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**Language policy as an instrument of nation-building:
The case of Post-Maidan Ukraine**

Master's thesis



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Declaration of Authorship

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
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In Prague on
20. of May 2020

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Abstract

In this thesis, the issue of language policies and nation-building as seen by a constructivist perspective are studied, the studied case being the Post-Maidan Ukraine. It is argued that the ruling elites of Ukrainian society are persuading the members of minority-language populations to re-categorize themselves according to the blueprint of national and linguistic identities that the elites are presenting. The thesis studies the responsiveness of the populations of Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod and Odesa to the identity-building efforts. To assess the success rates of the endeavour, the method of linguistic landscape analysis and a survey among students of Czech in Ukraine are employed. In the linguistic landscape analysis, the behaviours of issuers of official, commercial and informal messages appearing in the studied cities are observed. Looking at the language composition of these signs, the overall responsiveness of the populations towards the official language policies, and, by extension, towards the nation-building efforts overall, are assumed. The survey then provides supporting evidence by asking the respondents questions about their attitudes towards the language legislation and stance on the issue of language use in the country. It is observed that in informal contexts, the messages often revert to the language mostly used in the studied city, regardless of whether it is the official language or not.

Abstrakt

Tato magisterská práce se zabývá otázkami jazykových politik a budování národa na Ukrajině po Majdanské revoluci. Z konstruktivistického pohledu jsou zde rozvíjeny teorie národa a jeho budování. Hypotézou je, že se ukrajinské elity pokoušejí přesvědčit příslušníky jazykových minorit, aby se re-identifikovali podle elitami prezentované vize národní a jazykové identity. Práce se zabývá identifikací s touto vizí mezi občany čtyř ukrajinských měst – Kyjeva, Dnipra, Užhorodu, a Oděsy. K ohodnocení úspěšnosti tohoto projektu je využita metoda dotazníku a analýzy jazykové krajiny. V této analýze jsou sledovány zprávy ve veřejném prostoru zvolených měst. Tyto zprávy jsou následně vytříděny na oficiální, komerční a neformální. Texty jsou analyzovány z pohledu kompozice výskytu jazyků. Podle tohoto výskytu lze sledovat, do jaké míry se obyvatelstvo ztotožňuje s oficiální jazykovou politikou, a tedy i s vizí elit o národní a jazykové identitě. Dotazník mezi ukrajinskými studenty češtiny slouží jako podpůrná metoda, která má za cíl zjistit, jak se respondenti staví k jazykové legislativě a idejím o používání jazyka v zemi. Ze získaných dat lze vyčíst, že v neformálních kontextech často dochází k ignoraci oficiální politiky a k užívání místně dominujícího jazyka, nezávisle na tom, zda je též jazykem státním.

Keywords

Linguistic landscape; Nation-building; Nationalism; Ukraine; Language policy; National identity

Klíčová slova

Jazyková krajina; Budování národa; Nacionalismus; Ukrajina; Jazyková politika; Národní identita

Název práce

Jazyková politika jako nástroj budování národa: Případová studie Ukrajiny po Majdanu

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1. Introduction

“Some minority languages behave like good children, seen but not heard. Others behave like normal children, both heard and seen. And yet others behave like unruly children and be heard or seen even when banished away from the public eye. The latter is the case of Russian in Ukraine.” (Pavlenko 2012, p. 36)

In this thesis, I intend to expand the perspectives on ideas of nations, nation-building and nationalism through analysing the language policies and identity-building done by the post-2014 Ukrainian authorities and the responsiveness of the population towards these efforts. The case study was inspired by the latest language law introduced by the Ukrainian lawmakers in 2019 to bolster Ukrainian national cohesion by giving more space to the hegemonic official language and less space to the other languages, indirectly targeting the Russian language. I will draw from the constructivist notions. These state that national, language and cultural identities are constantly (re-)constructed by the elites and are therefore fluid and non-permanent.

To understand if the elites were successful in persuading the populace to subscribe to their re-imagined definition of Ukrainian national identity, I will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.

In the quantitative part of the text, I will compare the data that I have assembled during my visits to Kyiv and Dnipro in 2019 and to Uzhhorod and Odesa in 2020. Employing the method of linguistic landscapes, I have photographed almost 4000 pieces of text in the central streets of the studied cities. In this text, I will analyse all of the photographic material and compare the languages used in the texts to count the occurrences of Ukrainian, Russian and foreign languages. By quantifying the results and comparing them to the languages most spoken in the cities, I will try to ascertain the responsiveness of the citizens to the language policies of the state.

For the qualitative part of this work, I will analyse responses to questionnaires that I was able to disseminate in 2020 among Ukrainian students of the Czech language in various Ukrainian cities. These students are attending courses organised by the Czech

Centre Kyiv. In the questionnaires, I was trying to discern if the students are responsive to the official language policy and to the Ukrainian linguistic identity that the elites are proselytising.

1.1. Research target, research question

The target of this thesis is to see how the citizenry reacts to language policies and identity-manufacturing efforts done by the post-Maidan Ukrainian elites. In general, I seek to further the research on the relation between different identities and how the state attempts to create, recreate, shape, and/or use them. The work could also help shed light on the relations between hegemonic and minority languages, as well as on the usage of linguistic identity as a part of nation-building in times of turmoil.

The primary question is whether the population of the studied cities subscribed to the language policy and to the re-imagined identity for the nation that the identity-constructing projects are trying to promote. This question is answered through the use of linguistic landscape analysis. This method allows for analysing pieces of text in a selected area. By selecting the commercial centres of the four studied cities with different language compositions, I could analyse the languages that were used by the local populations in the messages posted into the public space and see the language composition of the messages.

1.2. Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that in case of successful persuasion of the population by the governing elites, more commercial text in the linguistic landscapes of Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod, and Odesa will be in Ukrainian than in previous studies. Ukrainian would then occupy a privileged position in all of the landscapes, regardless of the linguistic composition of the studied locations.

I also hypothesise that this rule would only apply in contexts where the issuer or creator of the message is trying to establish a brand identity or advertise himself or herself through the message. This is due to the idea that those individuals might want to be perceived in a certain (patriotic) way as means of self-identification or self-categorization, to belong to a specific group; or wants to be perceived that way. By this definition, informal

or private messages which aren't establishing a brand should be less influenced by the government's attempts. This hypothesis relies on insights from the Social Identity Theory (Billig 1995, p. 66), as well as those from linguistic landscapes analysis (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 423).

1.3. The structure of the text

In the second chapter, I will explain the masonry upon which this work is built, the theoretical perspectives. The theoretical writings on ideas of nation, national and other identities, and nationalism will be discussed. Ideas of interaction between the elites and the public in the arena of identity construction and self-identification will then be explored.

In the third chapter, I will discuss the developments in Ukraine. The events coinciding with the eras of Russification and Ukrainization will be discussed. I will address the work of other authors on different ways in which the post-1991 Ukrainian governments have been attempting out to reshape the overall identity of the nation. These include laws on education, changing of the toponymy or the names of streets and other places, changing of names of citizens in newly issued passports and specific ways of constructing the census. The 2019 language law will be analysed and put into context with the language laws that were put in place previously.

In the fourth chapter, I will explain my methodology. In this chapter, I will introduce the method of linguistic landscape analysis and describe how this method borrowed from linguistics can be employed to ascertain the success of language laws. The parameters of this specific instance of linguistic landscape analysis will be set and explained. Then, I will delineate how I have decided to assemble the questionnaires.

In the fifth chapter, I will discuss the findings from field research trips to Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod, and Odesa. The collected and quantified data will be discussed. I will also put them into perspective with the works of two other authors who did similar research.

In the sixth chapter, the results of the supporting part of the thesis will be introduced, to put the previous part into context. This chapter includes the results of the

questionnaires that I was disseminating among students of Czech language in various Ukrainian cities.

Lastly, in the seventh chapter, I will discuss the findings and hint at possible venues for further research.

2. Theoretical perspectives

When researching the topics of national as well as other identities, as well as nations and nationalism, a researcher must first set out the parameters and theoretical starting points from which the issues can be analysed. In focusing on these issues, I am drawing mostly from the ideas of Benedict Anderson, Michael Billig, John E. Joseph, Ernest Gellner, as well as some other theoretical sources.

When addressing the issue of nations, I must first address their origin and how they were formed. In this present work, I subscribe to the modernist or constructivist notion (Gellner 2003, pp. 111-118) that nations are not semi-timeless objects, formed somewhere in the mists of the ancient past. Instead, the concept of nation was constructed or “imagined” (Anderson 1983) and then constantly and continuously reshaped over the course of the last two centuries or so. In his seminal work, *Imagined Communities*, Anderson notes:

“In anthropological definition of the nation, I propose that: it is an imagined community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” (Anderson 1983, p. 6)

Any groups larger in size than a small tribe or a village - in which the individual members have no chance of meeting all the other members - have to be imagined. This applies not only to group identities of a territorial kind, as different sorts of imagined groups like sexual, gender and professional are based on the same principle (Joseph 2004, p. 20). Group identities are also more abstract than individual ones (Ibid., p. 7). Identity allows itself to be perceived as a performative act: The individual doesn't just receive the

identity passively, but actively self-identifies, or subscribes to a part or the whole of an identity blueprint presented by the identity-manufacturers (Joseph 2004, pp. 20; 76). In the case of Ukraine, that self-identification would mean voluntarily using Ukrainian in informal contexts when one's native language is a minority language, while this minority language could be used instead. According to the Social Identity Theory, the social identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Joseph 2004, p. 76). While the Social Identity Theory wasn't originally a theory of nationalism, its characteristic of groups and identities can be applied to the topic. It states that the performative acts and psychological aspects are constituent of the group. According to this theory, a group only exists if its members consider the group to be real. This identification is necessarily a kind of self-categorization, as the individuals constituting the group need to include themselves. When a "membership list" exists, there must be non-members, too. This then divides individuals into two categories: in-group and out-group (Billig 1995, p. 66). The theory also points out that there isn't just one category that everyone is putting themselves (Ibid., p. 69) in. In the studied context, for example, a single person might be "Ukrainian", "Russian-speaker", "Jewish", "Man" and many other categories of varying degrees of importance for the individual.

When studying the aspect of both individual and national identities, the linguistic category is perhaps the most crucial. Individual linguistic identity is consisting of multiple factors, the primary of which is the name of the individual. Furthermore, according to Joseph, one's language is the base of his or her personal identity (2004, p. 185) This is important for this work as it will be observed that the studied tools employed by the elites include the changing of given names of people and of places (Ibid, p. 12). Multiple sources and scholars have argued that language plays the main role in constructing the national identity and the main pillar on which modern nationalist ideologies were built (Ibid. 94; Hobsbawm 1992, p. 117-118).

How was the nation constructed and why does it matter? If nations are considered primordial and timeless, they are implicitly given an enhanced degree of authenticity and validity. Moreover, a non-recognised group aspiring to be a nation is fighting an uphill battle - it has to "prove" that it is eligible to sit down at the table reserved for established, "authentic" nations, with their national histories, peculiarities and myths (Anderson, 205).

A problem arises when a nationally oriented government attempt to put their ideas in practice and create a state and citizenry modelled on their blueprints. In no modern nation, all of the citizens bear the characteristics they “should” (Joseph 2004, p. 92). The debate opens about the “purity” of the linguistic situation. A victory of one national idea is usually bringing along a defeat of another (Billig 1995, p. 28). Linguistic diversity, especially with minority languages being concentrated in regions bordering other nations that speak those languages, could be considered a sign of weakness of the nation. To “mend” this problem, the regions of question need to be convinced to self-(re-)identify according to the model described in the Centre (Ibid. 104-105). As will be inspected, it seems that the Ukrainian elites have more or less subscribed to this way of thinking. Nationalist politics can bring positive changes, especially in the form of national liberating struggle against a colonial subjugation or in post-colonial contexts. Nevertheless, any form of ideology or politics that support nationalist inclinations should be observed sceptically. Even if banal, nationally oriented ideas always put one group above other group(s), or, conversely, puts a group bellow other groups in importance (Billig 1995, pp. 6-7). Michael Billig describes banal nationalism as daily strategies to reproduce and bolster the national identity of a given nation. The practices may seem unextraordinary, like putting a flag next to a post office. Nevertheless, they help reproduce the idea of a nation in the everyday reality (Billig 1995, p. 6).

The struggle for linguistic purity or simplicity is also connected to the differentiating of a language and a dialect. In a nation-state, the elites will attempt to codify their way of using the language as the only appropriate, with denigrating the other languages in their country to the position of dialects. Dialects often carry a negative meaning. From a political and historical point of view, they can be often understood as languages that did not “make it” politically. Conversely, national movements may be attempting to convert their dialect into a language, giving it more political weight (Billig 1995, p. 35). These aspects will be discussed later when covering Rusyn and Surzhyk.

While it might be complicated to spot in monolingual nations, in multilingual nations, the usage of language in the public might be a show of allegiance towards the government, or lack thereof. For a person that speaks a minority language in a multilingual state, to communicate in the public space of the streets through advertisements, shop

signs, as well as other signage, can be not only a question of reaching the customer and being able to deliver the message, but also to demonstrate a position on the state language policy through the choice of language(s). Therefore, using a minority language in a commercial centre of a city with the majority language speaking population, or vice versa, could be conceived as a sign of political stance. Using a minority language in a majority language speaking settlement could be seen as an act of defiance, as it is commercially irrational to do so. By using a language which is not the most preferred among the populace, the vendor or advertiser risks alienating potential customers or not being comprehensible to them. Using a majority or official language in a minority language speaking area could possibly be considered somehow less controversial. Nevertheless, the risks are similar to the previous case. In linguistically mixed settlements, the choice of language becomes even more peculiar. Will the advertiser or vendor use the official language, the minority language, a completely different one or multiple languages? And in case they use more languages, which will be the first or the most prominent? Which piece of text shall be produced in a bigger size than the others? For our purposes, it should be mentioned that in cases of international "World" languages (especially English), the motivation may also lie somewhere else. The advertisement may target tourists who are more likely to understand the global language than a local one with fewer speakers.

With the exception of stateless persons, almost every individual in the World holds at least one citizenship or national identity. The state and the hegemonic elites are always on the lookout for new venues for a tying the individual with a more extensive identity "package". Those are the media, the politicians, and other powerful people possessing cultural or economic influence, who are maintaining the national identity. The different products offered are aspects of the national-ness: taking part in the national culture, consuming the culture, using the language, having certain normalised prejudices towards the other nations or other groups like sexual minorities and deciding who is to be part of the in-group, who belongs to the out-group and who is the Other. Like a mobile phone, the national identity is mostly quietly sitting in one's pocket but can be awakened if a moment when a national crisis arises (Billig 1995, p. 8). The individual then decides how he or she will self-categorize, absorb the group's myths and ideologies, including the stereotypes against out-group individuals and groups (Joseph 2004, p. 76). Therefore, in terms of agency, there is some to be found on both sides of the equation. The ruling elite is manufacturing and trying to steer the juggernaut of national and other identities, and it is

trying to persuade the rest of the populace to buy in and subscribe to as many facets as they are willing to. Simultaneously, the “common folk” are deciding on how much of the construct will they identify with. These processes and activities lead to a situation where nationalism and national identity are co-created by both the top down and the bottom up forces.

3. An overview of developments in Ukraine

3.1. Maidan, Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine

In 2014, the Ukrainian government led by Viktor Yanukovich decided to not sign the negotiated association treaty with the European Union and to strengthen ties with Russia by instead pursuing the path of nearing the membership in the Eurasian Union. This had led to widespread street protests, mostly in Kyiv at the *Maidan Nezalezhnosti*, the main square of the metropolis (Rychlík, Zilynskyj, Magocsi 2015, pp. 417-418).

The protests quickly with a violent reaction from the government, which led to Maidan being fortified by the protestors and massive street fighting between the government forces and the people. President Yanukovich, assuming that the protest could be crushed by force, used ever more severe tactics against the pro-European protesters. However, this led to increasing solidarity with the movement among the until-then passive population of Kyiv and later many other parts of Ukraine. Realising that the battle for legitimacy and political power was lost, Yanukovich fled to Russia. Meanwhile, the successful protesters were able to persuade the parliament to organise new elections, which were won by powers until then in opposition (Ibid., p. 418).

After organising a sham referendum in Crimea, the Russian Federation annexed the peninsula. The local governments in Donetsk and Lugansk were overthrown by uniformed militants without insignia, later called Little Green Men or “Polite people” (in Russophone environments). These separatists, later shown to be partly consisting of Russian soldiers off duty, have proclaimed separatist Donetsk and Lugansk People’s “Republics”. Backed by heavy support from Russia, they were able to fend off the Ukrainian forces (Ibid., p.

419). Since then, the two Easternmost regions of Ukraine are under occupation of these separatist forces and the war is at a stalemate. (Hires-László 2019, p. 89)

The war in Eastern Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea has led to a resurgence of patriotism and nationalism in Ukraine (Kravchenko 2015, p. 464). The first elected president after the revolution, an oligarch named Petro Poroshenko, led his campaign on a platform of unity under the banner of Ukrainian national identity, bolstered by a nation sharing one language and identity. He started the policy of “decommunization” and has spearheaded many laws and initiatives which were aimed at removing the legacy of the USSR and propagating a reborn and reimagined Ukrainian identity (Rychlík, Zilynskyj, Magocsi 2015, pp. 420-424).

3.2. Russification, Derussification, Ukrainisation, Deukrainisation?

One of the ways a nation was historically modelled was described by Anderson (1982, pp. 86-110) is an “official nationalism”. Specifically mentioning the 19th century Tsarist strategy of Russification, Anderson explains the general policy. Starting with Nicolas I., the Tsar’s administration decided to react to the threat of unofficial nationalism, which might tear the dynastic empire apart, by constructing an “official” nationalism. Under his rule, his advisor and minister Sergei Uvarov constructed the three pillars upon which the imperial authority was supposed to reside - Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality. This ideology was supposed to sedate the serfs and undermine support for groups such as the Decembrists, who unsuccessfully tried to prevent Nicolas from taking the throne. As Anderson notes, these sorts of nationalisms combined naturalization and the dynastic power, and they “stretched the short, tight skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire” (Ibid., p. 86).

In Ukraine, the official nationalism was clashing with the bottom-up romantic nationalist aspirations of the Ukrainian elites. This type of struggle was theoretically systematised by Miroslav Hroch. First, interest about the national idea, history, and language is “discovered” by intellectuals, who then disseminate the ideas. The idea then transforms into a mass movement, which then leads into a national liberation. (Billig 1995, p. 44). In Ukraine, however, the struggle was about to last for much longer.

Ever since the “awakening of nations” and the formation of nations in the modern sense in the 19th century, the colonial Russian Tsardom attempted to hamper the emergence of national movements in the colonised territories. Apart from the abovementioned official nationalism, this was done by a ban on publishing books in Ukrainian, importing of books in Ukrainian and a closure of Ukrainian-language education (Pavlenko 2012, p. 38). Ukrainian language was classified as a dialect of Russian and therefore couldn’t be considered for as fit for instruction in schools (Magocsi 1996, p. 373).

The Tsarist policy of Russification in the 19th century was met with the emerging romantic nationalism by the emerging middle and upper classes in Ukrainian cities. In a process not dissimilar to other aspiring nations in multinational empires of the time, the national idea was first articulated by poets, writers and scholars. The nationally oriented elites of Kyiv and other parts of Ukraine started to re-identify themselves from regional identities to the Ukrainian one. The changing of linguistic identity of Ukraine at the time was more complex, though. The Russification of Kyiv, for example, happened not only because of policies of the Russian administration, but also due to demographics. The 19th century Kyiv experienced an extraordinary swelling of its Russian population due to migration of labour, which has led to their language dominating the cultural sphere of the city (Pavlenko 2010, p. 141).

However, the Bolshevik revolution has changed all hitherto processes of struggles for language domination. In Kyiv, Ukrainian began to reappear. Under Lenin’s guidance, USSR began campaigns for increased literacy and education, which also led to the indigenous languages being promoted. This policy was implemented in the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s and it was called *korenizatsia* (or nativization in English). This has led to a resurgence of Ukrainian, which was further standardized. Ukrainian education and culture were supported too, with newspapers, books, and journals gaining prominence, provided that they support the struggle to create the Marxist utopia that the Bolsheviks were picturing for the USSR. Russian-speaking citizens had to attend courses of Ukrainian to keep their places if they held prominent positions, a policy in some ways not dissimilar to the one which is being promoted today (Pavlenko 2010, p. 143). However, the reins of power were still mostly held by non-Ukrainian speakers (Magocsi 1996, p. 537).

This situation did not last. With the change of leadership and the spread of rabid paranoia in Stalin's court in the 1930s, the politics of languages and nations were completely reversed in many of the socialist republics. "Bourgeois nationalism" or nationalist deviation was articulated as one of the leading threats to the Soviet nation and the policy of *korenizatsia* was gradually discontinued. The 1936-1938 Great Purge that was about to swallow large swaths of Soviet society was preceded by a smaller-scale purge in Ukraine (Magocsi 1996, pp. 566-567). Furthermore, man-made disasters and wars have changed the demographic makeup in Soviet Ukraine, especially in the eastern parts. Holodomor was of the most severe disasters in Ukrainian history. It was a man-made famine of 1932-1933 caused by, among other factors, a cruel policy of exporting grain to support rapid industrialization while leaving none for the local populations. Other parts of the Soviet Union were struck, too, but Ukrainian rural areas in the East were particularly hit with estimated 4-10 million people dying from hunger and related diseases. The areas were then re-settled, with newcomers commonly speaking Russian as their native tongue. Furthermore, the Second World War put a toll of approximately 5-7 million dead civilians on Ukraine. Apart from that, the Crimean Tatars were unwillingly resettled in 1944, while many Ukrainian families were subjected to a similar treatment during the *Tseliny* (Virgin Lands in English) campaign of the Khrushchev era, which forced families from all over USSR to settle inhospitable parts of Kazakhstan and Siberia (Matviyishyn, Michalski 2017a, pp. 188-189).

