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# Scorched by War: A Report on the Current Language Situation in Ukraine

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## Executive Summary

As war rages, evidence points to a renaissance for the Ukrainian language. In Ukraine, not only those who spoke Ukrainian prior to the conflict, but also formerly Russian-speaking citizens are now rallying around the Ukrainian language as a symbol of national unity. Since the start of the full-scale invasion, this has largely happened as a result of individual, bottom-up choices. Allegations of discrimination against Russian speakers in Ukraine featured prominently among Russia's expressed grievances prior to the invasion. All the signs indicate that Russia's linguistic propaganda efforts have backfired on a grand scale. At the same time, the Crimean Tatar language has been the object of discrimination in Russian-occupied Crimea since 2014.

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\* "Scorched by war": from Hrytsenko 2023. Ukr. "obpalena viinoiu". This and all subsequent translations by the authors.

## Introduction

Language and its role in identity formation has stood at the forefront of Ukrainian history for centuries.<sup>1</sup> Today, we are witnessing the unravelling of a new chapter in this history: the latest in a long line of attempts by Moscow to nullify the Ukrainian nation, subjugate it and thus render it harmless in Russian eyes. Since the 18th century, the authorities in the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation have sought to destroy everything Ukrainian – the language and culture and the people themselves – in order to gain political advantage in Ukraine. The Imperial authorities sought to discourage the use of Ukrainian by means of legislative acts. The Valuyev Circular (1863) forbade the printing of religious and educational literature in the Ukrainian language and the Ems Decree (1876) prohibited use of the Ukrainian language in administration, teaching and music, and also banned the printing or importation of Ukrainian books, as well as the staging of Ukrainian-language theatre performances.

The Soviet authorities continued this policy of linguistic and ethnic violence. A short period of promotion of the Ukrainian language and culture (1920–1930), aimed at strengthening the position of the Bolsheviks in Ukraine, gave way to mass arrests, executions and deportation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. The talented Olena Kurylo, whose name is the glory of Ukrainian linguistics, was sentenced to eight years in the camps in Kazakhstan (Karlager) in 1938 for conducting scientific research on the Ukrainian language. The Ukrainian cultural elite was purged and replaced by Russian appointees. The Holodomor of 1932–1933, created by the Soviets, took the lives of millions of peasants, killed just because they were Ukrainians.

The 20th century saw the closure of Ukrainian language schools on a massive scale and their replacement with Russian language schools. In 1938, a decree of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party introduced compulsory study of the Russian language in

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1 Flier and Graziosi 2017; Zayarnyuk and Sereda 2023, 162.



Ukraine; 20 years later a decree was issued on the complete transition of education to the Russian language. In 1961, a new programme was drawn up to merge the entire population of the Soviet Union into a single Soviet nation. In reality, this was a process of complete Russification.

The campaign to replace the Ukrainian language with Russian gained further momentum in the Brezhnev era. Success in education and career opportunities depended entirely on mastery of the Russian language. Teachers of Russian were awarded a salary bonus. Those who persisted in using Ukrainian faced accusations of political disloyalty and were persecuted. The government stimulated migration, and the resettlement of Russians to Ukraine was encouraged. Industrial giants, directly subordinate to Moscow, were concentrated in the east of Ukraine, all documentation was in Russian and the entire management was brought from Russia. Between 1926 and 1979, the number of Russians living in Ukraine increased from 2.5 million to 10 million.<sup>2</sup>

Ukraine today, however, is essentially different from the Ukraine of 1876, 1918 or, indeed, 1991. Andrew Wilson, a Professor of Ukrainian Studies at London's University College, concludes that "... war is a great driver of identity consolidation and change".<sup>3</sup> What has been the observable impact of Russia's full-scale invasion as far as the language situation is concerned? It is a truism that issues of national self-identification and language choice are complex, and Ukraine is no exception in this respect. The country has essentially been bilingual, with Ukrainian and Russian as the major languages. Other languages are spoken by a mere fraction of the population.<sup>4</sup> It has been claimed that there is no other country in Europe where the language of an ethnic minority is as widespread as the state language, and where the state language in some territories is the language of the minority.<sup>5</sup> This is clearly an exaggeration, however, since both Latvia and Belarus are in comparable, albeit not identical, situations. Nonetheless, given its size in geographical as well as population terms, Ukraine's language situation merits close attention.

