consistent research in this area since 2015. His study on Ukrainian-Russian-Polish trilingualism provides a detailed analysis of the language attitudes of Ukrainian migrants in Poland toward their language repertoire. Before the onset of the full-scale invasion, respondents exhibited a more restrained and somewhat neutral attitude toward the Russian language. However, the starkly negative perception of Russian among Ukrainians, unprecedented before the invasion, underscores the war's significant impact on language choices and changes.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals a complex linguistic scenario in which the speech patterns of bilingual Ukrainians undergo transformations amid the ongoing conflict. The complexity of this linguistic dynamic arises from the fact that the primary language for many Ukrainians, actively used in their daily lives, is perceived by a segment of society as a symbol of aggression. The phenomenon of linguistic shift in Ukraine, influenced by negative emotional attitudes toward the Russian language due to aggression, is thoroughly analyzed in the study by sociologist Volodymyr Kulyk.[32] The researcher details how bilingual Ukrainians are increasingly choosing Ukrainian over Russian as a sign of national solidarity and resistance to Russian aggression. While Russian remains a private language, Ukrainian is becoming the preferred language in public settings. According to Kulyk, this shift is most evident in public communication, although it is gradually influencing private language use as well. Our study focuses on the feeling of language shame as a manifestation of language attitudes that influence language choice. Among Russian-speaking Ukrainians, there exists a sense of linguistic shame, which prompts efforts to modify their speech behavior in public places, which echoes Kulyk's research. Notably, Ukrainians who are predominantly fluent in Russian and currently residing in forced migration in Poland express a strong inclination to alter their language use in public spaces, driven by a fear of being mistakenly associated with Russians while abroad. This study primarily aimed to underscore the emotional factors influencing language choice, reflecting current trends in the speech behavior of Ukrainians in forced migration. Future research into the emotional aspects of language use will require a comprehensive analysis that transcends traditional linguistic dimensions and incorporates an in-depth examination of psycholinguistic factors.

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[32] V. Kulyk, *Language shift in time of war: the abandonment of Russian in Ukraine*, "Post-Soviet Affairs" 2024, no. 3 (40), p. 159–174, 10.1080/1060586X.2024.2318141 (28.10.2024).

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