In the decades after the Second World War, the policy of Russification was partly re-started, while Ukrainian was being held back (Demska 2019, p. 8). In the Russian-speaking parts of the country, there were almost no schools that taught in Ukrainian (Csernicsko 2011a, p. 88). However, the Soviet policy was more nuanced than just complete Russification in the second half of the 20th century.

It could be theorised that the Soviet state was not attempting a policy of complete destruction of the nations under it. If it were so, they would cease the existence of the Soviet republics (although that would make the USSR weaker in international affairs, as some of the Soviet republics were "independently" members of international institutions) and force instruction at schools of all levels in Russian. While Russian unofficially worked as a state language, and definitely as the *lingua franca*, the Soviet citizens were given the right to study in their native language (Pavlenko 2011, pp. 38). The Soviet super state was

instead trying to create a sort of new, imperial, de-nationalized identity of the “Soviet people”. In this new framework, the different nations were supposed to gradually merge (the policy of *Sliianie*) and converge (the policy of *Sblizheniie*). The Russian language and culture were supposed to be the blueprint for the Soviet citizens, but not to replace the other cultures completely (Wojnowski 2015, p. 3). It shouldn’t be forgotten, though, that this somewhat less repressive kind of Russification didn’t entail much political rights or freedoms for the republics, which were still ruled from Moscow (Brubaker 2011, pp. 1787-1788). Nevertheless, in an unspoken way of comprehending the hierarchy of the Soviet nations, the “Little Russians” (Ukrainians) were considered the second in the order of nations, between the “Great Russians” (Russians) and the “White Russians” (Byelorussians). Many of prominent soviet leaders from the USSR post-Stalin, for example, were from the “Dnipropetrovsk Mafia”, which will be discussed in brief in the section on the city of Dnipro (Kravchenko 2015, pp. 450-451).

The linguistic situation in Ukraine in the historical sense is a complicated one. It shouldn’t be forgotten that only after the Second World War many regions actually became part of Soviet Ukraine. Before, some were separated by borders and were part of other state entities. The Crimean Peninsula was delegated to Soviet Ukraine in 1954 (Pavlenko 2011, p. 48).

This new ways of constructing the nations of the USSR also brought “collateral damage”. In Ukraine it led to the gradual destruction of Rusyn identity. The Rusyns were re-branded as Ukrainians, and Rusyn language was struck from the position of a language to that of a mere dialect (Csernicškó, Laihonen 2016a, p. 5).

Although Ukrainian was not the language of prestige in the USSR, it was experiencing a resurgence in the latter part of the 1980s. As the disappointment with the quality of life rose and the censorship weakened, more nationalistic voices started to be heard. In 1989, 88 % of Kyivans self-identified as native speakers of Ukrainian, although that percentage most probably didn’t reflect the real language composition in the city:

“In all probability, the choice of most Kyivans was motivated by their intuitive understanding of a division between one’s native language (or mother tongue), acquired

through family upbringing, and one's functionally first language, practiced in a wide range of communicative situations outside the family circle" (Podolyan 2005, p. 2).

These factors all contributed to the reality in which only 40 % of Crimeans, 41 % of citizens in Donetsk and 50 % of those living in Lugansk selected Ukrainian as their native language after the fall of the USSR Ukrainian (Csernicsko 2011a, p. 88). As Russian nationalist discourse started to question Ukrainian sovereignty already in the 1990s, the self-identification of the citizens especially in the peripheral areas was more important than elsewhere (Brubaker 2011, pp. 1790).

3.3. Politics of independent Ukraine

"The language is a glue of the nation. Only the sole state language, the sole history and the common church can guarantee the independence and prosperity of the country" – Ukrainian president Viktor Yushchenko, 2010

(A'Beckett 2013, p. 29)

Since the obtaining of independence, the general direction of the policy, law and public opinion was closer to the idea of supporting Ukrainian. Nevertheless, the last 30 years have seen some swings in the language laws, which will be explained in the section on the language laws. As in many other newly (re-)created nations, Ukraine needed to look for a new "golden era" upon which the national identity discourse should be built. Just as the era of the First Czechoslovak Republic for Czech Republic (Eberle 2018), a historical period had to be found that would serve as a starting point for the way the new nation can and should be imagined. Kravchenko (2015) identifies two main basic ways of thinking that were employed since the gaining of independence.

The ideology of national revival was followed by presidents Leonid Kravchuk (1991-1994), Viktor Yushchenko (2005-2010) and Petro Poroshenko (2014-2019). These presidents were attempting to erase the symbolism and identity connected to the Soviet legacy and replace them with Ukrainian ones on all levels of institutions and culture, wherever possible (Kravchenko 2015, p. 453). Explicitly or implicitly, the politicians and intellectuals adhering to these principles put the starting points on the modern periods

when parts of Ukraine struggled against Russian imperialism with competing state-building projects, around the First and the Second World Wars. These ideas were most supported in the westernmost regions of the country, which started to independently de-construct the Soviet identity already in the late 1980s (Ibid., p. 453). In the first two decades of its existence, Ukraine was a promising example for other Eastern European nations politically, as it had no significant ultra-nationalist parties in its parliament (Umland, Shekhovtsov 2013, p. 35). This positive image was partly tainted by the fact that some pro-European and pro-Western politicians, as well as their electorates, showed xenophobic and nationalist tendencies. The parts of Ukraine that are the most pro-European, were paradoxically more susceptible to ethnic stereotyping and even antisemitism (Ibid., p. 52).

A more eclectic approach to identity building was employed by presidents Leonid Kuchma (1994-2004) and Viktor Yanukovich (2010-2014). In their view, the “golden era” was the timeless and dusty stability of the Brezhnev years of the USSR (Ibid., p. 454). Yanukovich’s later years were more turbulent, as Ukrainian patriotism was increasing and the country was increasingly divided on the issue of geopolitical belonging (Ibid., p. 464). The regional projects of European Neighbourhood Policy, Eastern Partnership and possible Association Treaty with the EU were competing with the Russia-led Eurasian Union (Delcour 2015, p. 317).

The situation on the Crimean Peninsula was proving to be another problem for the politicians. The majority Russian-speaking and often Russian-by-ethnicity Crimeans were rabidly against the policies of Ukrainization and were often supportive of their Russian neighbour and “big brother” across the Sea of Azov (Delcour 2015, p. 455).

As Bloom & Shulman (2011) demonstrate, Pre-Maidan Ukrainians generally casted their vote according to the part of country in which they resided. The authors analysed the 2010 election, in which the western and central provinces voted mainly for Yuliya Timoshenko, who represented the ideals of the 2004 pro-Western Orange revolution. The southern and eastern provinces supported Viktor Yanukovich. The authors set out to find out to what degree the vote demographics were connected to identity (linguistic, geopolitical, ethnic) and to what degree the economic policies were relevant. Ukraine was at that moment heavily damaged by the world economic recession and its GDP fell by 14 % in 2009 (Ibid., p. 412). Campaigns were, nevertheless, heavily influenced by

ethnolinguistic and identity issues. Viktor Yanukovich employed the slogan “Two Languages, One country” (Ibid., p. 415). Yuliya Timoshenko, whose native tongue is Russian, was against giving Russian an official status. During her prime ministership, she transformed herself into a patriotic heavily pro-Ukrainian defender of national interests. All the while, a poll showed that majority of the population at the time (54.7%) said that the language question shouldn’t be tackled at the moment. The authors comment:

“Ethnic appeals are relatively costless for politicians and voters alike. Voters do not need to know the ins and outs of policies, and politicians do not need to target policies to economic groupings within the society.” (Bloom & Shulman 2011: 417)

While the results of the study proved a connection between economic situation of the sub-national entities and their vote, the voting based on ethnic appeals nevertheless more or less prevails in the different parts of the country. Just as there are “Red States”, “Blue States” and “Swing States” in the USA, there were parts of Ukraine which would always vote for a pro-European candidate, parts that would support a pro-Russian candidate, and those that had to be persuaded. The “Swing State” would in Pre-Maidan Ukraine be the South, where Yanukovich’s Party of Regions wasn’t completely dominant. But the politics of Ukraine were about to be turned upside down when the victorious Yanukovich declined to sign the Association Agreement Treaty with the EU a few years later.

The identity politics of the newly elected president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, are yet unknown, as he isn’t as ideologically clear-cut as his predecessor. Yet, given the fact that he voiced displeasure with the 2019 language law and agreed to rework its functioning according to the Venice Commission (the laws will be discussed in chapter 4.4.4.), it would seem that he might be closer to the more eclectic approach to identity-construction (Hosa, Wilson 2019).

3.4. The post-Soviet Ukraine - A resurgent Ukrainization?

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the newly independent states had to find a new way of comprehending themselves and their political and national identities. The newly organised states, including Ukraine, set on a path of creating homogenous nations and

removing the characteristics of their previous cultures, including the usage of the Russian language (A'Beckett 2013, p. 28). Brubaker (2011) has theorised a general direction observable in those states. He called these “nationalizing” states. According to his idea, some post-socialist states became independent after their titular nations (the majority populations in these new states) were systematically “de-nationalised” during the socialist period of their existence. Therefore, they obtained independence without a fully developed national idea and characteristics. These states then went on a path of nationalizing projects, trying to construct these national characteristics more abruptly, and, perhaps, aggressively.

The core tenet of this approach is that the states contained a “core” nation, which needs to assert dominance over the linguistic and cultural situation in the country. This process is then perceived as a remedy, or a cure, to the previous unfair standing of the core ethnicity (Brubaker 2011, pp. 1785-1786). In Ukraine, where the ethnolinguistic makeup was ambiguous, the members of groups that do not fit perfectly with the conceptualization of the core need to self-(re-)identify to match the definition of the hegemonic society (Ibid., p. 1789). The identity and values of the majority are promoted and those identities that do not coincide with it are scorned at. In the case of Ukraine, this is the “Post-Soviet” identity, common among citizens of the easternmost parts of the country (Matviyishyn, Michalski 2017b, p. 183). The existence of minorities like these were deemed harmful to the struggle for de-Sovietization and de-Russification efforts (Pavlenko 2011, pp. 42-43).

With this approach came the discourse of the “endangered” language. In contrast to the general Western European notion that the minority languages need to be protected, the elites in the Ukrainian environment argue for the protection of the majority language (Brubaker 2011, p. 1789). The language laws, which will be further discussed in this chapter, were defended by the argument that the Western approach doesn't work in the post-socialist context. The defending of the majority language is often rhetorically connected to the defence of the ideas of democracy, freedom and human rights, while some Ukrainian scholars argued that the support for minority languages and opposition to the laws are simply a part of anti-Ukrainian propaganda.

“The key features of this discourse are (a) the anthropomorphic division of languages into ‘big’ and ‘strong’ versus ‘small’ and ‘weak’, with the latter requiring ‘protection’ or even ‘rescue’; (b) the use of the biological metaphor (death, extinction), which frames languages as a species intrinsic for biodiversity; and (c) the reliance on emotive vocabulary (genocide, murder, danger, threat, fear, loss, rescue) and moralistic terms (protection).” (Pavlenko 2011, p. 49)

The debate about the role that Russian should play in the Ukrainian society is polarized, with some Ukrainian scholars citing discrimination towards linguistic rights and others being dissatisfied by the “slow” progress of the changes (Pavlenko 2012, pp. 43-44). Some authors point out that the central government tendencies shouldn’t be analysed without being put into context with the political battles that Ukraine was facing. Political parties in regions where Russian is dominant were using the “language card” to subvert the policies of the state and fuel separatist tendencies (Matviyishyn, Michalski 2017b, p. 189).

Nevertheless, I would subscribe to the notion that the government’s policy tries to mend the situation with excessive force, as it attempts to minimize the distance between the *de jure* and *de facto* identity of the nation. Implicitly, the aim of the ruling class is to turn Ukraine into an officially monolingual country, but also into a country where Ukrainian is used in informal contexts (Csernicsko 2011a, p. 82).

In the following sections, I will map the practices, laws and tactics employed by the state and the nationally minded citizens that were aimed at assimilating the linguistic minorities.

3.4.1. The census

As observed by Benedict Anderson (Anderson 1983, pp. 164-169), a national census is not necessarily a neutral endeavour that provides objective insight of the ethnic and linguistic makeup of a given country. The answers that the population can provide during the collection of the data are thought out by the administration that decides how the nation will be categorized. By including and omitting of possible answers, the administration can partly engineer how the data will be quantified. Through these

categories and omissions, a size of a given subsection of a population can be optically inflated or deflated. The results of the census then enter the sphere of politics and can be utilised for political purposes. Ethnic geography then leaves the sphere of statistics and enters the arena of individual ways of self-categorization which is connected to the political processes and ideologies (Brubaker 2011, p. 1793). In Ukraine, the process of self-categorization is especially peculiar, given the history of Russian and then Soviet imperial policies (Stebelsky 2009, p. 78).

Unfortunately for the purposes of this work, official data on native language and ethnicity of Ukrainians is considerably outdated. The last general census of the population was conducted almost 20 years ago in 2001. Another census was supposed to take place 10 years later, it but was postponed ever since. The official places never gave out reasons for the delays, and the media speculated that they were caused by lack of funds and fear of interethnic tensions (Matviyishyn, Michalski 2017, p. 183). The final date was then set on 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak in the beginning of said year, the census was postponed again, and it will probably not take place sooner than in 2022, due to the latest statements by the responsible organs (Interfax-Ukraine 2020).

The 2001 census revealed a substantial change in the self-identification of the nation when compared to the last Soviet census held in 1989. The number of people who declared themselves Ukrainian rose slightly, while the amount of those who considered themselves ethnically Russian fell by approximately 3 million. This led to the percentage of Ukrainians rising from 72.7 % to 78 % and the number of Russians falling from 22.1 % to 17.3 %. Even when accounting for emigration and immigration, the percentages were still puzzling. The author concludes that the discrepancy can be explained as following: Citizens that previously declared themselves as ethnically Russian have reclassified themselves as Russian-Speaking ethnic Ukrainians (Stebelsky 2009, pp. 77-78).

ETHNICITY AND NATIVE LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	%
Ukrainians (by ethnicity) whose native language is Ukrainian	31 970 728	66.27
Russians whose native language is Ukrainian	328 152	0.68
National minorities whose native language is Ukrainian	278 588	0.58
<i>TOTAL NUMBER OF THOSE WHOSE NATIVE LANGUAGE IS UKRAINIAN</i>	<i>32 577 468</i>	<i>67.53</i>
Russians whose native language is Russian	7 993 832	16.57
Ukrainians whose native language is Russian	5 544 729	11.49
National minorities whose native language is Russian	735 109	1.52
<i>TOTAL NUMBER OF THOSE WHOSE NATIVE LANGUAGE IS RUSSIAN</i>	<i>14 273 670</i>	<i>29.59</i>
National minorities whose ethnicity and native language are the same	1 129 397	2.34
National minorities who speak the native language of another minority group as their native language	260 367	0.54
<i>TOTAL NUMBER OF THOSE WHO SPEAK MINORITY LANGUAGES</i>	<i>1 389 764</i>	<i>2.88</i>
TOTAL NUMBER OF SPEAKERS IN UKRAINE	48 240 902	100

Figure 1: The 2001 Ukrainian census. Source: Cserniczko 2011, p. 76

A more recent survey (KISS 2013) show a different language reality. The survey, which was carried out in 2013, 56.2 % declared Ukrainian as their native tongue, while 39.6 % did so with Russian. However, due to the limitations in scope and categorization, I have decided to use the data presented in the results of the 2001 census as the baseline for my research.

1.1.1. The changing of names and national holidays

Natalia Knoblock (2018) has studied the changing of names in newly issued passports. These happened to Ukrainian citizens whose native language is not Ukrainian, and who used other (Russian) versions of names rather than their Ukrainian counterparts. This is “a routine practice” (Knoblock 2018: 2). The authorities implemented a policy of standardization of names not only for new-borns, but also for older citizens whose passports have expired, and they requested a new one. As Knoblock observes in her

study of the statements by politicians, some pro-Ukrainian politicians actually tried to persuade schoolchildren to use the Ukrainian versions of their names (Knoblock 2018: 2). This could be considered as an attempt to change the most important segment of one's linguistic identity, as explored by Joseph (2004, p. 12).

Klymenko (2020, pp. 12-13) demonstrates how the way Ukrainian public and national holidays changed in nature in the recent past. By reframing the way the Second World War is conceived, the narrative shifts and distances itself from the stress previously put on the positive role of the Red Army. Simultaneously, these changes allow for changing the discursive role of the Ukrainian irregular troops that fought the Soviet army and disregarding of some of their involvement in war crimes.

3.4.2. Shaming of linguistic minorities

A practice discussed by the researchers is employed not only by the top-down actors, such as the authorities or the elites, but also by a nationally minded segment of the public. This is the segment that would be classified as self-identifying with the identity framework set out by the elites. During the Soviet times, using Ukrainian words or phrases by accident when speaking Russian in official or work environments was often a source of shame for the speaker, as Russian was considered the language of prestige, one that has to be mastered in order to advance on the social ladder. It has been argued that the situation has now reversed (A'Beckett 2013, p. 41). Many of the non-native speakers of Ukrainian are actually speaking *Surzhyk* in their everyday lives. *Surzhyk* is a mix between Ukrainian and Russian. It is a language of very low prestige and is often a source of ridicule, especially among Ukrainian-speaking elites and linguists (Csernicsko 2011a, p. 80).

The purity of the language is often informally "policed". The language purists are trying to shame those of not complete command of Ukrainian, those that speak Russian or *Surzhyk* into bettering themselves (Brubaker 2011, p. 1800). Using perfect Ukrainian then becomes an in-group / out-group indicator, which may lead to alienation or Othering of linguistic minorities. Russophone Ukrainians are then discursively denied agency, reduced to not fully Ukrainian, not knowing "their" language and therefore not being full citizens. Russian is posited as a foreign language, or language of the enemy. (Pavlenko 2011, p.

48). As many of the Ukrainian-speaking citizens see the language as the foundation of the society, the Russian-speaking people are reduced to a less-than-citizen position, destined to be less patriotic because of their language proficiency (A'Beckett 2013, p. 31). It has been observed, too, that some in some institutions in the western parts of Ukraine, as well as public transport spaces, included signs which encouraged the people to use the "right" words, that being standard Ukrainian words (Pavlenko 2009, 262).

3.4.3. Changes to toponymy

As was understood by Gramsci (Vuolteenaho, Puzey 2016, p. 66), there was always a relationship between the hegemonic power and the names of places, Gramsci was dismayed by the sight of changes of the local toponymy in Turin, which changed the names of streets from those of local relevance to names of national heroes put forward by the local government. "All the princess, regents, ministers and generals... have been given their niche... the encyclopaedia provided has the rest..." (Ibid., pp. 70-71). In Gramsci's view, changes of toponymy shouldn't only represent the history and narratives that the authorities are presenting, but also the local, regional contexts.

The changing of names of public places, the toponymy, is also employed by the Ukrainian state. The de-communization process, or the removal of physical remnants of symbolism and propaganda that were installed during the Soviet era, did not start with Maidan. But, before the revolution, it was uneven and almost non-existent in the "Post-Soviet identity" regions in the easternmost part of Ukraine (Gniatuk 2018, pp. 2-5). The first wave started in 1991 and ended approximately in 2000. During this first attempt, the monotony of Soviet naming was starting to be altered (Kravchenko 2019, p. 240-241). Under the Poroshenko government, the policy was made mandatory as the state policy, according the 2015 law "On Condemning of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes and of the Promotion of their Symbols". By 2016, virtually all of the thousands of Vladimir Lenin's statues were removed from the picture in Ukraine (Kravchenko 2015, p. 456).

The choice of new names was left to the regional governments, though. Toponymy is not a neutral endeavour and it represents the local identities and official narratives that the authorities are presenting. In the Ukrainian context, the names of places were changed

multiple times in recent history, starting with the rejection of Tsarist names by the Bolsheviks and then, later, by the rejection of the Soviet propaganda (Gnatiuk 2018, pp. 2-5). The street-renaming caused by the de-communization policy was both politicized and de-politicized. While the western and central regions more commonly chose names connected to the previous attempts at Ukrainian nationhood, even of the controversial periods during the First and Second World Wars, the east often used more neutral names without political or historical associations. The case of Odesa, one of the cities studied in this thesis, was quite interesting, as the de-communization approach was contested by the local authorities, but their authority was ultimately overruled by Mikhail Saakashvili, the then governor of the region and then an ally of the patriotic president Poroshenko (Ibid., p. 8). This can be perceived as supportive evidence of different approaches to symbolisms and perception of historical events (Ibid., pp. 15-16).

3.4.4. Education & Legislation

The four most important laws until 2016 were analysed by István Cserniskó and Csilla Fedinec (2016). Moreover, a new law was introduced in 2019. It is this law that sparked my interest in the topic of Ukrainian language policy and is therefore one of the main reasons why this particular thesis was written. I will also discuss relevant Constitutional Court decisions and the views of the legislation given by the so-called Venice Commission, an expert body falling under the Council of Europe.