This report constitutes an attempt to survey current language trends in Ukraine. In order to provide an up-to-date account that reflects current views as of the early summer of 2023, we have chosen to emphasize personal communications with Ukrainian citizens who are personally engaged in the Language Question. The interviews were carried out in Ukrainian, Russian and English.

## Statistics and Legislation

Independent Ukraine carried out its only census of its population to date in 2001.<sup>6</sup> According to its findings, 67.5 percent of the population gave Ukrainian as their mother tongue while 29.6 percent stated Russian. Other languages were spoken as their mother tongue by 2.9 percent of the population.

A 2017 poll funded by the Volkswagen Foundation produced slightly different and more detailed results concerning the mother tongue of respondents: Ukrainian 64 percent, Russian

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2 Halushko 2013.

3 Wilson 2022, 378.

4 Masenko 2020, 31.

5 Besters-Dilger 2010, 332.

6 Census 2001.

17.1 percent, Ukrainian and Russian equally 17.4 percent and other languages 0.8 percent. Some 46.9 percent of respondents used Ukrainian exclusively or in most situations in daily life, while 31.8 percent chose Russian. Equal use of Ukrainian and Russian was reported by 20.8 percent of respondents.<sup>7</sup>

In December 2022, a poll undertaken in areas under Ukrainian control found that 80 percent of respondents agreed that “the Ukrainian language should be principal in all spheres of communication”, up by 20 percent since 2017. The poll also showed that fewer were in favour of Ukraine being a bilingual country (15 percent compared to 33 five years previously). The number of respondents supporting Russian in all spheres of communication had fallen to 0.6 percent compared to 2 percent in 2017.<sup>8</sup> A year into Russia’s full-scale invasion, the Rating Group polling organization recorded a sharp increase in the percentage of the population reporting Ukrainian as their mother tongue – to 82 percent:

Considering the switch to the Ukrainian language, significant changes have took [sic] place in all regions, except for the West, where the majority communicated only in Ukrainian anyway. It has grown especially noticeably in the south and east, despite the difficulties of the transition to Ukrainian, since for a third of the locals, Russian is still native language.<sup>9</sup>

A new official census has been postponed a number of times and is now planned for an unspecified date “after the end of the war”.<sup>10</sup>

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Ukraine’s law “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language” entered into force on 16 July 2019.<sup>11</sup> This Law encourages the use of Ukrainian in spheres where a language shift is already taking place: the state and communal spheres, education, healthcare, mass media, and so on.

The Law states that, as of 16 January 2022, enterprises, institutions, and organisations shall deliver services and provide information about goods, including via online shops and online catalogues, in Ukrainian. Furthermore, article 25 of the Law states that from the same date, print media must be distributed in Ukrainian or, if in another language, “an edition of the publication in the state language shall be published simultaneously”. Local mass media in Ukraine will be obliged to comply with the article 25 requirements by 16 July 2024. The law does not, however, apply to print media published in the Crimean Tatar language, other languages of the Indigenous peoples of Ukraine, English or other official languages of the European Union.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the transition of the Ukrainian mass media to distributing its content in the Ukrainian language has been gradual and was initiated before the start of Russia’s full-scale military invasion.

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7 Masenko 2020, 31.

8 Kulyk 2022.

9 Rating Group 2023, 13.

10 Mintsifry 2023.

11 Zakon 2019.

12 In Ukrainian legislation, the “Indigenous people of Ukraine” are defined as: “an autochthonous ethnic community that formed on the territory of Ukraine, [and is] a bearer of an original language and culture, has traditional, social, cultural or representative bodies, considers itself an Indigenous people of Ukraine, is an ethnic minority in its population and does not have its own state entity outside Ukraine (Zakon 2021, art. 1, §§1–2).

On 8 July 2020, the Ukrainian government appointed Taras Kremin Commissioner for the Protection of the State Language. The Office of the Commissioner publishes an annual report on the status of compliance with the law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language”.<sup>13</sup> In 2017, a study of Ukrainian language legislation concluded that “[t]he future of the language legislation greatly depends on the development of the military conflict in eastern Ukraine”.<sup>14</sup> This remains true today.