Ukrainian law limits the possibilities of the citizens to study in Russian as the native language for those who consider themselves Russian by ethnicity and forbids such chance for those who proclaim themselves Ukrainian. This contributes to a lower amount of Russian language schools being able to operate (Pavlenko 2012, p. 43). According to Ukrainian law, the regional government agencies decide on the number of schools being able to teach in a language based on the number of speakers of the languages living in the areas. Sometimes, Ukrainian was selected for education disregarding the demographic makeup of settlements (Pavlenko 2011, pp. 43-44). These decisions could be understood as implicitly seeking to reduce the prevalence of the minority language speakers in the long run (Csernicsko 2011a, p. 88).

The 1989 Language Law was quite lenient in the sphere of relations between the majority and the minority languages. In 1999, the constitutional court of Ukraine decided that Ukrainian is the sole state and official language (A'Beckett 2013, p. 36). The following piece of legislation, called "On Ratification of European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages" was less favourable (Cserniczko, Fedinec 2016, pp. 578-579). However, when analysed by a Western expert, the language legislative situation before the ascendancy of Viktor Yanukovich was considered balanced: "Ukraine has every right to establish Ukrainian as the state language of Ukraine... There is no need ... to give special constitutional status to Russian... Every public official should have a good command of Ukrainian... Ukraine should maintain its admirable policy of a right of education both in and of the minority languages, including Russian" (Bowring 2011, p. 29).

The 2012 law "On the Principles of the State Language Policy" passed during the rule of the Yanukovich administration granted the regional and minority languages the possibility to be used in official contexts, provided that the minority constituted at least 10 % of the linguistic makeup of the region in question. The affected regional authorities were obliged to publish their legislature in the minority language besides Ukrainian (Cserniczko, Fedinec 2016, p. 570). This was considered by large segments of the society as a protection and fostering of Russian as a *de facto lingua franca* in the country. It was often seen as a means for developing dominance of Russian over Ukrainian (Ibid. p. 575). However, some local governments decided to ignore the 2012 regulations, and 5 western Ukrainian regions decided not to implement the changes (Ibid., pp. 576-577). In this chaotic situation, it is unsurprising then that some interviewees in 2013 didn't know the legal framework in which the country was operating and weren't aware of the fact that Ukrainian was designated as the sole official language by the constitution (A'Beckett 2013, p. 26). The 2012 law was cancelled after the Maidan revolution (Demska 2019, p. 5).

Overall, the legislation until the Revolution of Dignity was considered as alternating between waves of Russifying and Ukrainizing tendencies, where the state language policy was sometimes akin to the "One state – one language" ideology and sometimes it was trying to balance out all of the different interests (Cserniczko, Fedinec 2016, pp. 578-580).

Since the success of the revolution, a new legislation was starting to be prepared in accordance to a more patriotic and Ukrainian-centric conception of the nation (Hires-László 2019, p. 90). In 2017, an education law was passed that made Ukrainian the language of study for pupils passing the fifth grade of elementary schools. Since then, minority language pupils could study their native language as a non-compulsory subject (RFE/RL 2017).

In 2019, the *Verkhovna Rada* (the Ukrainian parliament) has adopted a law that was supposed to push the Ukrainian language to the fore in all aspects of the public life. The law was strongly supported by president Poroshenko, and it prescribed that 90 % of content on the television, radio and in movies be in Ukrainian, while 50 % of print media and books were required to be published in the language (Roth 2019). The law was ratified by Poroshenko just before he was replaced in office by Volodymyr Zelenskiy. The law differentiates between minority languages used in the EU and other minority languages, giving the former preferential treatment and indirectly targeting Russian. The law was criticized by the Venice Commission, which recommended renegotiating the law with the local leaders of the minorities. It also criticized the aforementioned new law on education and asked for the new language law to soften the language quotas on TV and radio. Among other objections, it also supported the possibility of minority language speakers to speak their languages in public and in emergency situations (Venice Commission 2019). President Zelenskiy then expressed an inclination to implement most of the recommendations (UkrInform 2019). From this recent development, it could be judged that the resolution of the “schizophrenic” (Csernicsko, Fedinec 2016, pp. 578-580) language law situation in Ukraine is nowhere in sight.

3.5. Was it worth it?

It was discussed by scholars whether a stricter policy actually lead to a successful assimilation of the minorities (A’Beckett 2013, p. 26). It has been argued that starker measures actually lead to a greater defiance by the minorities, who are then mobilised to rejects not only the efforts, but also the government authority in general (Joseph 2004, p. 23). The data on the actual reality of usage of language among the minority language speakers show that the adherence to the linguistic regime is often limited. Some studies

showed that in the Russian-speaking regions, the usage of Ukrainian was limited to the official environments only (Brubaker 2011, p. 1801).

Nevertheless, some data would suggest that the efforts were in fact successful in some ways. A study showed that since the Revolution of Dignity, the share of people self-categorising as Ukrainian leaped to up to 92 % (Nedozhogina 2019, p. 1). At the same time, a qualitative study showed that Russia was successfully categorised as the out-group Other (Ibid., p. 16). In the following research, I would like to put forward a way of inferring the perspective of the populations of the four studied cities on the nation-building project.

4. Methodology

4.1. The method of linguistic landscapes

4.1.1. What is a linguistic landscape?

“Wherever a sign is present, ideology is present too.”

(Voloshinov 1929)

Linguistic landscape analysis is a way of delving into the usage of language, relative prevalence of different languages in an area, interethnic relations, success of language policies and many other parameters. Developed as a tool for linguistic analysis, it is currently used in many different fields, including semiotics, anthropology, sociology, social and human geography, and, importantly, political science (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 423).

What is a linguistic landscape is, then? In the present work, I will subscribe to the following definition: “Linguistics of a linguistic landscape refers to the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region.” (Landry, Bourhis 1997, p. 23) As for describing what belongs to the linguistic landscape and can therefore be analysed and categorised, the broad definition could be described as “The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the

linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.” (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, p. 25). For my analysis, I have decided to use a similar but – in my opinion – a perhaps more parsimonious and elegant description, according to which the studied unit is "Any piece of text within a spatially definable frame" (Backhaus 2007, pp. 66).

The languages spoken in a given setting are not necessarily mirroring the linguistic landscape, which is instead produced by power relations, self-identification and other factors (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 431). While the political representation may promote monolingual policies in the public space, the everyday reality is almost always more complex and is often in stark contrast with the state policy (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 434)

4.1.2. Applied methods of analysing the linguistic landscapes

Linguistic landscape allows itself to be observed both through quantitative and qualitative means (Hires-László 2019, p. 89). In the qualitative analysis of the photographed units, the researcher explores relations between languages on individual signs or establishments, looking into the specific makeup of a sign or a small area, or combines this approach with surveying the locals that they meet in the studied area. In the quantitative approach, a larger number of samples is analysed, the units are counted according to the languages on display, and the data is then compared. This can be accompanied by also geographically labelling the individual units, an endeavour I did not take part in (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 426).

As my research is not primarily linguistic in character, I have used a more simplified method of sorting and categorizing the photos than some other researchers (Hires-László 2019; L’Nyavskiy 2016; Pavlenko 2012; Shakh 2010). I have sorted the units of analysis by two aspects. First of them was the dominant language in each of the units. The dominant language is referred to as the language that conveys the meaning of the message of the sample (Shohamy, Gorter 2009, p. 135). In the present work, I am characterizing the dominating language as the language which is most visible in the piece of text and is also positioned in the most privileged area. In case of texts written in most languages used in Europe (including Ukrainian, Russian and English), such area would probably be on top left of the text when the employed fonts are of the same size and

colour, as readers of the text start the reading process in this area. In the case of Ukraine, the linguistic landscape was previously (Demska 2019, pp. 2-4) described as hybrid: Consciously or unconsciously, the issuers of the commercials were creating mixed messages where multiple languages are present on one sign. Un the Ukrainian context, the position of Russian in linguistic landscape is somewhat ambiguous, as it is sometimes tricky to assert whether it works as a minority language or *lingua franca* (Pavlenko 2009, p. 251). Even in studies of other linguistic landscapes with contested language situation, usage of English is often considered a neutral and pragmatic choice, while it also possesses considerable prestige (Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 438). I would speculate that it is so in Ukraine, as well, a position supported in the literature (Csernicskó, Laihonon 2016a, pp. 21-22). I have settled to only classify the dominant language, though, as I consider it the most important language from the point of view of the language policy analysis.

The collected samples were then separated linguistically into four categories: Ukrainian, Russian, Foreign and Non-identifiable. The last category includes texts which are spelled the same way in both Ukrainian and Russian. This problem was already encountered before (Pavlenko 2009, p. 251). Nevertheless, the number of units in this category was considerably low and could possibly be removed from the data analysis. In the general comparison of the cities, I have decided not to omit the category as I didn't want to exclude any readable text from the overall number to avoid including any personal bias in my analysis. In the more detailed comparison of the different types of messages, they were removed, though.

As per a more detailed section of the analysis, a "genre" or a type of a message may be analysed, too. The most basic categorization of samples in linguistic landscape analysis apart from the languages observed is dividing them by their origin, or their "type" (in my terminology), to top-down and bottom-up. Top-down messages are issued by the official authority. They are the signs of names of streets, signs describing names of institutions, government messages, commemorative plaques, road signs, texts on public transport stations and other texts that are directed from "above" towards the reader. A bottom-up message is issued by a private subject. These are the most abundant elements of a linguistic landscape: Commercials, billboards, names of private enterprises, all sorts of advertisement. They also include posters and private ads posted on public advertisement

boards, columns, traffic lights and traffic sign poles (Gorter 2006, p. 3; Van Mensel, Vandenbrouke, Blackwood 2016, p. 434).

I've settled on further separating the bottom-up messages into two categories: permanent and non-permanent. The permanent messages are characterised not by the complete permanence of their existence, but by a relative permanence in comparison to the other category. They include all the units apart from posters and private ads, which were mostly posted without a contract or a permission from the authorities. I have also included in this category any specific message posted on a door or vitrine of a commercial establishment which is not focused on communicating the brand but on answering a frequently asked question by the local population or communicating an offer which is only relevant to the same group of people. A typical example of such message is a job offer for a bartender or a chef at a restaurant, posted on the restaurant's door. While it is a message by the restaurant, it is not primarily aimed at a hungry customer seeking lunch, but at locals who might be looking for an opportunity to start a new career. As a "rule of thumb" when unsure of whether to categorize a message into this category, I was asking myself the following question: Was it possible to print this message on a home printer, and was it most probably produced this way? In the overwhelming majority of the cases, though, the categorizing was simple, as the differences between the permanent and non-permanent messages (as discussed in this section) was clear-cut.

A great example of what I considered a non-permanent sign was described by Pavlenko (2009, p. 265). A bookstore's storefront had a logo in English and the dominant message about the business was in Ukrainian. There was one more language present there, though. A piece of paper was fixed to the glass vitrine, with a simple message in Russian: *Xeroxa net* (No xerox). This is a sign answering a facultative question, in fact most probably enquired by the passers-by multiple times in the past. Another typical example of this type of sign would be a search for a lost pet or a new apartment in the area where the sign was posted.

In my hypothesis, what sets the private ads and posters apart from the other bottom-up messages is the fact that they can be entered into the linguistic landscape by anyone without a contract or permission, they aren't necessarily focused on establishing a brand and are therefore less interested in adhering to the linguistic framework that the

regime is trying to set up. These messages are also (comparatively) free from the need to express themselves in self-identifying markers set up by the community values (Hires-László 2019, p. 91). This hypothesis is already supported by previous research (Pavlenko 2015, p. 120).

When it comes to the non-permanent messages, I have decided to include the only criteria for omission of a message. In case of multiple instances of an identical message on the same exact location (one wall or a single advertisement board), I have only included one of them in the data. The issue of repetition was already discussed in previous research (Gorter 2006, p. 8), and this solution seemed the most elegant to me.

When settling for the area of the field research, a researcher may choose one of many approaches. I have decided to use one of the options described by Gorter (2018, p. 6) by selecting the central commercial and touristic streets of the selected settlements. However, I have decided to expand the definition slightly and to select whole central districts including both the main avenues and the side streets. In these areas, I made sure to take a picture of every single piece of stationary text that I saw (Gorter 2006, p. 3). I do not claim that I saw everything that was there to see, but I tried my best to not miss anything.

As articulated by Pavlenko and Mullen (2015), one crucial aspect that many analyses of linguistic landscapes lack is the issue of time progression. A “snapshot” of a linguistic landscape is relevant for some studies, but when studying responsiveness to language policy and shifts in language preference caused by self-(re-)categorization, diachronicity is important for shedding light on the changes in the makeup of the local linguistic landscape.

In my research of Linguistic landscapes in Ukraine, I’ve decided to study four cities. To reach that end, I have organised and self-financed two research expeditions, one in 2019 and one in 2020.

I have visited Kyiv and Dnipro in the summer of 2019. I have then visited Uzhhorod and Odesa in the winter of 2020. When deciding on which cities to visit, I was influenced by the following logic. I wanted to study some cities that were previously already studied to

achieve diachronicity, to be able to compare the data with some data that were previously collected. Unfortunately, the linguistic landscapes of most Ukrainian cities were not yet studied, so I was limited in my choice.

4.1.3. A review of other research

Unfortunately, the linguistic landscapes of most Ukrainian cities were not yet studied, so I was limited in my choice. Some sources I could gather were kindly sent to me by Dr. Aneta Pavlenko, who is a leading researcher in the field and who also studied the landscape of Kyiv in many of her works. She sent me two master's theses by Svetlana Lnyavskiy (L'Nyavskiy 2016) and S. Shakh (2010). Shakh studied the linguistic landscape of Kyiv and Kharkiv and she collected the data in 2008. Lnyavskiy studied the linguistic landscapes of four cities – Kyiv, Dnipro, Lviv and Odesa – and she collected her data in 2016.

As these works were of a more quantitative character than the others, I decided to use their data for comparison of the data that I was assembling. I did this to be able to compare the places as time progressed. However, the characteristics on which the authors were focused were not entirely overlapping with those of mine choosing. Moreover, the authors didn't provide maps or approximate locations of where they collected their data. Due to these limitations, I have decided only to compare my data with theirs on the most basic level while only comparing my data on different cities with one another on the deeper level.

There was also a study by Kornélia Hires-László (2019) which focused on the linguistic landscape of a Western Ukrainian town of Berehove which holds a large Hungarian-speaking population. A shorter text by Orysia Demska (2019) employs a qualitative approach to linguistic landscape in the Podil district of Kyiv. A dissertation by Olga A. Bever (2010) was written about Multilingualism and language policy in Ukraine in 2010. Thematically close to my method, the author selected 100 pictures out of 1000 and analysed them qualitatively. Due to the different (qualitative) character of the study, I decided not to compare her data to mine.

4.1.4. Selected areas

As for the choices of cities to study, I have settled on studying each of them as a representative of certain ethnolinguistic regions. When selecting the areas, I was aiming at picking a perimeter which encompasses the economic and touristic centres of the cities.

Kyiv is the capital of Ukraine and it is split between Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking population. The history of use of language in Kyiv is very complex. However, it was never a purely Ukrainian-speaking city (Pavlenko 2012, p. 37). For Kyiv, I have adopted the approximate perimeter that Pavlenko uses in her research of the city. Although Pavlenko didn't add a map to her study, I was approximating from her written description of the perimeter:

“The data for the study was collected in the central part of Kyiv, located between the main street Khreshchatyk and the parallel street, Volodymyrs'ka, and ending at Maidan Nezalezhnosti (the Independence Square) and Sophiivs'ky Square on the one side, and Tolstoy Square on the other.” (Pavlenko 2012, p. 44)

By utilising Google Maps, I was able to come up with an area which most probably mirrors the original (Figure 2).

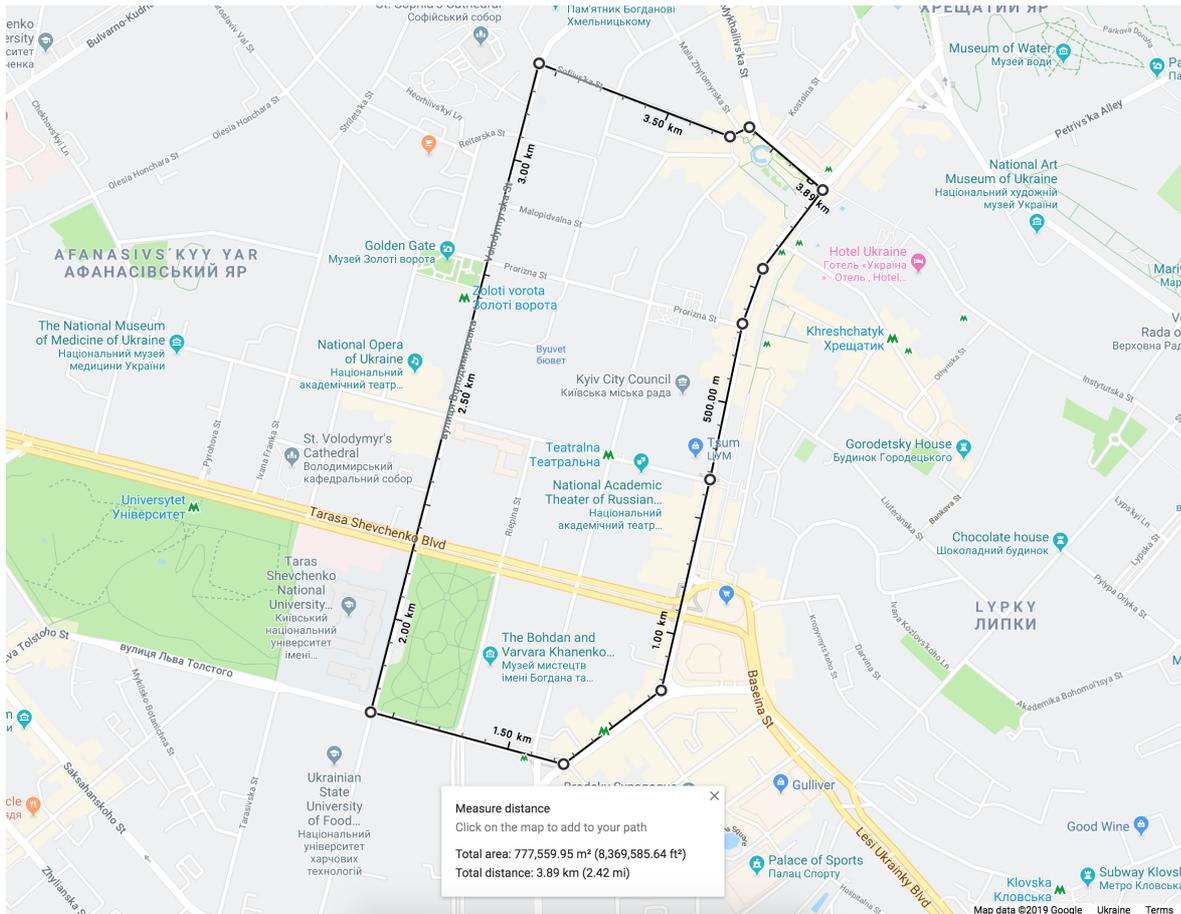


Figure 2: The selected area in Kyiv

Dnipro is geographically closer to Kyiv than the other studied cities. It is a city of complicated and competing identities connected to its history. By some estimates it is considered as a sort of border town, which sits between predominantly Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking populations. During the Soviet times, it was a closed city, where secret military projects were developed. It was also the origin of Leonid Brezhnev’s rise to power. He brought his cronies from Dnipro to the leadership of the USSR when he took power. These officials were then dubbed “Dnipropetrovsk mafia” (Magocsi 1996, p. 659).

In Dnipro, I have consulted a local lady named Nataliya Andryeyeva, who is employed at the office of the honorary council of Czech Republic in Dnipro and who’s also a local coordinator for the courses of Czech language, organized by the Czech Centre Kyiv. My final map looked like this (Figure 3):

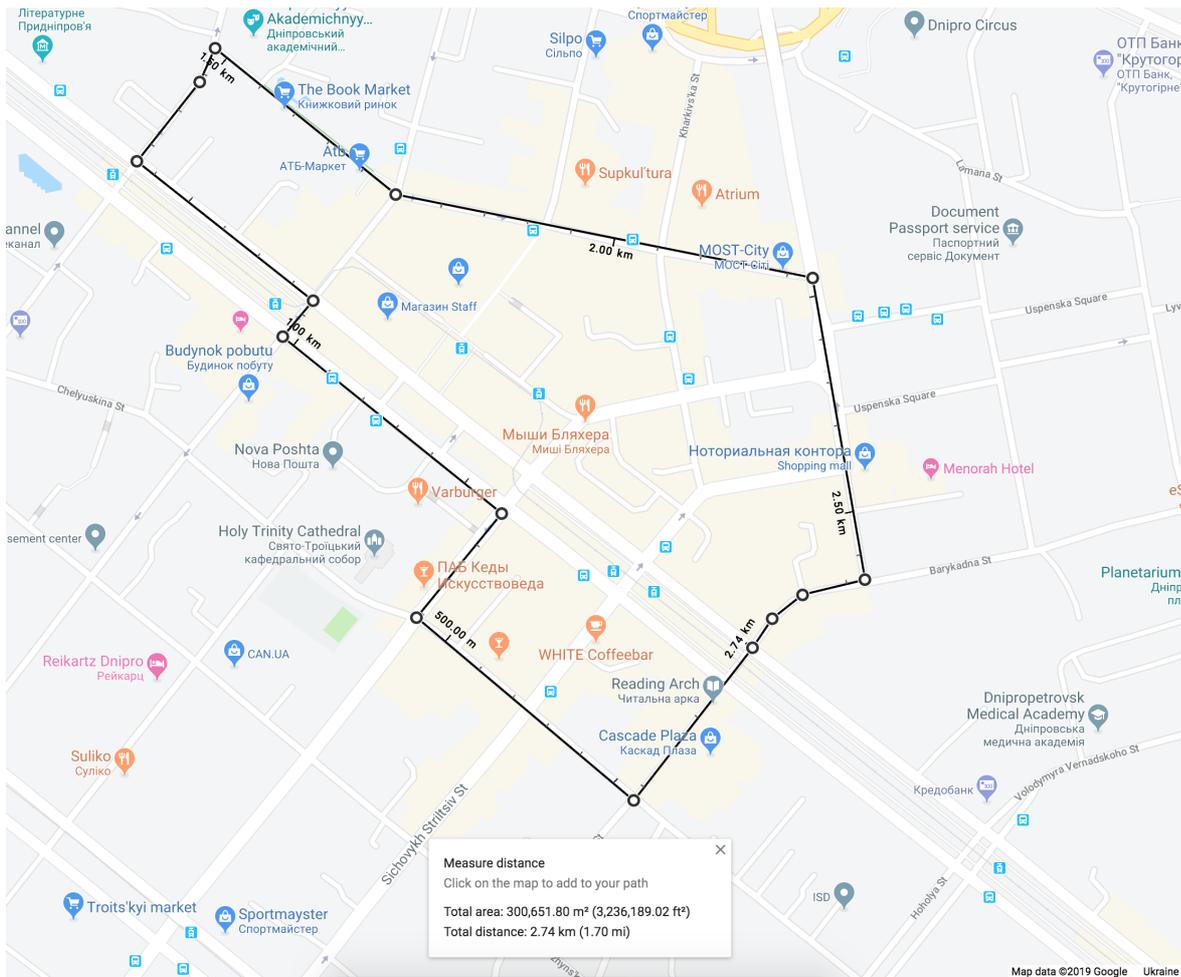


Figure 3: The selected area in Dnipro

Uzhhorod is the smallest of the studied cities. It is a town closer to the Hungarian and Slovakian borders, and it has lived through a highly specific history in the 20th century, as it used to be a part of Austria-Hungary and then of Czechoslovakia, before being annexed by the USSR. It sits in the Transcarpathian region, which was historically also a home to Rusyns and Hungarians. As discussed in previous chapters, Rusyns have been forcibly re-labelled and re-identified as Ukrainians, a view that most of them subscribe today. Hungarians were much more resilient to assimilation, and they still constitute about 13 % of the region's population (Csernicskó, Laihonon 2016a, p. 17-19). When consulting the parameters of my research with the teachers of Czech at the local university, I was told that the Hungarians mostly live in the villages in the area and aren't linguistically represented so much in the city itself, which is a notion supported by my data.

In Uzhhorod, I have set up the perimeter myself after a consultation with the local teacher of Czech and some other people who are native to the town. The area is considerably smaller than in the other cases as the town is smaller in general (Figure 4).

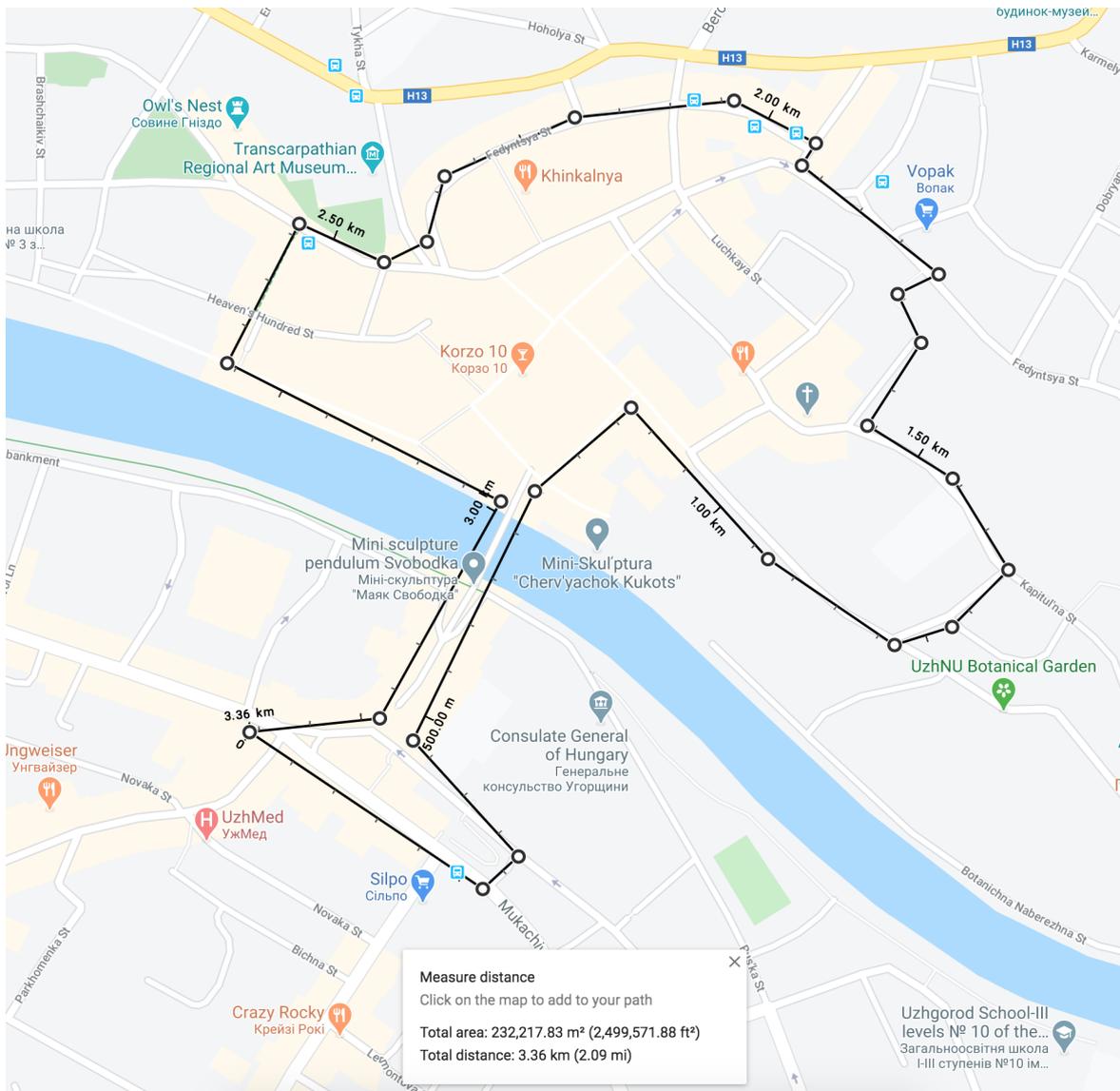


Figure 4: The selected area in Uzhhorod

Odesa is an economically important Black Sea port. It also has a highly specific history due to the strategic and economic value it possessed in the past and which it still has. It is a Russian-speaking city and it used to be a centre of a cosmopolitan culture in the pre-Soviet era. Due to the immigration by Jews from other places in Europe especially after the First World War, the city had and partly still has a slightly Jewish character in its culture (Sicher 2015, pp. 223-224). Unfortunately, the Jewish population was mostly lost during Stalin's rule and during the Second World War, when the Romanian forces

occupied the city and attempted at erasing the Jewish population. Although Ukrainization was attempted in during the policy of *korenizatsia*, Odesans remained Russophone in essence, and while most identify themselves as Ukrainians, the city-dwellers are still somewhat unresponsive to today's state policies on language (Sicher 2015, p. 221).

In Odesa, I have picked the area myself. I have decided to do so as I was a teacher of Czech language there for a period of 5 months in 2018 (Figure 5).

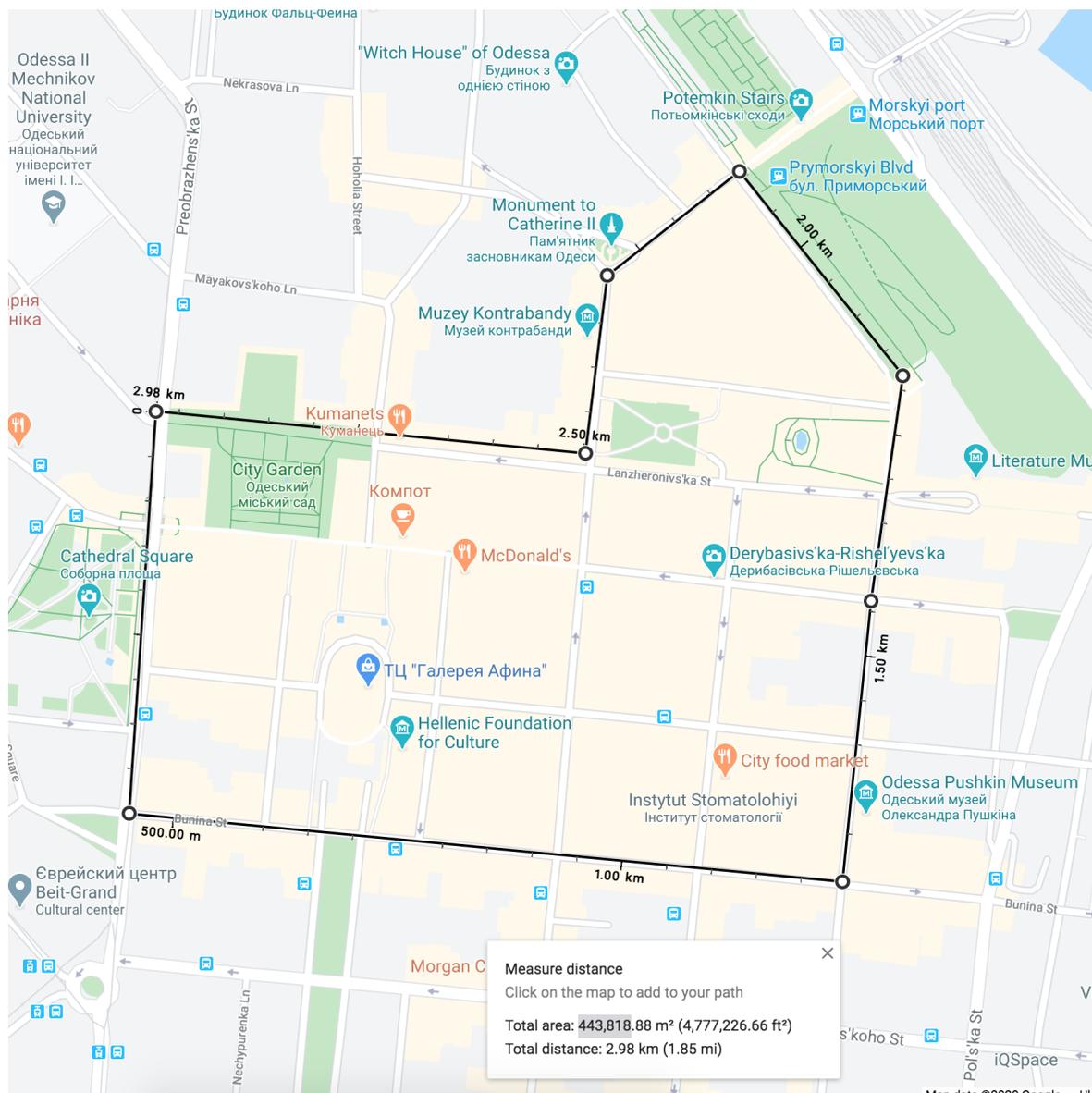


Figure 5: The selected area in Odesa

To conclude this section, I have included the populations of the studied cities and the size of my selected perimeters in the following table (Figure 6). The from the selected

area in Kyiv is the largest, followed by the area in Odesa, Dnipro and Uzhhorod. The selected areas did not account for the population, though, as the perimeter for the smallest city of Uzhhorod would have to be quite tiny.

<i>City</i>	<i>Population¹</i>	<i>Selected area (m²)</i>
<i>Kyiv</i>	2,950,819	771
<i>Dnipro</i>	998,103	300
<i>Uzhhorod</i>	114,897	232
<i>Odesa</i>	1,013,159	444

Figure 6: The populations and selected areas

4.2. Using online survey as a supporting method for analysing public attitudes

To add another supportive perspective to the research, I decided to try to get some data from questionnaires sent to Ukrainian students of Czech language attending lessons at the various branches of the Czech Centres (which are akin to the Goethe Institute or British Council). This was possible thanks to my background in teaching Czech in Ukraine for the Czech Centre Kyiv and the kind help of Ms. Řehoříková, the director of Czech Centre Kyiv.

The questionnaires were disseminated among the students by the local teachers of Czech through Google Forms. They were presented with three versions of the form: in Russian, Ukrainian and mixed English-Czech.

4.2.1. Research design and limitations

In my execution of the supporting part of my thesis, I have been relying on the insights of Babbie (2007, pp. 243-285; 377-404). I was expecting to get around 100-150 responses maximum from various cities in Ukraine, from people coming from various environments and linguistic backgrounds. The only signifier tying them all together was their wish to better themselves at the mastery of Czech language. I have also been partly inspired by the research design of Podoyan (2005), who was interviewing refugees from Donbass that decided to flee to Russia since the start of the conflict in Donbass.

¹A 2019 estimate. Sourced from citypopulation.de (City Population - Population Statistics in Maps and Charts for Cities, Agglomerations and Administrative Divisions of all Countries of the World).

Knowing that my survey is going to take place in the on-line environment of Google Forms and that I will probably never meet any of the respondents in person, I wanted the survey to contain less than 10 questions to maximise the amount of responses that I would be able to get. The first few questions had to allow me to categorise the respondents, while the last few questions were supposed to decode their responsiveness towards the 2019 Poroshenko language law and the attempts at identity-construction.

Questions 1 to 5 were included to categorize the respondents and to enable sorting them into groups. Questions 6 to 9 were supposed to show the respondents' attitudes towards the language policy and identity manufacturing by the elites. In question 8, I have used the phrase "main language", as I didn't want to use a legal definition like "official" or "state". I did so because the question was about the language of everyday use more than the language ordained to be used from "above". This connects to the concept of citizens accepting and self-identifying with the idea rather than just obliging the rules.

In all of the three language versions, the students received the following set of questions:

1. How old are You (open question)?
2. What is Your native town or village (open question)?
3. Where are You living now (open question)?
4. Which language do You consider as Your native (multiple choice question)?
5. Which language is the one that You currently use the most (multiple choice question)?
6. Have You heard about the new language law, which was adopted in 2019?
7. If yes, how would You describe Your attitude towards the law (on scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the most favourable)?
8. Do You think Ukrainian should be the main language of choice for the whole of Ukraine (on scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the most favourable)?
9. If You want to tell me something more about the issue or ask a question, You can contact me by e-mail or write it here (open question).

4.2.2. Representativeness

The survey is by no means representative of the whole Ukrainian population, or of the cities from which the responses came. The respondents were students of Czech language courses organised by the Czech centres. One can therefore assume some general characteristics about the respondents and their social, economic and political backgrounds. These characteristics are also based on my experience as a teacher of Czech in Odesa.

1. Given their interest in the courses, the respondents were either interested in working or studying in Czech Republic or had a family there.
2. The courses were quite expensive. I wasn't aware of the cost of the course *per se*, but I was told by the coordinator of the courses that they were comparable in price to courses of German at the Goethe Institute in Czech Republic, adjusted for the local salaries in Ukraine. That means that they were probably out of reach for low-income families unless they dedicated a large part of their monthly salary to the cause of learning the language.
3. The students (or their parents) had to have an ambition to move to another country to improve their social standing or be provided better education.
4. The last characteristic is slightly harder to argue, but I would nevertheless hypothesise that the respondents had to have at least neutral stance towards Czech Republic and possibly "Western" (meaning West from Ukraine) Europe overall. I am assuming this because Ukrainians can also try their luck in life other Post-Soviet countries without necessarily having to learn a completely new language, as it is easier for a Ukrainian to learn Russian than to learn Czech.

To sum up these characteristics, I would argue that most of the respondents were more or less well educated, middle to upper class, ambitious and at minimum ambivalent about Czech Republic and the EU overall, perhaps even positive.

Not every respondent answered every question, which resulted in varying amount of responses to differing questions. I decided not to make every question compulsory to avoid discomforting the partaking respondents and increase the number of people finishing the survey. Nevertheless, the number of respondents who didn't answer a question was

negligible and never exceeded a few percentage points. As I have mentioned previously, the main focus of this text is to analyse the relations between Ukrainian and Russian languages. Because of that, I'm not mentioning native speakers of other languages in the data, but I would like to mention that one respondent filled in Rusyn as his native language.

5. Linguistic landscapes of Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod and Odesa

“You throw him out the door, he comes back through the window.” – A Czech proverb about someone who persistently resists attempts to be done away with

5.1. Overall results

Firstly, I would like to compare the cities with each other when it comes to the overall composition of language speakers as a starting point of the analysis. Because of the lack of a census since 2001, the data (Всеукраїнський перепис населення 2001 | English version | Results | General results of the census) has to be approached rather sceptically when considering the current ethnic and linguistic reality. People of Ukrainian and Russian ethnicity were included in the results for Kyiv, Dnipro and Odesa, with also people of Hungarian ethnicity considered for Uzhhorod. Note that the percentages for the three places apart from Kyiv are consisting of people living in the region (*Oblast*), with Dnipropetrovskaya Oblast being the region around Dnipro and Zakarpatskaya Oblast the region in which Uzhhorod is situated (Figure 7).

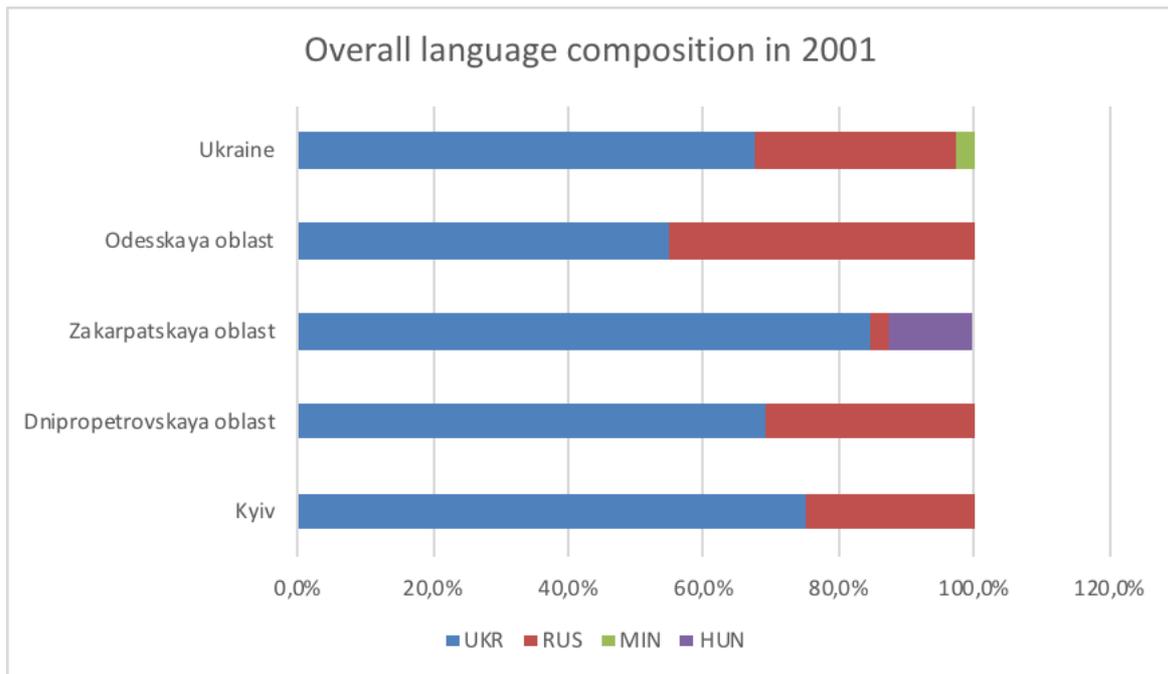


Figure 7

Next, the quantified results of the 3929 units that I've collected in all of the cities are included. Ukrainian was most present with 51,9 % of the share, with Russian being at 24,4 % and foreign texts (FOR) occupying the third spot with 20,2 %. As can be seen in this table (Figure 8), the number of Non-identifiable units (marked as NI in the table) is very small (139 units or 3,5 %) and can therefore be disregarded in the next part of the analysis. Ukrainian was dominant in Kyiv (64 %) and Uzhhorod (70,8 %), contested in Dnipro (40,7 %) and in minority in Odesa (32,2 %). Russian was the strongest there, where it actually had a lead over the state language (42,5 %). It was about 1 % less visible than Ukrainian in Dnipro (39,9 %). The language of Ukraine's Eastern neighbour then had 11,4 % visibility in the capital and it was close to non-existent in Uzhhorod at 1 %. Foreign texts take around one fifth of the space in all cities but Dnipro, where it holds 16,3 %.