## Current Views on the Russian Language in Ukraine

The informants consulted for this report all agree that a shift has taken place among Ukrainians in their views on the Russian language. Although the process is ongoing and exact numerical statistics cannot be obtained, there are many signs to indicate that a large proportion of Ukrainian society has turned away from the Russian language and Russian culture, as the following comments demonstrate:

Dr Tetiana Yastremska, Deputy Director for research, I.Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies:

For most Ukrainians, since the invasion by Russia, the Russian language has become a marker of military aggression, of the enemy and of war. The language is even cited as one of the causes of the war. The war brought the language problem to the fore because it was the Russian language that became a marker of non-Ukraine, non-Ukrainians, the “svoi” (Russian) territory, “svoi” people who speak Russian. This is not a war for territory, but for Ukraine, for its statehood, culture and language.

[...]

Unfortunately, it was the war that enabled us to understand that language is not only a means of communication, but a marker of identity. The language problem, which had been “out of fashion” for decades, now confirmed its strategic importance, becoming a kind of front in the struggle, because language is the basis of our identity and the assurance of Ukraine’s victory. February 24, 2022 became a turning point for many Ukrainians, a day of insight and understanding of the essence of the ‘Russian world’, and at the same time of Ukrainian self-affirmation, awareness of who they are, in which state they want to live and in which language to communicate.

Taras Kremin, the State commissioner for the protection of the state language, emphasizes that the invasion has “caused tectonic changes in the consciousness of Ukrainian citizens and further established the Ukrainian language as the state language, strengthened the linguistic statist imperative of Ukrainians”.<sup>15</sup>

Dr Maryna Hrymch, writer, philologist, historian, anthropologist and native of Kyiv, continues:

My daily observations and field research as an anthropologist, as well as the survey materials of my colleagues, testify that attitudes to the Ukrainian language have changed dramatically. Similarly, the frequency of the use of Ukrainian in all situations

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<sup>13</sup> SLPC 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Azhniuk 2017, 382.

<sup>15</sup> Yastremska 2023. Cf. also Yastremska 2022.

(from official to everyday) and in various strata of society has increased dramatically. In intellectual circles, the trend to cancel Russia, cancel Russian culture has spread. In fact, this applies to a large extent to language issues.<sup>16</sup>

## Practical Consequences of the Invasion

The attitudes of intellectuals are one thing, but what is the everyday language situation like on the streets, in schools and in the workplaces of Ukraine?

Oleksandr Kotyash, a teacher from Dubrovytsia (Rivne area) in western Ukraine:

Recently I was in Bucha, near Kyiv. Before the war, I knew almost nothing about this town, except that it is one of the “dormitory suburbs” of Kyiv where rich people live. The Ukrainian language could be heard in state institutions (but not in all), in schools, maybe even in some other places. However, following adoption of the law on language and the Russian war, the Ukrainian language is heard in all state institutions. Employees who used to speak Russian all the time have switched to Ukrainian. True, you can feel the accent, some Russianisms fly by, but people try to speak Ukrainian.

[...]

At the beginning of January this year, I had the honour to speak in front of internally displaced persons (from the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions) in our town of Dubrovytsia. These people had fled from the war, from trouble and had come to Dubrovytsia. They were provided with housing and everything they needed. People sincerely, with tears in their eyes, thanked us for this assistance. They had lived all their lives in a Russian-speaking environment but in eight months had learned to speak Ukrainian. True, it is a bit difficult for them to understand the local dialect, but I introduced them to the map of dialects, explained that ‘every village has its own dialect’, but all of them are ours, Ukrainian.<sup>17</sup>

Maryna Hrymych:

Having lived in Kyiv since birth, I especially listen to the language situation in the capital. There have never been such a large number of Ukrainian-speaking people. Even in a mass demonstration, one feels either shame or embarrassment when someone accidentally speaks Russian. He tries to switch to Ukrainian immediately. In all official institutions and most businesses, the Ukrainian language is mandatory, so even if the client speaks Russian, the staff members do not switch to Russian as before. [...] Clearly, all these impressions of mine are subjective. Future research, including social surveys, will create a more objective picture.<sup>18</sup>

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16 Hrymych 2023.