Languages	UKR %	RUS %	FOR %	NI %
<i>Kyiv</i>	64,0%	11,4%	21,3%	3,3%
<i>Dnipro</i>	40,7%	39,9%	16,3%	3,1%
<i>Uzhhorod</i>	70,8%	1,0%	22,4%	5,8%
<i>Odesa</i>	32,2%	42,5%	22,8%	2,5%
Total	51,9%	24,4%	20,2%	3,5%

Figure 8

5.2. Comparison with Lnyavskiy and Shakh

Lnyavskiy (2016, p. 92) has studied three of the same cities that I did - Kyiv, Dnipro and Odesa, in 2016. Among the cities we shared, she collected 1830 units. Shakh (2010, p. 17) has collected her data on Kyiv in 2008. She mapped 1555 units of text in Kyiv, with 1,2 % being non-identifiable (which won't be included in the chart). See Figure 9 for the results.

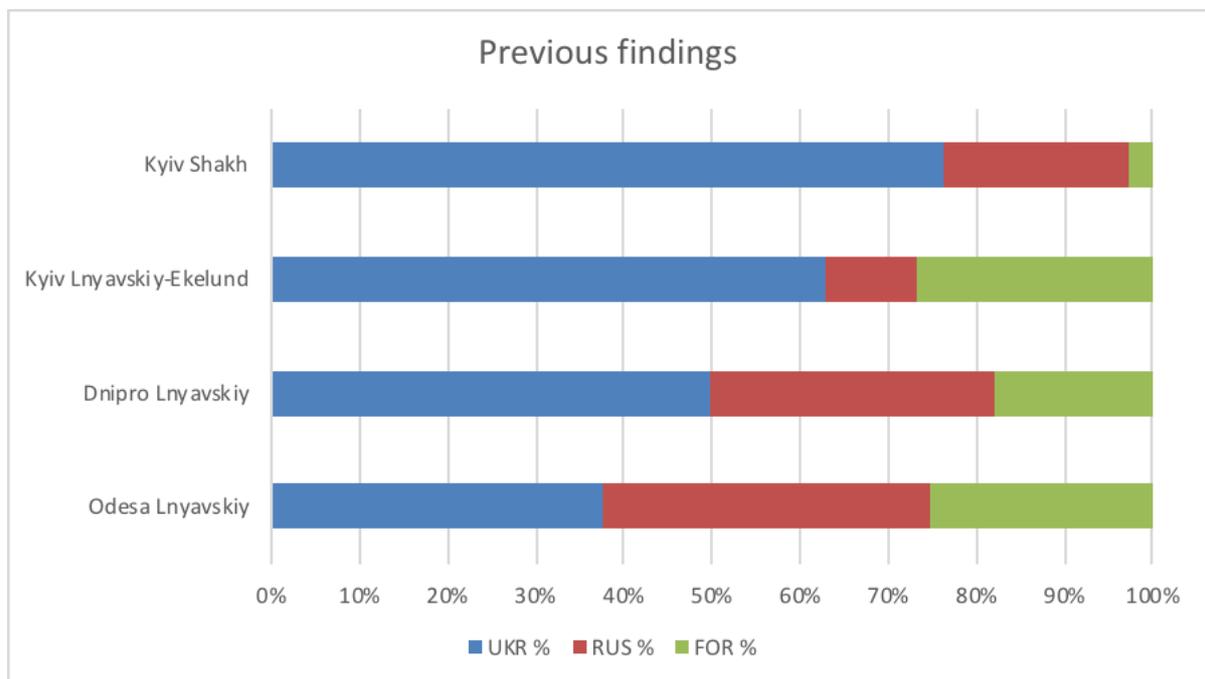


Figure 9

In the following charts, I will compare my data on the cities with those of the other two researchers. The only city that appears in all of the works is Kyiv (Figure 10).

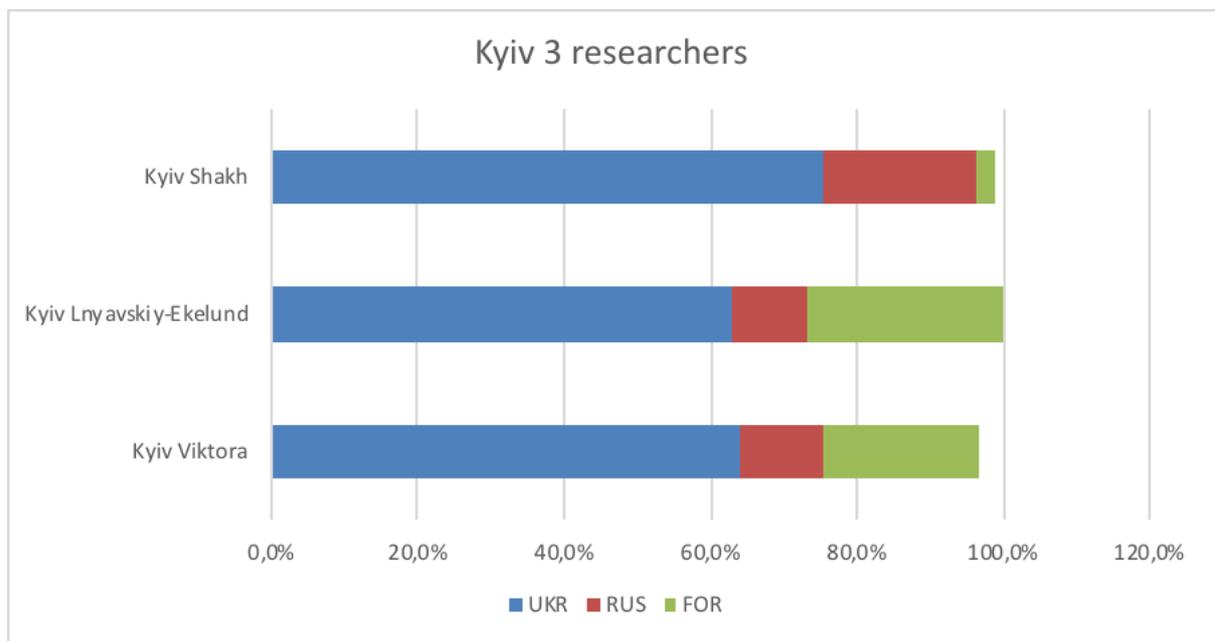


Figure 10

What came to me as a surprise when comparing the data was the fact that in the first study by Shakh in 2008, Ukrainian held a more privileged position (75,3 %) in the linguistic landscape of the city than in the latter two studies. This could be due to the author's selection of the places to analyse and the overall design of the study. Nevertheless, this finding does not support my hypothesis that the overall position of Ukrainian will be rising steadily in the linguistic landscape of the city.

I would dare to suggest, though, that the position of Russian as a language of prestige was partly replaced over time by foreign languages, most presumably English, which was the most prevalent among foreign languages in my data. In Shakh's work, Russian was at 20,8 % and foreign languages only occupied 2,7 % of the linguistic makeup. In the datasets collected by Lnyavskiy in 2016 and me in 2019, Russian was at 10,3 % and 11,4 %, respectively, while foreign languages were at 26,8 % and 21,3 %, respectively. However, I would claim that this notion is neither certain nor verifiable with the analysed datasets. Instead, it could be an opportunity for another study which would tackle the position of the most used non-state language in the studied areas.

As observed multiple times, though, the datasets should only be compared with a large amount of scepticism, as the parameters of the research weren't the same. In the next section, I will only work with my own data, which enables a more balanced and nuanced view of the situation.

5.3. Going deeper: analysing the types of message in the cities, presenting some examples

The explanation for the more detailed study of the cities' landscapes and the types of message presented there was already provided in the methodology. In my hypothesis, the producers of the messages seen in the linguistic landscape will adhere to the language policy and the linguistic regime promoted by the governing elites more if they're trying to present themselves as a brand. In that case, in Russian-speaking cities, the language spoken most on the everyday basis wouldn't be employed if the communicators of the messages displayed feel that they should present themselves (or self-identify) as adhering to the rules set out by the state. In the case of more informal or private messages, then, the producers of the message should, in theory, revert to their native language or to the language that most local speakers would use.

I will break off the established practice and start with Uzhhorod this time. In Uzhhorod, most of the population speaks Ukrainian as their first language. When it comes to its linguistic landscape, the data is quite one-sided (Figure 11).

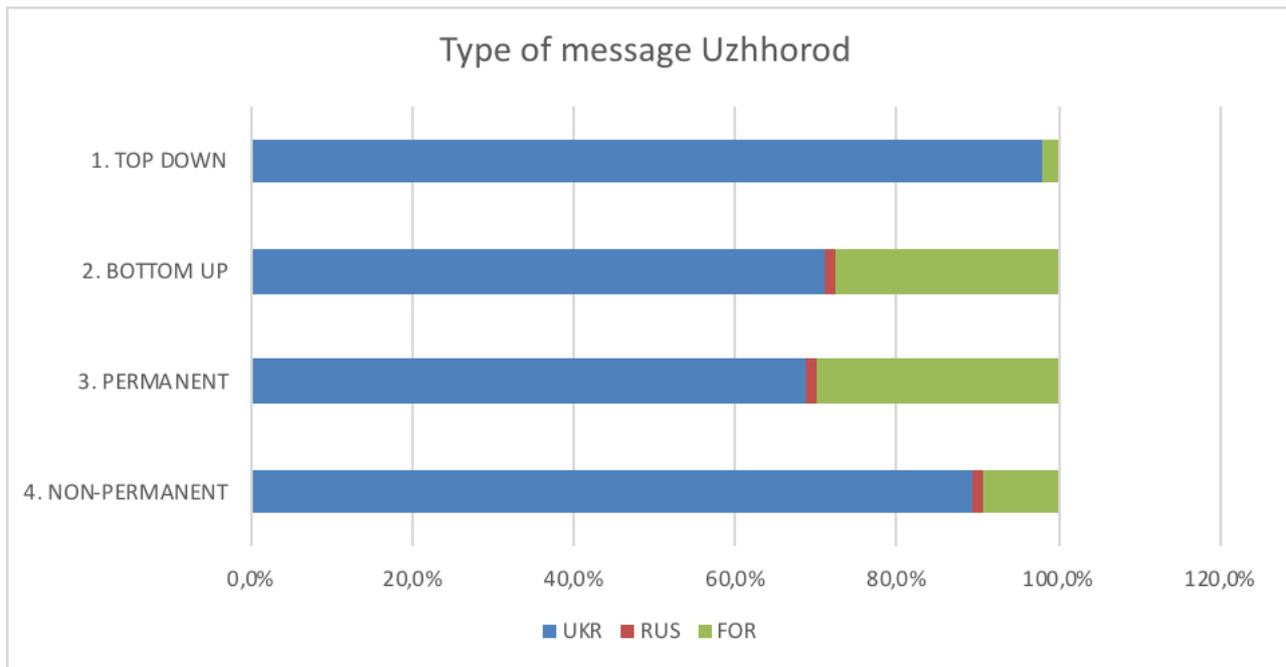


Figure 11

Russian is practically invisible in all of the types and Ukrainian is the most prevalent in all of the fields. In the case of my hypothesis, in non-permanent settings, the local native language (Ukrainian) is also dominant in the data. However, the case of Uzhhorod is not really relevant in this light, as the local native language is also the state language. To verify the data, I have employed Fisher's Exact test². The p-value was 0.0004998, so I consider the data valid. Some interesting examples include a permanent sign written incorrectly in Czech, combining Czech and Russian (Appendix 1: "Česká Kofejňa"), and another permanent sign which includes five languages (Ukrainian, Hungarian, Czech, English, and German, respectively), none of which is Russian (Appendix 2: "Fresh Beer").

Next, in Kyiv, the situation changes dramatically (Figure 12).

²Fisher's exact test is a statistical significance test used to analyse tables where some of the values may be too low for different types of tests. It looks on whether the numbers in the table are statistically different enough to be considered valid.

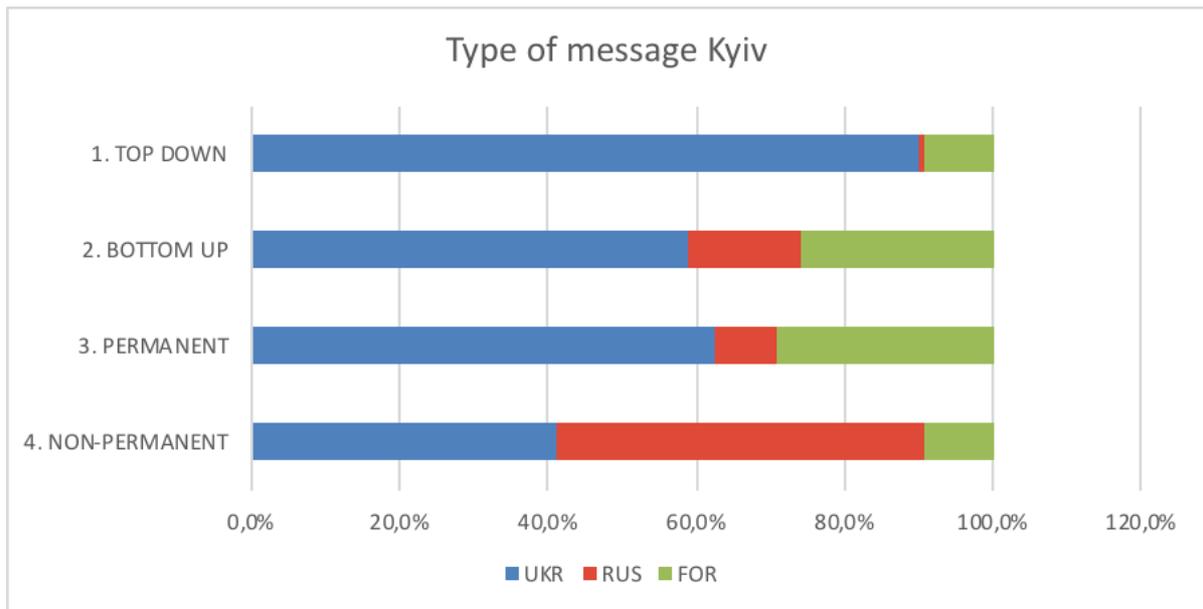


Figure 12

In the official setting, the situation is similar, with Ukrainian holding 90,1 %. In the bottom-up permanent type, the ratio changes in favour of foreign languages and slightly in favour of Russian but is not dissimilar to the overall linguistic makeup in the city in my study or in the previous ones. When one separates the non-permanent messages, the statistic changes considerably, and Russian moves to the first spot with 49,4 %. The data was verified by a Chi-square test ($p\text{-value} < 2.2e\text{-}16$). An interesting example of signs in Ukrainian included a door on which the two languages are represented in a permanent and a non-permanent form, respectively (Appendix 3: “Close the door, please”).

In Dnipro, the situation is quite similar, with a bigger share of Russian in all of the categories (Figure 13).

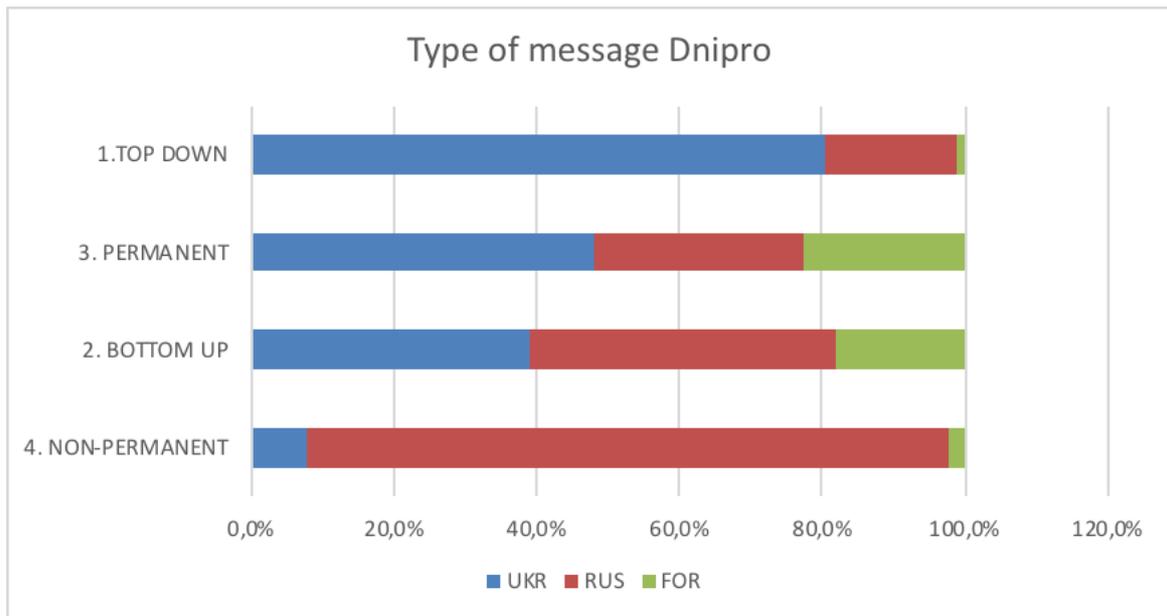


Figure 13

There are some (18,6 %) top-down messages in Russian. In the permanent category, Ukrainian holds 48,2 % and Russian 29,2 %. In the non-permanent type, the situation is quite clear: Russian holds 89,8 % majority of all the messages. The foreign languages are quite absent from the linguistic landscape, which could be due to the fact that Dnipro receives a smaller proportion of foreign tourists than Kyiv and Odesa, because Russian still holds the status of the language of prestige, or due to the combination of the factors. The data was verified by a Chi-Square test³ (p-value < 2.2e-16). In Dnipro, I was able to document a quite unique (in my data, at least) example of a permanent sign where the name and the slogan of the brand is in Ukrainian, but the dominating language which informs about the business is in Russian (Appendix 4: “Family development centre”).

Lastly, there is the port town of Odesa. Perhaps unsurprisingly due to the language of preference of the locals as I could observe during my stay there, the linguistic makeup was in favour of Russian, too (Figure 14).

³ Similarly to the Fisher’s exact, the Chi-Square test is a statistical significance test used to analyse tables. It looks on whether the numbers in the table are statistically different enough to be considered valid.

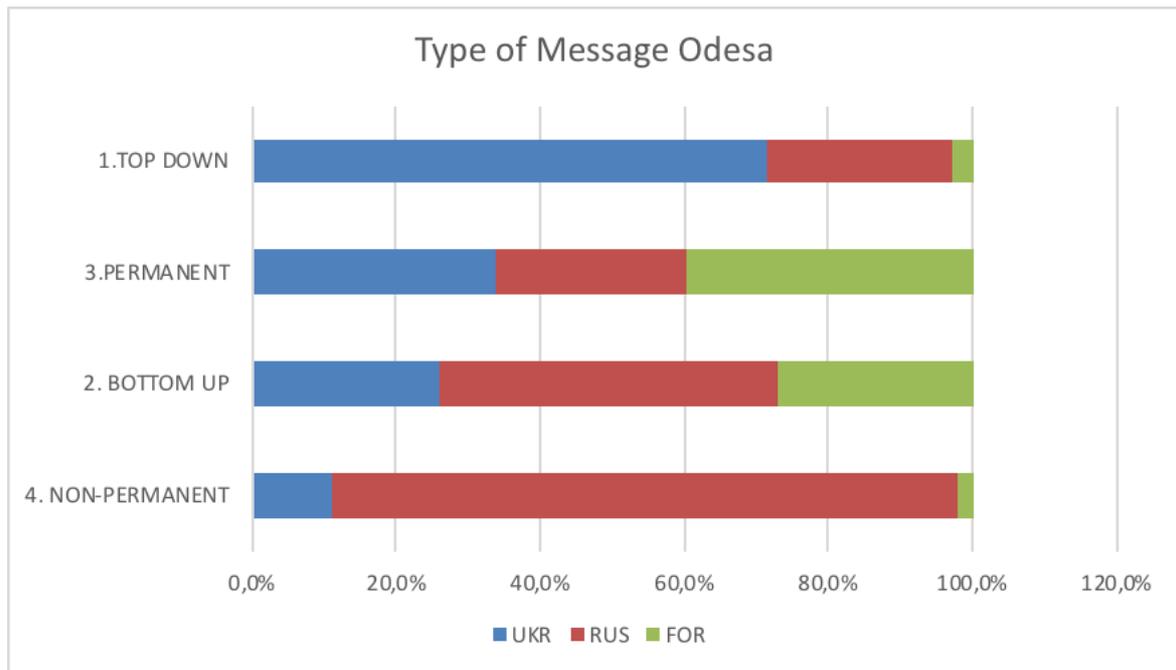


Figure 14

What strikes me as interesting is the similarity between the ratios in Dnipro and Odesa. Apart from the larger proportion of English in Odesa, which could be explained by the fact that it is a popular tourist destination even for international tourists and hosts boutiques of many big fashion brands, for example, the linguistic landscapes are very similar. In Odessa, the bottom up section overall and the non-permanent section are dominated by Russian language with 46,9 % and 86,9 %, respectively. The data was verified by a Chi-Square test ($p\text{-value} < 2.2e-16$). Some interesting examples include a permanent poster dominated by Ukrainian but with headline using the Russian spelling of the name of the city (“Odessa” instead of “Odesa”; Appendix 5: “Odesa by the ocean”) and a unique non-permanent sign in English (with a spelling mistake), which warns the passers-by that a man residing in the city carries sexually transmitted diseases (Appendix 6: “Beware of Vincent!”).

To conclude this section, here is the Table with my whole dataset for the type of message in the studied cities (Originally Figure 15, moved to Appendix 7 due to formatting issues when exporting to the PDF/A format).⁴

⁴The non-identifiable messages have been removed.

5.4. Types of message: a comparison with Lnyavskiy's research

Although probably not as relevant as the previous section, my data on the type of messages can be also partly compared to Lnyavskiy's research. I'm questioning the relevance as Lnyavskiy has decided to exclude the messages that I mark as non-permanent messages in her study. Nevertheless, here are the comparisons between her data and mine on the issue of the type of message in the shared places of study.

Lnyavskiy (2016, p. 92) has recorded a higher share of bottom up messages in Russian in Kyiv, while my data shows a bigger share of messages in foreign languages (Figure 16).

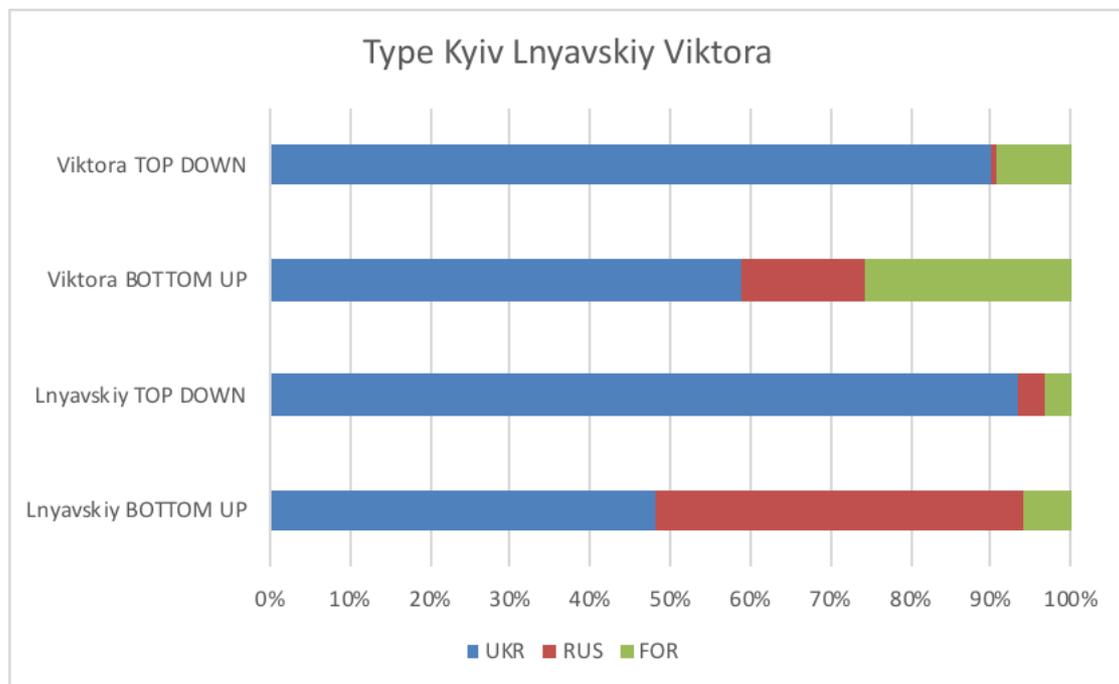


Figure 15

In Dnipro, the situation is somewhat similar. In Lnyavskiy's work, foreign languages in the town's linguistic landscape are non-existent, while my study shows a modest share of 18,1 % in the bottom-up category. In the 2016 study, Russian is completely dominant in the bottom up category with a 97,4 % share (Figure 17).

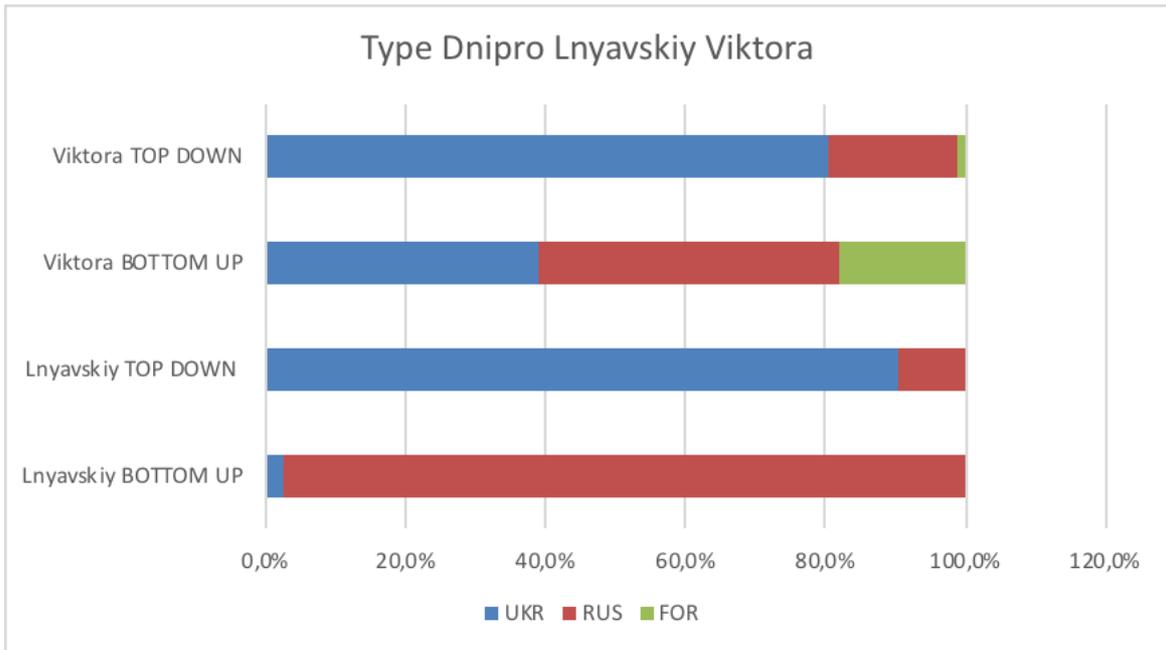


Figure 16

Lastly, in Odesa, the situation is again almost identical to Dnipro. In Lnyavskiy's dataset, the bottom-up category is again dominated by Russian with 97,8 %, the top-down category is more also more in favour of Russian and foreign languages are not present (Figure 18).

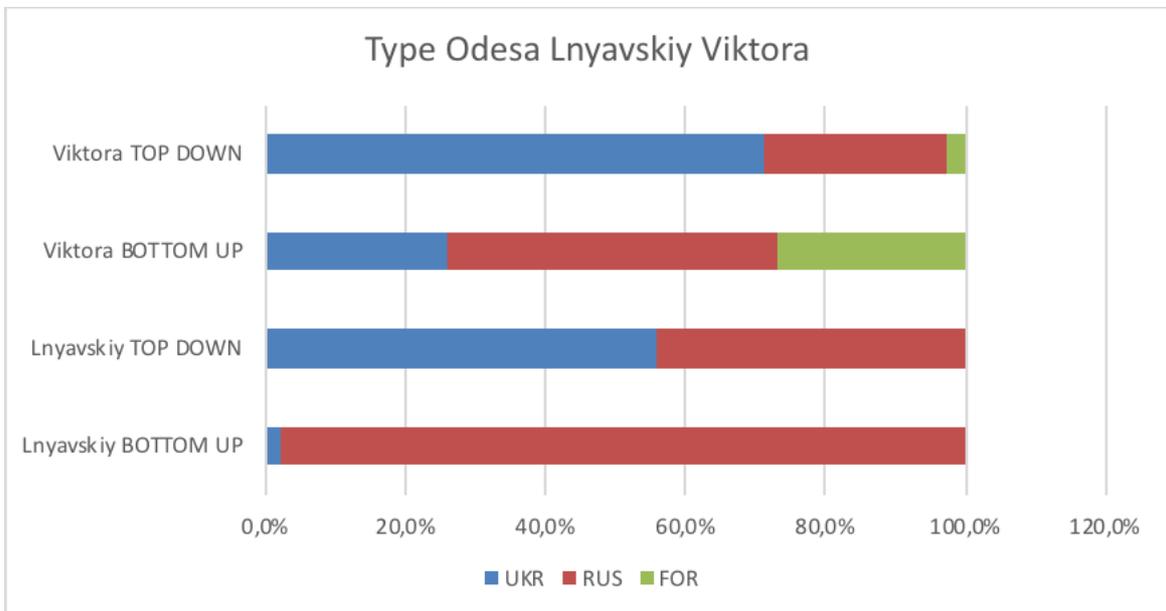


Figure 17

6. Survey among students of Czech in Ukraine

6.1. The results of the questionnaires

Out of the 139 respondents, 61% considered Ukrainian their native language, while 12% of them did so with Russian and 27% with both Russian and Ukrainian. The last category is an interesting one, as it was argued in the previous chapter that some Russian-speaking Ukrainians were possibly saying that both languages were their native, even though they were not in complete command of Ukrainian. This was due to personal politics or self-identification. From my experience from Odesa, I would argue that many young people in the city that I was acquainted with identify Ukrainian as important for them and as a language that they “have to use” in educational environment. Nevertheless, most of them wouldn’t use the language unless forced to.

At the time the questionnaire was filled in, the respondents were residing in one of 14 settlements. The majority (28 %) came from Uzhhorod. This was probably due to the fact that I was able to also establish a connection to a professor who taught Czech at the local university, who promised me to disseminate the questionnaires among her students in addition to the students attending the courses organised by the Czech Centres. 16 % were from Kyiv, 12 % from Ivano-Frankivsk, 12 % from Odesa, 11 % from Lviv, 7 % from Chernivtsi and the rest from other towns (Figure 19).

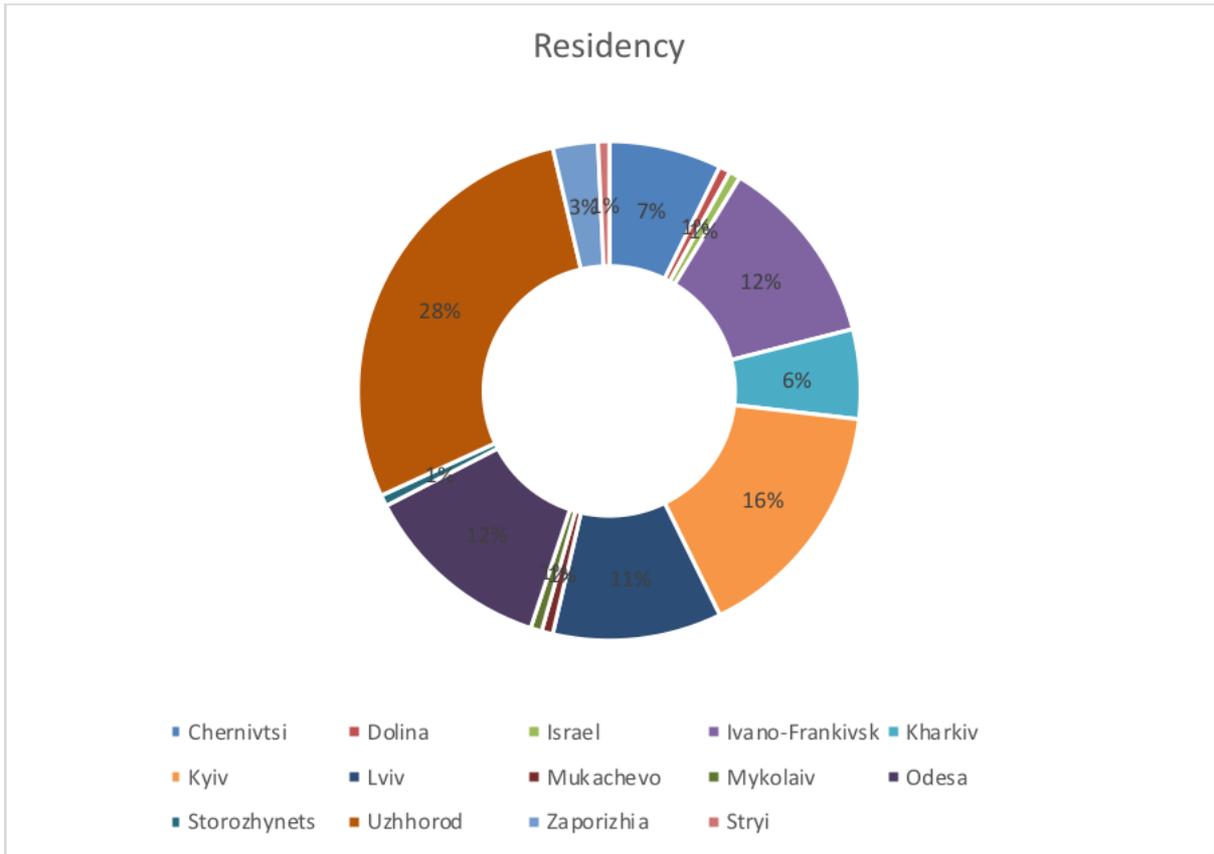


Figure 18

Most of the respondents were in approval of the 2019 language law, with 34 % choosing 1 and 25 % choosing 2 on the 1 to 5 scale. The support for Ukrainian as the main language for Ukraine was even greater, with 49 % choosing 1 and 20 % picking 2 (Figures 20 and 21).

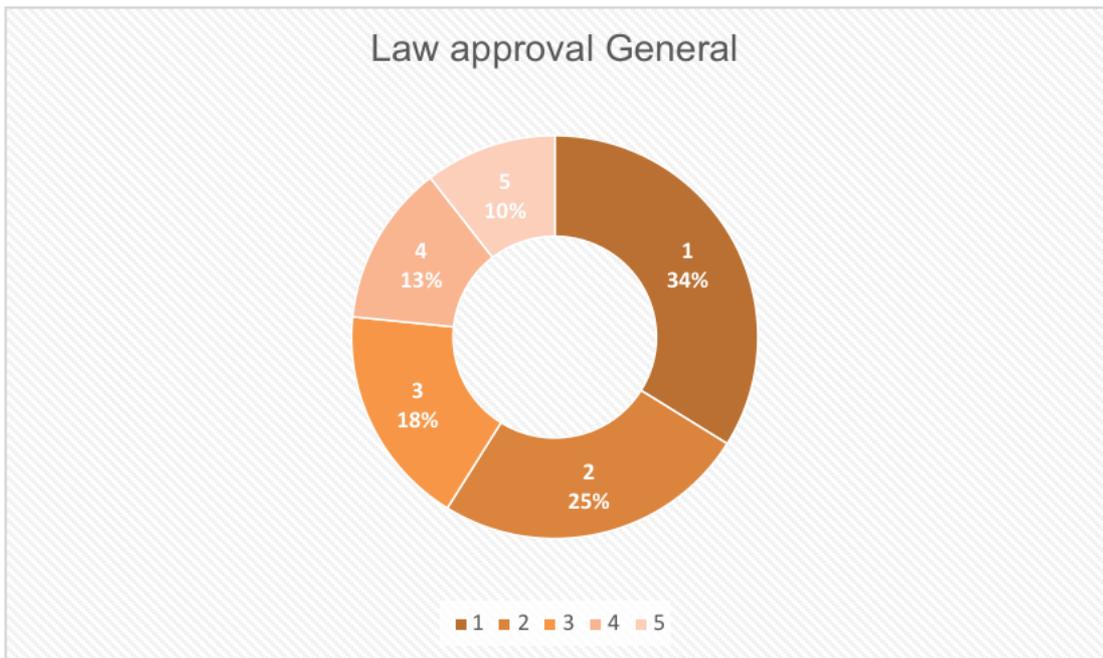


Figure 19

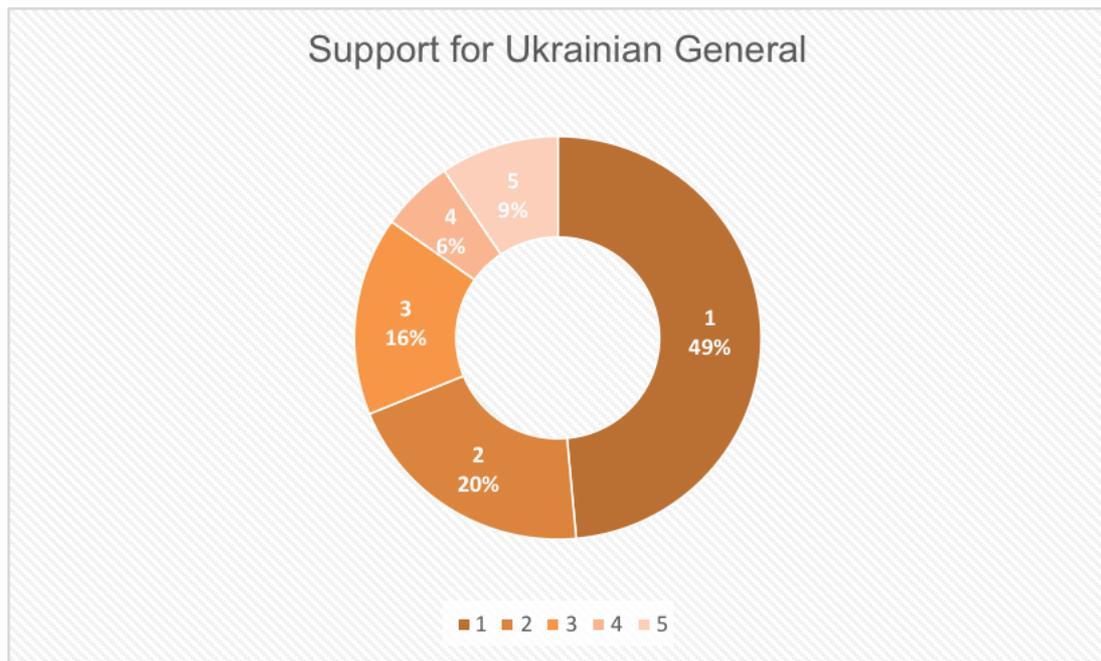


Figure 20

6.1.1. Support among respondents who selected Ukrainian as their native language

Among the respondents who considered Ukrainian their native language, 60 % approved of the law, 43 % picking the option 1 and 17 % picking the option 2. Out of those respondents, an overwhelming majority of 80 % was positive about supporting Ukrainian as the main language, with 63 % choosing 1 and 17 % choosing two as their option of choice (Figures 22 and 23).

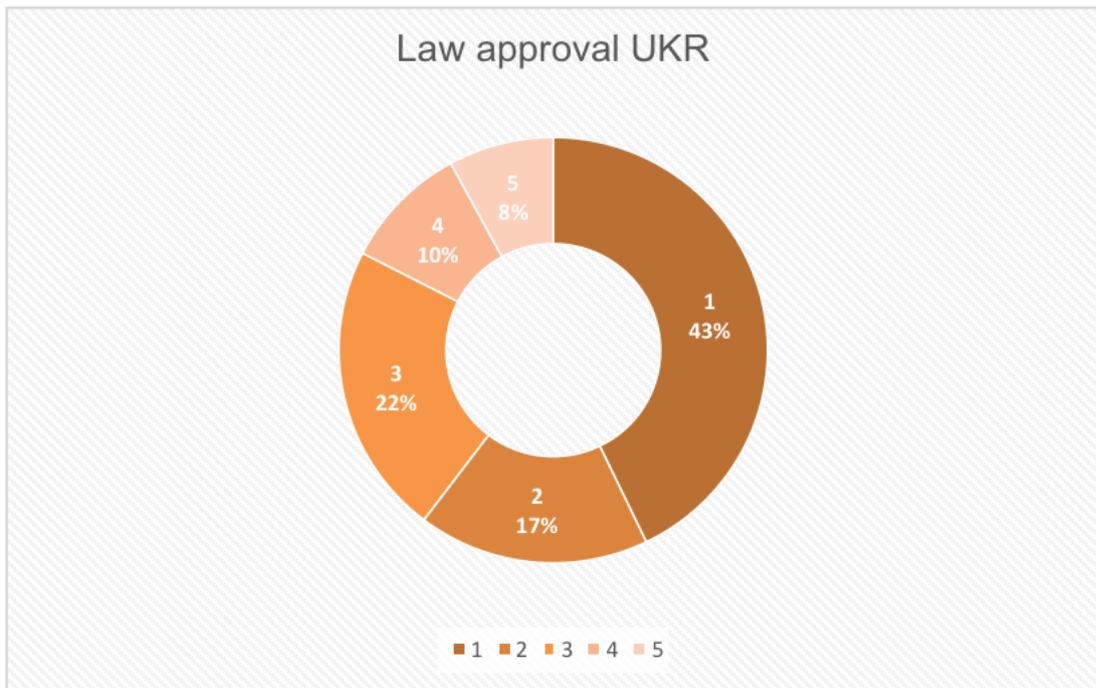


Figure 21

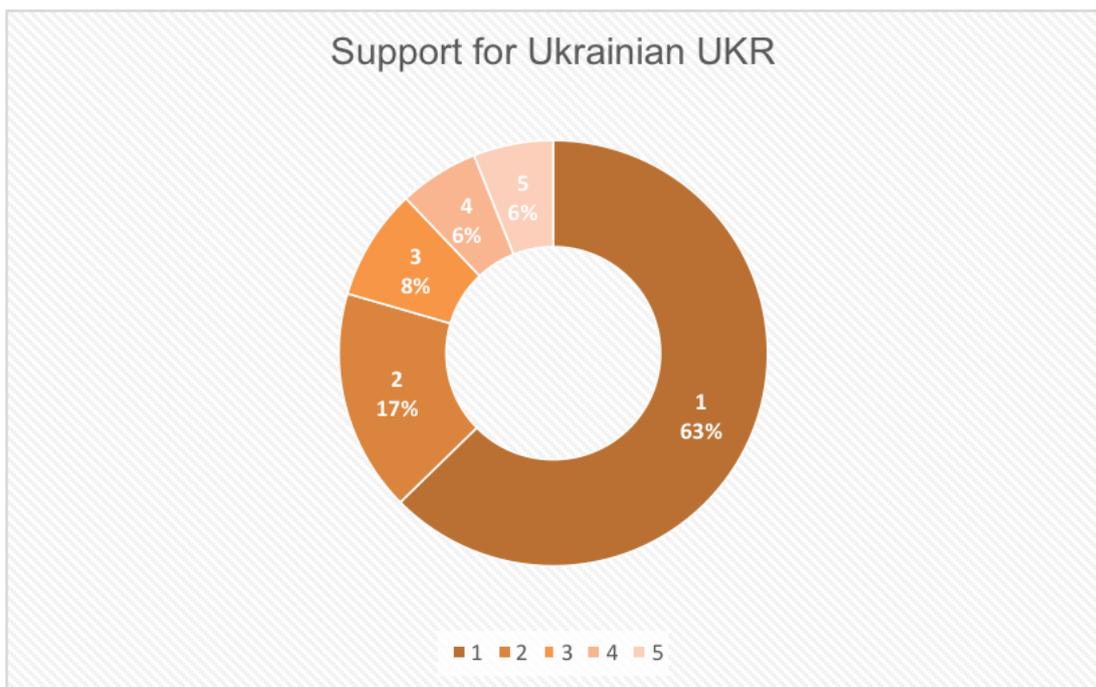


Figure 22

6.1.2. Support among respondents who selected Russian as their native language

When it comes to speakers who considered Russian their native language, the approval of the new law and the overall language discourse were lower. Considering the law, 41 % were in approval, with 18 % choosing number 1 and 23 % choosing number 2. With only 6 % being neutral about the law, 29 % picked number 4 and 24 % have chosen

number 5. The support for the national language preference was considerably higher, though. 30 % and 29 % selected numbers 1 and 2, respectively, making the overall support for the idea 59 %. 29 % were ambivalent about the issue and 12 % were completely against (number 5; Figures 24 and 25).