17 Kotyash 2023.

18 Hrymych 2023.

A high-ranking Western diplomat in Kyiv who we interviewed corroborates these impressions:

For foreigners, speaking Russian in Ukraine has become more difficult. While you are unlikely to provoke anger by speaking Russian, your interlocutor will probably reply in Ukrainian. You hear far more Ukrainian in the streets of Kyiv, and many of my Ukrainian friends who, prior to February 24, spoke Ukrainian only in conversations with official representatives, are now increasingly switching to Ukrainian in everyday life, with family, friends, and so on. This is a conscious choice and for many it feels unusual, and I do not think that it is a passing phenomenon.

[...]

At the same time, you hear a lot of Russian in the streets. It is difficult to estimate – perhaps 30 to 40 percent? This is completely uncontroversial and nobody reacts to it one bit. That Russian is not heard less is probably due to the great number of internal refugees from eastern Ukraine.<sup>19</sup>

## Ukrainian, Russian and Mixed Codes

The stereotypical view of eastern Ukraine is that it is Russian-speaking. This is, however, an oversimplification. In large parts of the Donbas and along the Black Sea coast, three languages (or codes) are spoken: Ukrainian, Russian and Surzhyk:

The term “surzhyk” originally meant a mixture of wheat and rye flour, which was considered lower grade than pure wheat flour. The term has also carried other etymological connotations. Hrinchenko’s dictionary (1909) defines the term as “1) mixed grains of flour made thereof; 2) a person of mixed race....”<sup>20</sup>

Of course, Suržyk has a completely different status than Ukrainian and Russian. It is an oral vernacular in which the Ukrainian “element” is shaped partly by old rural dialects, partly by the standard language; and the Russian “element” rather by Standard Russian.<sup>21</sup>

The close linguistic affinities are clearly illustrated by a play on words that has spread in Ukrainian and Russian, and – as we shall see – further afield. The word, which is an expression of Ukrainian humour, is *bavovna*. The exact time of its first appearance is difficult to ascertain, but immediately after the opening of Russia’s hostilities the word *bavovna* became popular among Russian-speaking Ukrainians. Nowadays it is widely used not only in conversations and social networks, but also in Russian-language mass media in Ukraine. The word means ‘cotton’ and plays on the graphic similarity between Russian *khlopok* ‘cotton’ and *khlopók* ‘clap, bang’, which differ in stress only. In Ukrainian, this word began to be used as a term for explosions within the territory controlled by the Russian army or on the territory of Russia. In official Russian reports and publications by Russian mass media, the word ‘bang’ (*khlopók*) is preferred over “explosion” (*vzryv*), obviously with the aim of reducing readers’ anxiety. Thus, in Russia “there was a bang” is usually written rather than “there was an explosion”. This Russian euphemism has, in turn, given rise to memes in Ukraine, where the Russian ‘bang’ is jokingly mistranslated as Ukrainian ‘bavovna’. This word has since entered the language

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19 We have respected the individual’s wish to remain anonymous. A full transcript of the interview has been retained by the authors.

20 Bilaniuk 2005, 104.

21 Hentschel and Palinska 2022, 288.

of Russian-speaking Ukrainians, who, when communicating or writing in Russian, choose *bavovna* when referring to explosions in the territories temporarily controlled by Russia.<sup>22</sup>

## The Case of the Crimean Tatars

The Law On the Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine states that the Indigenous peoples of Ukraine in the Crimean Peninsula are the Crimean Tatars, the Karaites and the Krymchaks.<sup>23</sup> We focus on the largest group, the Crimean Tatars. In 2001, there were 248,193 Crimean Tatars in Ukraine, or 0.51% of the population. (The number of Karaites was 1,196, and there were 406 Krymchaks.)<sup>24</sup>

Crimean Tatars represented 12% of the peninsula's population in 2014 and consider themselves to be Crimea's Indigenous people. Russia is a familiar colonial foe, having repeatedly occupied Crimea since 1783, suppressed the Tatar culture and religion, and committed atrocities that have had an enduring effect on the collective memory of the Tatars as a people.<sup>25</sup>

The “Concept of the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language”, approved by the Government of Ukraine on April 7, 2021, emphasizes the severely endangered status of the language. According to further assessments by specialists at the A. Yu. Krymskyi Institute of Oriental Studies at the National Academy of Sciences, negative recent trends have left the language in a critical state.<sup>26</sup> Many Crimean Tatars left the peninsula in the aftermath of the Russian occupation of Crimea in 2014, but the majority remain in territories under de facto Russian control.

According to Sabriie Slastion, Assistant Professor of Turkology at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the full-scale Russian invasion put a greater emphasis on communication in the Crimean Tatar language but changes have taken place since.<sup>27</sup> She explains that “language discourse has become increasingly aggressive”. For example, following the Russian annexation, the main slogan in the Crimean Tatar community was *Qırımda yaşa*, ‘Live in Crimea’. On the one hand, this phrase means “to choose life in native Crimea despite hardships and troubles”, while on the other hand, it is the imperative form of the verb ‘to live’, as if ordering the addressee to live in Crimea rather than in some safer location. According to Slastion, this has increased polarization in the Crimean Tatar community.

At the start of Russia's full-scale war on Ukraine, the expression *Qırımda yaşa* gave way to *Sen qırımtatarsıñ – acrasın taparsıñ*: ‘You are a Crimean Tatar, so you will surely find a way’. This phrase was coined by Crimean Tatar writer Aliya Kenzhe-ali and has since become popular. It is a play on words meaning that a Crimean Tatar will be able to find both ‘a way out of an unpleasant situation’ and ‘an opportunity’. According to Slastion, thanks to this catchphrase, the community still in Crimea understands compatriots who were forced to leave their homes.

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22 Concerning “bavovna”, cf. also Yatsenko 2022, 83.

23 Zakon 2021.

24 Natsionalnyi sklad 2001.

25 Shynkarenko 2022, 76.

26 Kontseptsia 2021.

27 Slastion 2023.



The word *bavovna* (see above) has also found its way into the Crimean Tatar language as *Bizde bugün bavovna* (we have cotton today) or “something has blown up”. This phrase is often preceded by *Köz aydyn* ‘light in our eyes/ what joy’, an exclamation used in Crimean Tatar before announcing good news or a pleasant surprise.

According to Slastion, the Crimean Tatar language has every chance of being reborn and developing in Ukraine. She identifies approval of the above-mentioned Concept as a positive step. Even partial implementation would “significantly improve” the situation of the Crimean Tatar language. In July 2023, the Ukrainian authorities in conjunction with the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, a representative body, launched a project to establish an orthography of Crimean Tatar based on the Latin alphabet.<sup>28</sup>

The Chairman of the Mejlis, Refat Chubarov, agrees that the Concept and the “Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022–2032” will play an important role in preserving and improving the state of the Crimean Tatar language.<sup>29</sup> The Crimean Mejlis took an active part in the creation of these documents, which analyse the current situation, set strategic goals and outline operational measures and tasks. Chubarov notes certain positive changes at the legislative level in Ukraine since 2014. These include a strengthening of the Ukrainian language as the state language, as well as preservation of the Crimean Tatar language.

The law “On complete general intermediate education” stipulates that the language of the educational process in institutions of general secondary education is the state language (Ukrainian). However, individuals belonging to one of the Indigenous peoples of Ukraine have the right to complete general intermediate education in their respective language alongside the state language.<sup>30</sup> According to Chubarov, since according to the law the Crimean Tatar language is the language of instruction in primary and secondary education institutions along with the state language, this provides the basis for the creation of a Crimean Tatar school where graduates can become fluent in both Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian.

Chubarov explains how the Crimean Tatar language suffered great losses after the Stalin-era deportations of 1944. The Russian occupation of Crimea and the invasion of Ukraine have also had negative consequences for speakers of Crimean Tatar.

In occupied Crimea since 2014, the Crimean Tatar television channel (ATR), Crimean Tatar radio stations and several newspapers have been closed. Currently, the Russian authorities control Crimean Tatar-language media in the peninsula. They spread propaganda messages and pay disproportionate attention to the Russian language when creating content. For example, programmes in the Crimean Tatar language talk about traditions or educational issues, whereas popular programmes, such as entertainment shows or prime time news broadcasts, are exclusively in Russian.

Post-2014, in occupied Crimea, educational opportunities in Crimean Tatar have deteriorated significantly. The language has been reduced in the curriculum in favour of Russian. Even in major Crimean Tatar communities with schools offering Crimean Tatar classes, the school administration of the occupier gives precedence to Russian as the language of instruction.

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28 Minre 2023.