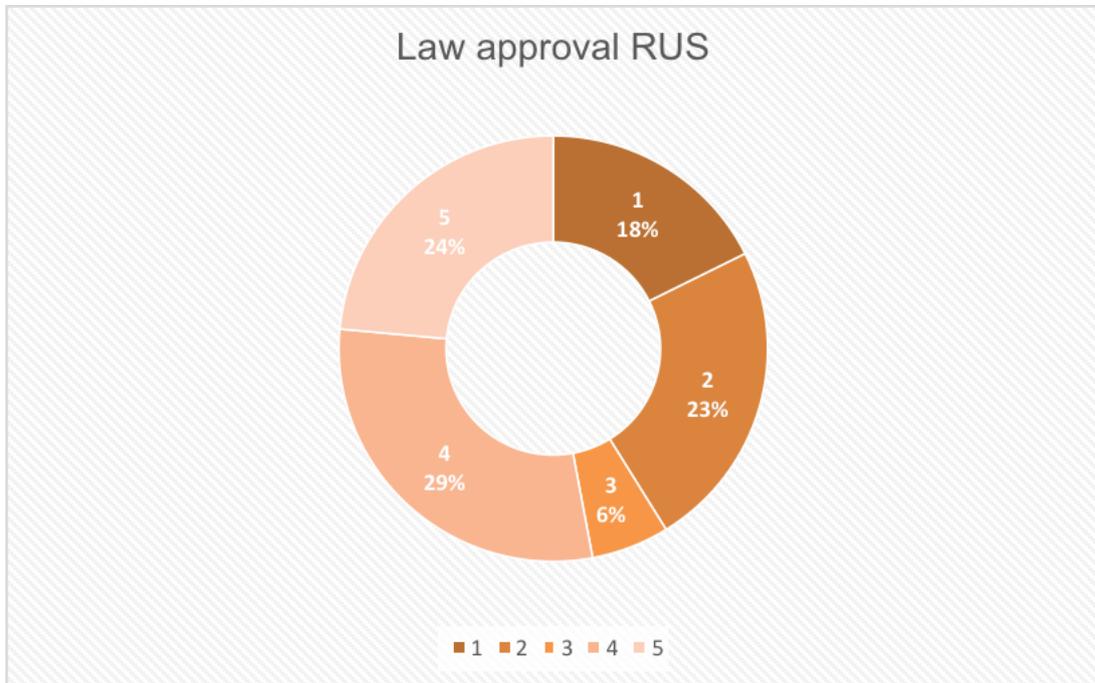


Figure 23

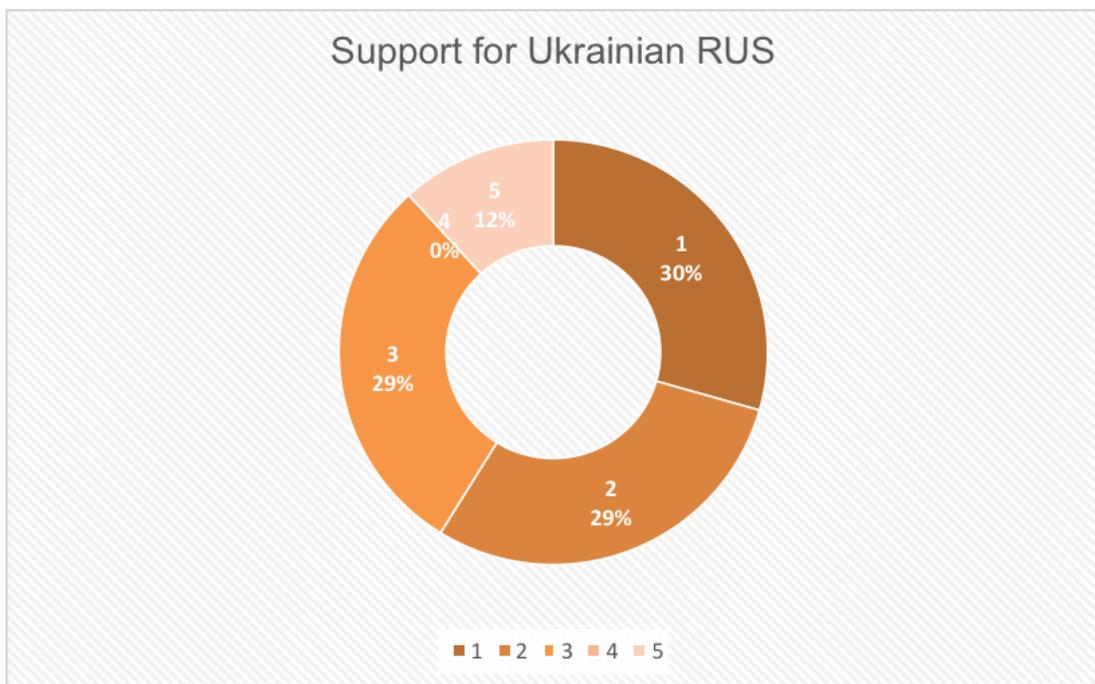


Figure 24

6.1.3. Support among respondents who selected Ukrainian and Russian as their native language

Among the respondents who said both Ukrainian and Russian are their native languages, the support for both the law and the Ukrainian language as the “main” language was higher than in the previous case. The law was supported by 56 %, with 29 % picking no. 1 and 26 % no. 2. 20 % of respondents were neutral. The Ukrainization policy was backed by 49 %, with 27 % being ambivalent about it. (Figures 26 and 27).

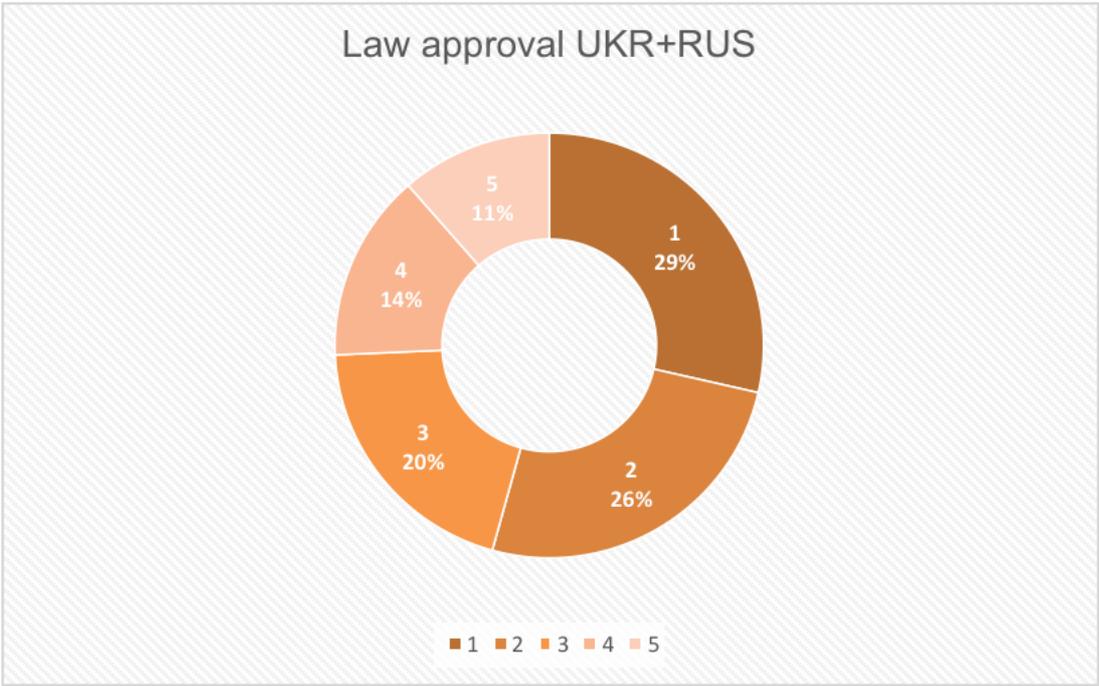


Figure 25

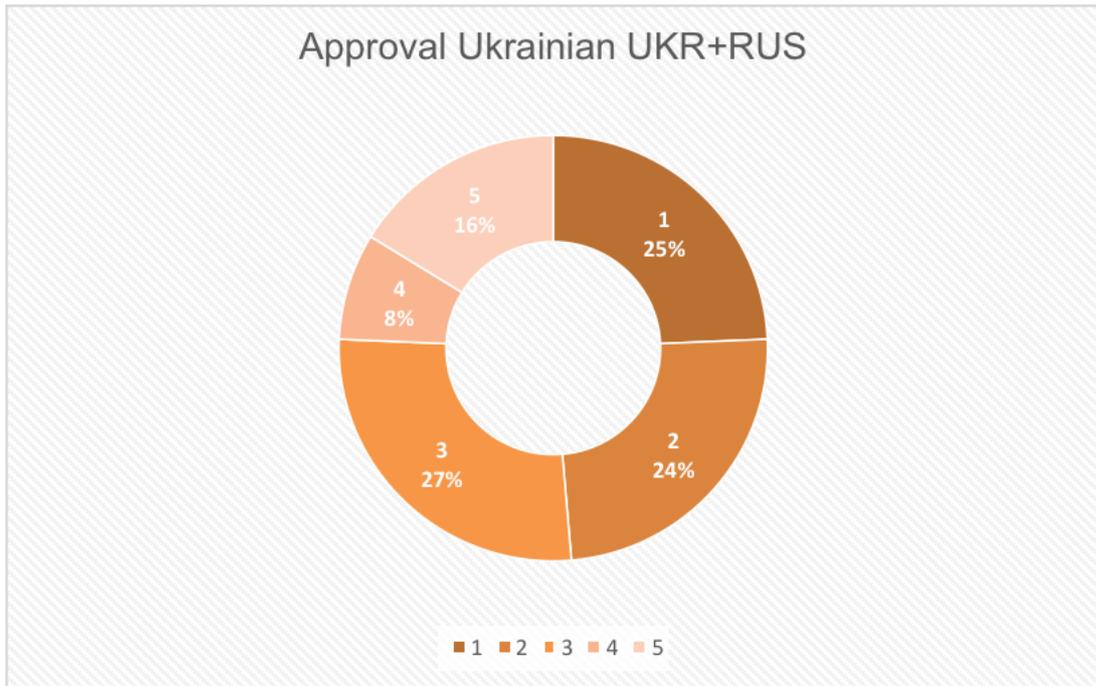


Figure 26

6.1.4. Support among respondents from Kyiv

The group of Kyivans that filled in the questionnaire consisted of 32 % of people considered themselves linguistically Ukrainian native, 14 % Russian native and 55 % Ukrainian and Russian native. The respondents were mostly in approval of the new law, with 24 % deciding for option 1 and 33 % choosing option 2. 29 % were neutral about the law. The questionnaires also brought in formidable support for Ukrainian as the main language, with 59 % picking no. 1 and 14 % no. 2 (Figures 28 and 29).

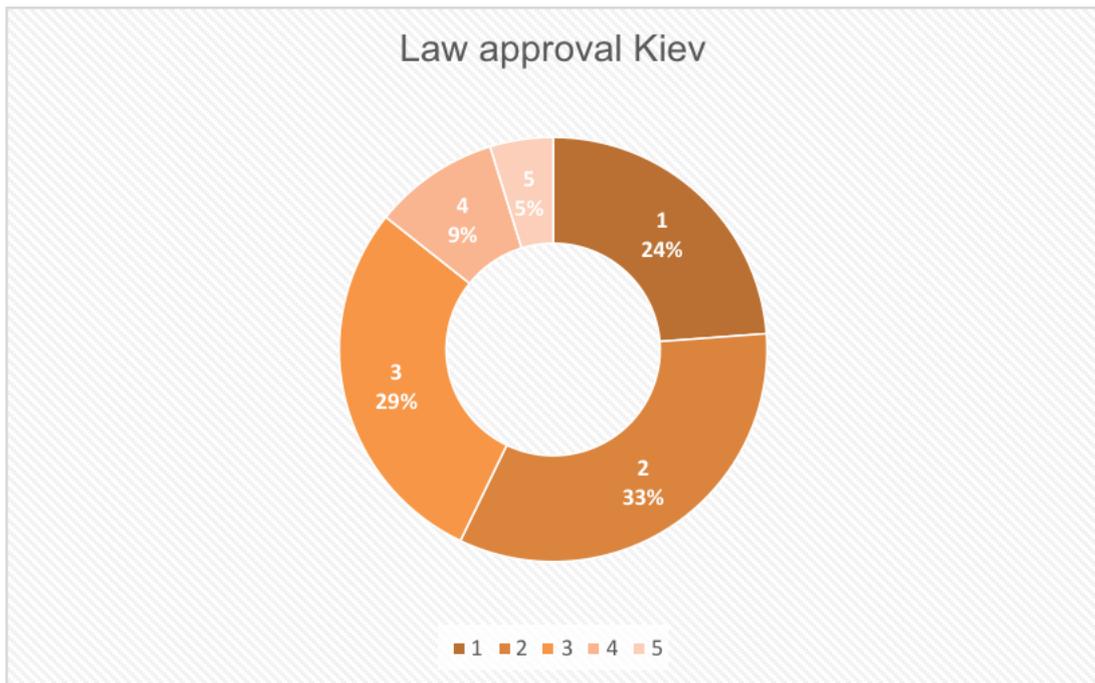


Figure 27



Figure 28

6.1.5. Support among respondents from Uzhhorod

78 % of students asked who hailed from Uzhhorod spoke Ukrainian as their native tongue, while 17 % chose Ukrainian and Russian and 6 % picked only Russian. The law was supported by 61 % of respondents, with 34 % and 27 % picking number 1 and 2, respectively. The overall direction towards Ukrainian as the main language was supported

by 66 % of the responses, with 39 % deciding for number 1 and 27 % for number 2 (Figures 30 and 31).

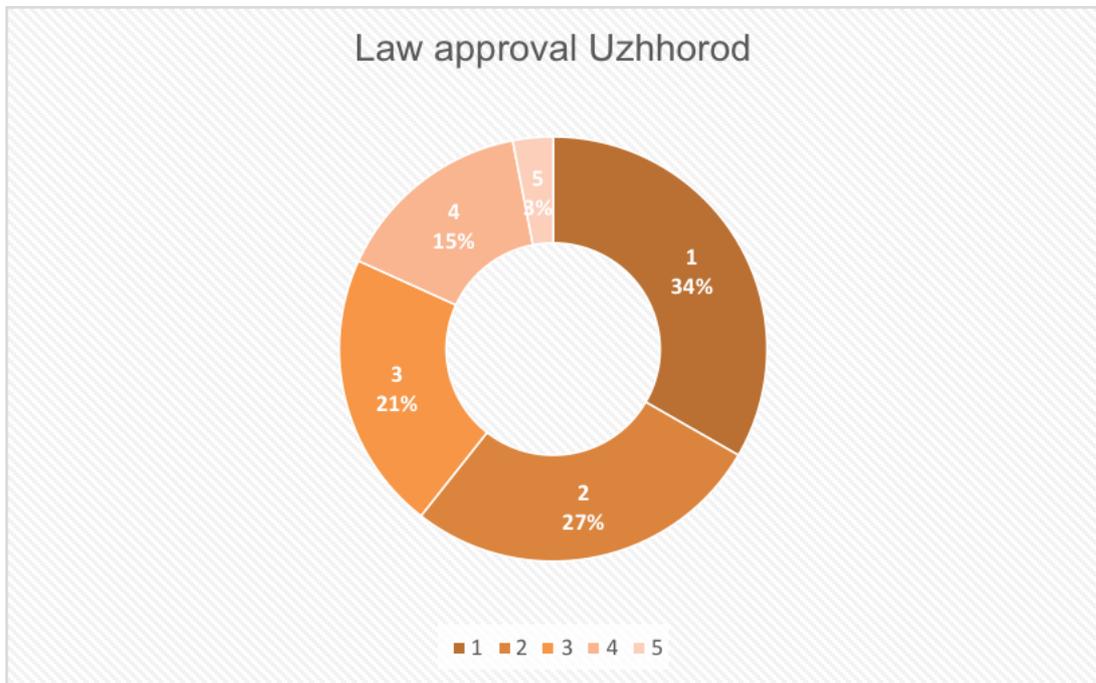


Figure 29

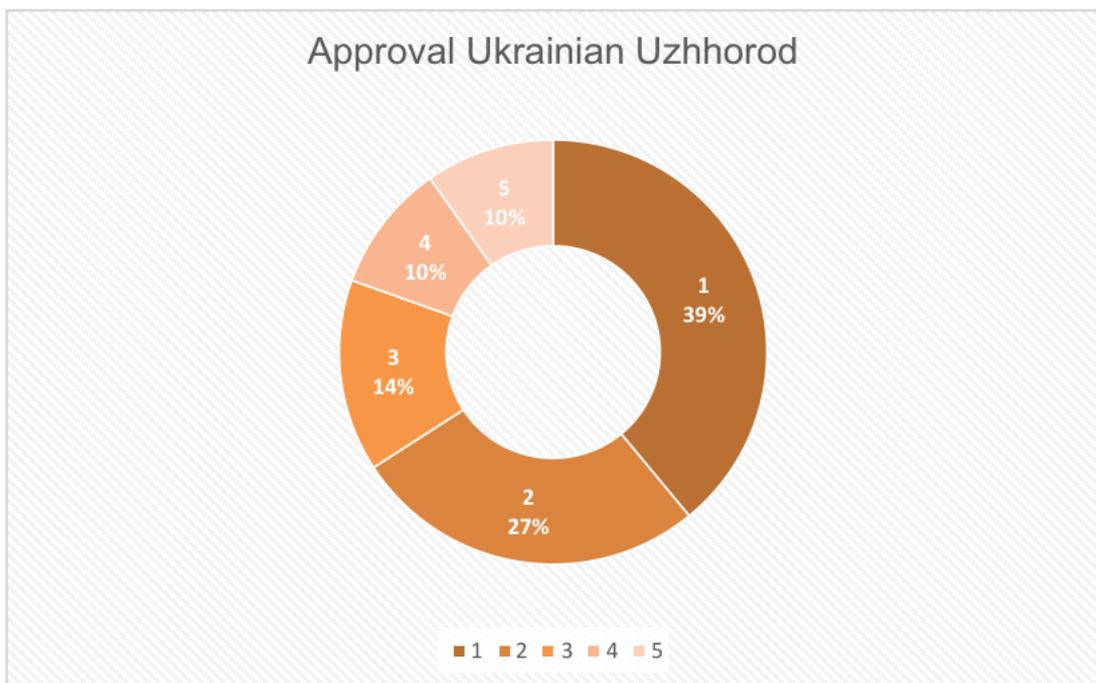


Figure 30

6.1.6. Support among respondents from Odesa

Lastly, the citizens of Odesa were linguistically more split than the other groups, with 18 % picking Ukrainian, 41 % Russian and 41 % both as their native tongues. Odesa

was the only one of the cities where the law met with less than 50 % of approval, with 6 % picking option 1, 23 % option 2 and 18 % being undecided. As 18 % were neutral about the law, 18 % picking no. 4 and 35 % no. 5, the percentage of approval and disapproval was equal, with both being at 41 %. As for the approval for Ukrainian as the main language, 41 % of respondents were neutral about it, with 35 % being positive (12 % no. 1s and 23 % no. 2s) and 24 % negative (6 % no. 4s and 18 % no. 5s; Figures 32 and 33).