29 Chubarov 2023.

30 Zakon 2020.

Today, according to Tamila Tasheva, Representative of the President of Ukraine for Crimea, “the opportunity to study the Ukrainian or Crimean Tatar language has a formal character, it includes less than 0.01 percent of Crimean children.”<sup>31</sup>

According to Chubarov, this has resulted in an increase in the use of Russian not only in the education system, but also in the linguistic habits of schoolchildren during breaks. He refers to the methods implemented by the Russian authorities as “Jesuit”:

The language environment in language learning is very important. If a child learns a language at school, and everyone in the corridor speaks Russian, it is clear that learning the native language will be very slow. The occupiers know this very well; in this way they assimilated their Indigenous peoples and now they are carrying out this policy in the occupied territory, in Crimea.

These days, Crimean Tatars in mainland Ukraine try to speak more often in their native language. For example, they may start a conversation in Crimean Tatar and then switch to Ukrainian. Similarly, more people now communicate on social media in Crimean Tatar. However, Chubarov concludes, it is not yet possible to talk of radical change: “Perhaps there is a desire, but there is not enough knowledge”.

In his concluding remarks, Refat Chubarov mentioned a number of other major projects that are waiting to be carried out. These include a spelling reform, a transition to the Latin alphabet and the creation of a dictionary.

## Summing up the Situation

Citizens of Ukraine representing various walks of life, ethnic groups and geographic origins agree that Russia’s full-scale invasion has prepared the ground for a major language shift. Views differ about the role of language in national identity. Some are adamant that Ukrainian identity equals the Ukrainian language. This is the position expressed in strong terms by Pavlo Hrytsenko, Director of the Institute for Ukrainian Language at the National Academy of Sciences:

Ukraine is scorched by war. The Ukrainian language is burned by the flames of war and destruction. And yet we can talk about catharsis, about the purification of many ideas and many circumstances connected with language. The first, most important state, which we must establish as a fact, is the victory of the idea of the Ukrainization of Ukraine in the confrontation with other ideas of multilingualism, bilingualism, Russian-speaking, and so on.<sup>32</sup>

While using different words, the Western diplomat arrives at a similar conclusion:

I believe that the Ukrainian language will continue to take over as the dominant language in Ukraine, a process that is, I am sure, likely to be accelerated by the full-scale invasion, both as a result of the free choice of individuals, and by means of policies aimed at strengthening the position of Ukrainian.

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<sup>31</sup> Tasheva 2023.

<sup>32</sup> Hrytsenko 2023.

Oleksandr Kotyash:

The Ukrainian language has a future, provided that our legislators do not come up with some other crazy idea like giving Russian the status of the second state language. If there are all kinds of support for the Ukrainian-speaking area at the state level.<sup>33</sup>

Maryna Hrymych:

I think that, right now, the situation for the Ukrainian language—at least in the cities, where there were always problems—is the best for 150 years. And, probably, Ukrainians will not let go of this chance, as they did in the 1920s in the time of Ukrainization. Of course, after the war a proportion of the people will revert to pre-war linguistic practices in the circle of their family and among friends. But publicly, the educated space will be Ukrainian; that is a fact.<sup>34</sup>

In Ukraine's language situation, the tectonic plates have shifted. The interviews carried out for this report clearly suggest that the Ukrainian language has gained immensely in prestige as a national rallying point.

On the future status of Russian, one high-ranking Western diplomat interviewed for this report argued that “being Russophone does not automatically mean that your Ukrainian identity is weaker”. While this may be true, as the war progresses and as the world learns more about Russian atrocities, the future of the Russian language in Ukraine becomes bleaker by the day.

## Policy Recommendations

The importance of language as a factor in the shaping of human identity cannot be overestimated. State agencies in Western democracies that wish to support Ukraine's nationhood and facilitate its European integration would do well not to neglect language issues. Aiding Ukraine in matters of language should prove successful in the long term. Some suggestions on how such support might be provided are set out below.

- Continue to support the work of Ukraine's State Language Agencies.
- Step up support for minority languages, including with regard to the protection and development of the Crimean Tatar language.
- Support and protect development of the Crimean Tatar language as a language of an Indigenous people of Ukraine, in line with Ukrainian legislation and in the context of the *International Decade of Indigenous Languages* declared by the UN General Assembly for 2022–2032.<sup>35</sup>
- Make Slavic studies in Western educational and research institutions less Russo-centric.

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33 Kotyash 2023.

34 Hrymych 2023.

35 Unesco 2023.

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