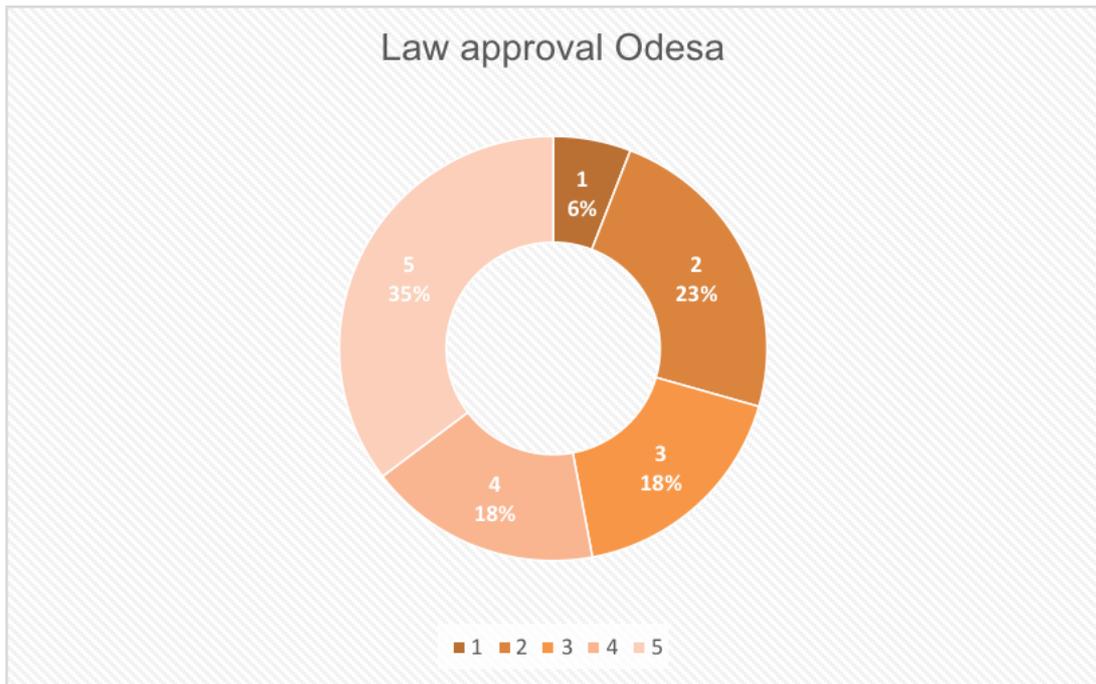


Figure 31



Figure 32

6.1.7. Support among respondents by age

Voters 18 or younger approved of the law with 51% majority, 20 % selecting option 1 and 31 % selecting option 2. The support for Ukrainization was 68 %, with 36 % choosing no. 1 and 32 % no. 2. It should be mentioned that in this group, 23 % of respondents were not aware of the existence of the 2019 Poroshenko's law (Figures 34 and 35).

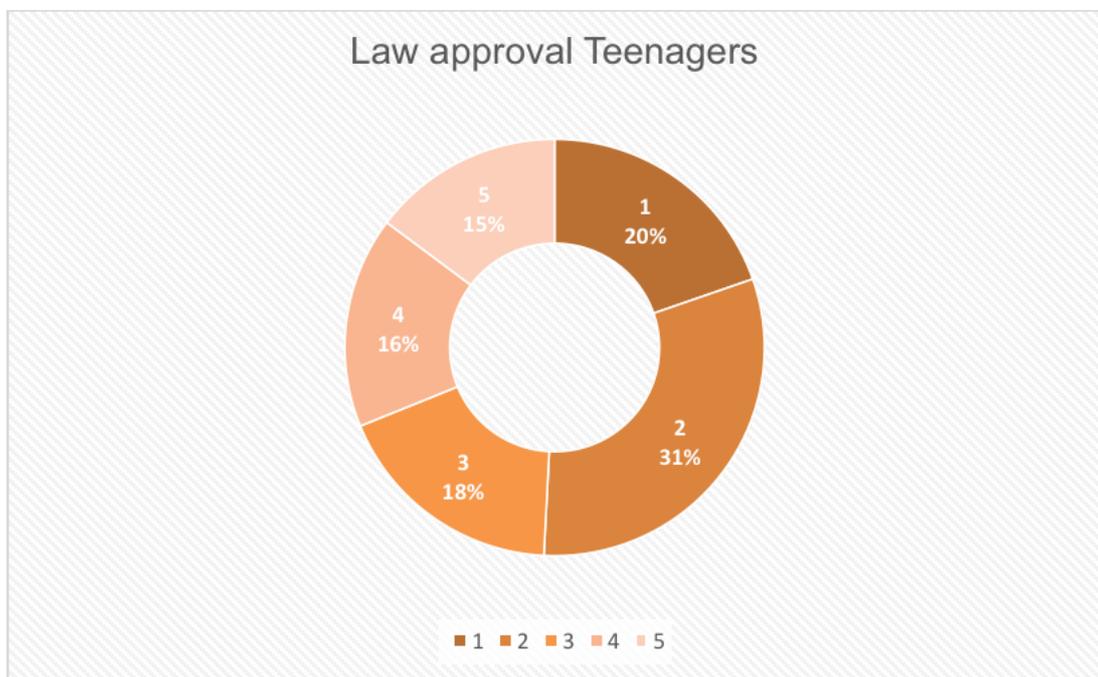


Figure 33



Figure 34

Older respondents were most positive about both the law (67 % with 48 % picking 1 and 19 % choosing 2) and Ukrainian as the main language (64 % for it with 36 % picking number 1 and 32 % number 2; Figures 36 and 37).

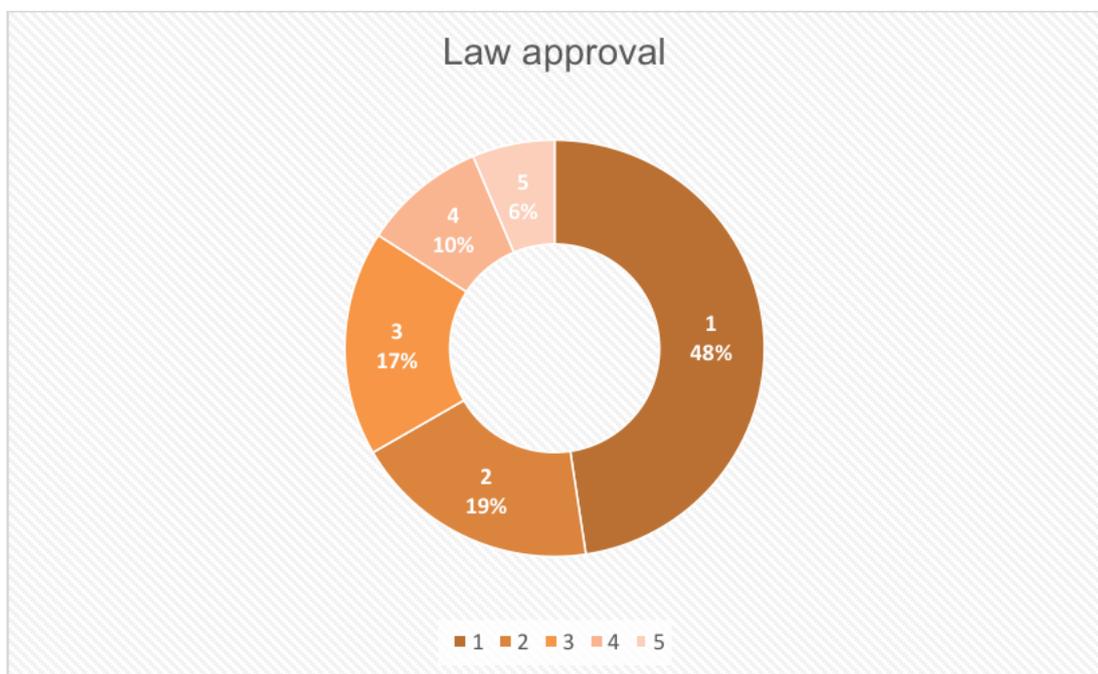


Figure 35

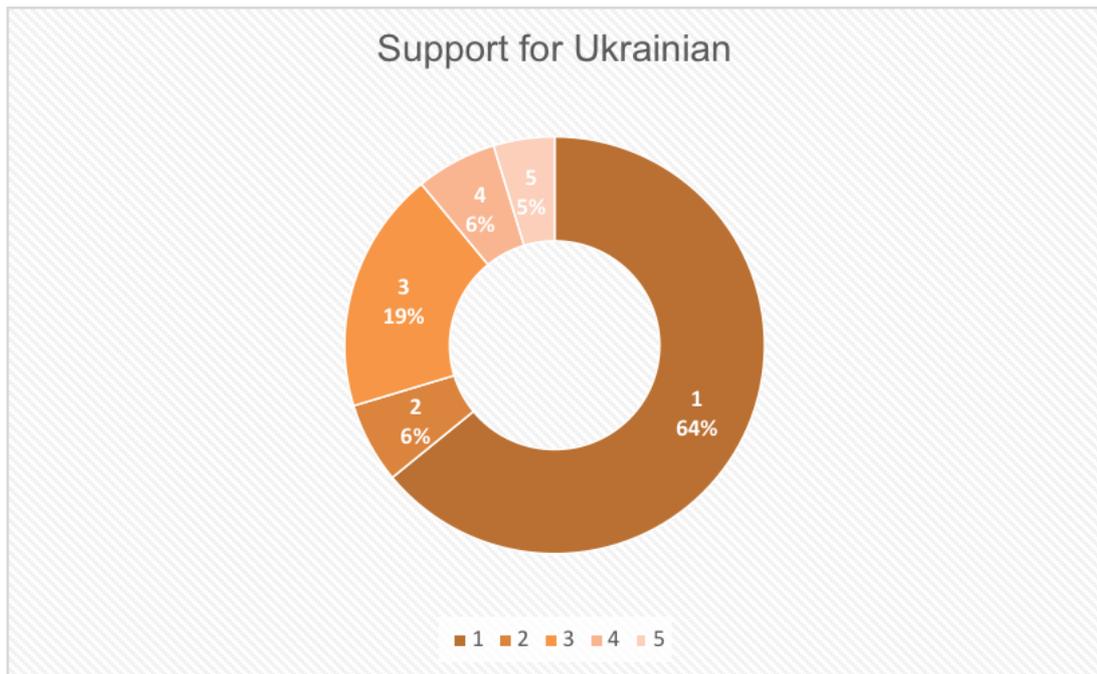


Figure 36

6.1.8. Individual responses to the open question

Given the limited scope of the research, the individual responses to the open questions are perhaps more valuable than the previously mentioned data. Unfortunately, most respondents didn't use the opportunity to leave me a longer response. Those who did, however, showed some interesting attitudes towards the issues in question. While most of the respondents wished me good luck or showed gratitude towards my research, a few of their statements were interesting for the research.

1. The first respondent is 20, lives in Uzhhorod and considers both Ukrainian and Russian as his or her native language. The student approves of the law (option 1) and the overall idea (option 2). The respondent said:

“Ukrainian language is very important for our country, and we should not forget about freedom of speech. We can speak exactly the language we want. In Transcarpathia, there is probably the greatest variety of languages (Ukrainian, Czech, Slovak, Russian, Hungarian) and this is not bad, but vice versa. Being a polyglot is cool, but you shouldn't forget about your native language either.” (Ukrainian, translated by the author)

2. The second respondent is 34, was born in Lviv but lives in Ivano-Frankivsk. His or her native language is Ukrainian and he or she approves both of the language law (option 1) and of the overall idea (option 1). The respondent said:

“It is a personal matter for everyone what language he speaks with family or friends, but institutions and government agencies should be the state language. I don’t think you would like to be spoken to in German, Ukrainian or another language at the Czech post office. There must be order.”

(Ukrainian, translated by the author).

3. The third and fourth respondents issued a somewhat similar response. The respondents lived in Odesa, and they were 37 and 44, respectively. The first out of the two considered Ukrainian his or her native tongue while the second considered Russian as his or her native language. They were both completely against the law (option 5) and neutral about the Ukrainization. Both of the respondents used the word “*nasil’no*”, which means “*violently*”. They said:

“Due to the forced imposition of Ukrainian, the language ceased to be appealing.”

(respondent no. 3, Russian, translated by the author)

“It is impossible to force someone to learn and use another language.”

(respondent no. 4, Russian, translated by the author)

4. The fifth respondent is 31, lives in Lviv, considers both Russian and Ukrainian as his or her native language, is neutral about the law but supports (no. 1) the idea of Ukrainian as the main language. The response was:

“This question cannot be explored with such a limited questionnaire, without taking into account the context and without understanding of the large number of local Ukrainian dialects that are completely unexplored and undescribed in our linguistics due to 70 years of Soviet pressure and then due to clumsy “patriotic” rhetoric”

(Ukrainian, translated by the author)

5. The sixth respondent was able to see through my deception in the question about the main language that the country should be using. The student was 29, was from Lviv, considered Ukrainian his or her native language and was in complete approval of both the law and the identity construction. The respondent said:

"In my opinion, the last question is too general to be answered in quantitative terms and get some interesting results. "The use of language in society" is too broad a statement. Are we talking about official relations, services, public initiatives? In my opinion, it is worth making this question either open for comment or giving clearer wording."

(Ukrainian, translated by the author)

The last two responses that I'm going to mention came to me through e-mail in Czech.

6. The seventh respondent didn't provide any data about his age, place of residence, or native language. He said:

"It's a huge problem that half of the citizens of the state speaks Russian but speak poor Ukrainian, including the top politicians. It's because of a historic fact that the Easternmost part of Ukraine was for a long time ruled by another state and another power, approximately since 1918. The Western part of Ukraine was ruled by the power only since 1945. Also, there were the Holodomors - the great famines of 1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947 - were much more deadly there than in the West. And after that, new people were simply brought to these regions in place of the deceased, and those new people spoke another language (mostly Russian). Thanks to that, we have the language heterogeneity in our country."

(Czech, translated by the author)

7. The last respondent that I will mention here is 29, lives in Uzhhorod, considers Rusyn his native language and supports completely both the language law and Ukrainian as the main language. He has told me in two e-mails:

“Ukraine is not a monolingual country, we have Russians, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians and many others. I feel that it would be beneficial to have one state language, which would be used in the administrative etc. It would be simpler for every citizen. Maybe I will be travelling somewhere to the East, and I want to be able to call an ambulance or police, and it would be bad if they don’t understand Ukrainian and I wouldn’t understand Russian (which I do but I know people who don’t). My native language isn’t Ukrainian, but I can speak and write Ukrainian well enough that nobody would guess that I’m not a native speaker. It’s because I value the state that I live in. When I was in Prague for a while, I was learning Czech. That’s why I find it weird when someone doesn’t want to learn Ukrainian (usually those people can only speak Russian, but some are Hungarians, too)”.

(Czech, translated by the author)

“My native language (Rusyn, note by the author) is considered by Ukraine as a dialect of Ukrainian, which kind of pisses me off. This also happened only due to dumb politics of some people. But that’s a topic for a long discussion.”

(Czech, translated by the author)

6.2. Discussion of the results of the survey

As previously mentioned, the results of the questionnaires should not be considered representative of the general population of Ukraine, of the studied cities or even of Ukrainians that are for one reason or another learning Czech. Nevertheless, in the broadest sense, the results more or less support the general hypothesis and the data collected during the linguistic landscape analyses.

Most of the respondents that live in Western or Central Ukraine or consider Ukrainian as their native language are in support of both the law and Ukrainization overall. Respondents that consider Russian or both Russian and Ukrainian as their native and those that reside in Odesa are more sceptical towards the law and are more often neutral or hostile towards the general idea of Ukrainian as the main language.

In the open questions, some respondents were (rightly) worried about the ambiguity of the previous question about the main language of use. Some respondents argued that the population should be responsible for being able to use the state language in official settings, and that mandatory usage of the language in official settings is more efficient and, in the end, more convenient for everyone.

Two responses by middle-aged students from Odesa said that forcing language use is unproductive and unfair, supporting the argument that forceful assimilation can bring about unforeseen consequences. From my experience as a teacher in Odesa, this proves to be true among the middle-aged students of Czech there and also somewhat relevant among people that I've met in their 20s, although they wouldn't use words like "forcibly" when describing their attitudes.

Lastly, the issue of devaluation of Rusyn from a language into a dialect comes into question. As mentioned, this practice occurred during the 20th century in Soviet Ukraine, as was noted previously. This occurrence is interesting when discussing the Billig's approach towards the difference between a dialect and a language in the sphere of politics, nationalism and identity, and should be definitely explored more in depth in another work.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, I think that analysing my dataset and comparing it with data produced in previous research has brought some relevant insights about the linguistic landscapes and language power relations in the studied cities of Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod and Odesa. My original hypothesis was that the populations of the studied cities would use Ukrainian more commonly with the progression of time. I wouldn't go as far as saying that my hypothesis was completely confirmed, though. Because I am unaware of how exactly the previous research was orchestrated, I wouldn't risk drawing any conclusions about the general trajectory of language use. Therefore, I can neither confirm nor deny the hypothesis that the populations are gradually more in acceptance of the linguistic regime and the blueprint for self-categorization that the seat of power in Kyiv is trying to impose. From the responses that I received in the survey, it seemed that the opinions of the different cities are divided, the answer being largely dependent on the place of residence of the respondent in question. These regional differences are akin to the differences observed in other literature, and they seem quite stable, at least in the area of linguistic identity. One part of my hypothesis can be considered true, in my opinion. The claim about non-permanent messages was strongly supported by the data, which showed that in informal contexts, the local language of everyday communication gains much more prevalence than the state language, if these two aren't the same one. This could also indirectly imply that in the commercial permanent sphere, the enterprises are trying to adhere to the linguistic regime more commonly because of brand, self-identification or commercial success, because in this segment, the proportion of languages was always more in favour of the state language. Last but not least, it is interesting that the linguistic landscapes' data on the usage of language in Dnipro and Odesa in the bottom up section were quite similar not only in my study, but also in the 2016 study. This correlation is supporting the notion that while Dnipro's population is divided in the terms of native language, the language of business is Russian, same as in Odesa.

7.1. Possibilities for further research

I see four ways in which this research could be built upon, should a researcher with genuine interest in the field ever read this thesis. First, to further research the language policies in the four cities I investigated in this thesis, I would recommend my research framework to be used in order to achieve a true diachronicity. This would allow for a more decisive comparison of the data, which would then in turn allow for more substantial claims about the results of the research.

Secondly, other minority languages should definitely be studied to broaden the scope of the research. I was very uneasy about excluding the other minority languages from my study for efficiency purposes, as this thesis implicitly argues for a friendlier approach to all the minority languages in Ukraine.

Thirdly, in my research, it would seem that English might be gradually replacing Russian in the position of a *lingua franca* or a language of prestige in Kyiv. While this research couldn't prove this, another research could.

Lastly, my dataset could be further used to achieve a more detailed and multi-dimensional picture of the language situation in the studied city. In case of interest, I will happily share my pictures with any researcher that would be interested. I can be reached at matyasviktora@gmail.com.

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Master's Thesis Summary

The present thesis preoccupies itself with the issue of language policies and nation-building as seen by a constructivist perspective. The thesis is constructed as a case study, delving into the case of the Post-Maidan Ukraine. It is argued that the ruling elites of Ukrainian society are attempting persuasion of the members of minority-language populations to re-categorize themselves according to the blueprint of national and linguistic identities that the elites are presenting. In the study, the author studies the responsiveness to these efforts by the populations of Kyiv, Dnipro, Uzhhorod and Odesa. To evaluate the success rates of the endeavour, the method of linguistic landscape analysis and a survey among students of Czech in Ukraine are employed. After analysing the results, the author

concludes that in informal contexts, the local populations revert to the language of everyday communication in the city, regardless of whether it is the official language or not.

9. List of Appendices

Appendix no. 1: Česká Kofejňa (a photo from Uzhhorod)



Appendix no. 2: Fresh beer (a photo from Uzhhorod)



Appendix no. 3: Close the door, please (a photo from Kyiv)



Appendix no. 4: Family development centre (a photo from Dnipro)



Appendix no. 5: Odesa by the ocean (a photo from Odesa)



Appendix no. 6: Beware of Vincent! (a photo from Odesa)



Appendix no. 7: The dataset

<i>Type of message</i>	<i>Kyiv UKR</i>	<i>Kyiv RUS</i>	<i>Kyiv FOR</i>	<i>Dnipro UKR</i>	<i>Dnipro RUS</i>	<i>Dnipro FOR</i>	<i>Uzh UKR</i>	<i>Uzh RUS</i>	<i>Uzh FOR</i>	<i>Odesa UKR</i>	<i>Odesa RUS</i>	<i>Odesa FOR</i>
<i>Top-Down No</i>	263	2	27	69	16	1	91	0	2	77	28	3
<i>Top-Down %</i>	20,7%	0,2%	2,1%	5,5%	1,3%	0,1%	13,2%	0,0%	0,3%	10,8%	3,9%	0,4%
<i>Bottom-Up No</i>	547	143	240	441	483	204	396	7	154	153	276	159
<i>Bottom-Up %</i>	43,1%	11,3%	18,9%	35,1%	38,5%	16,3%	57,3%	1,0%	22,3%	21,4%	38,6%	22,2%
<i>Permanent No</i>	481	64	225	421	255	198	338	6	148	131	103	155
<i>Permanent % of B-U</i>	87,9%	44,8%	93,8%	95,5%	52,8%	97,1%	85,4%	85,7%	96,1%	85,6%	37,3%	97,5%
<i>Permanent %</i>	37,9%	5,0%	17,7%	33,5%	20,3%	15,8%	48,9%	0,9%	21,4%	18,3%	14,4%	21,7%
<i>Non-Permanent No</i>	66	79	15	20	228	6	58	1	6	22	173	4
<i>Non-Permanent % of B-U</i>	12,1%	55,2%	6,3%	4,5%	47,2%	2,9%	14,6%	14,3%	3,9%	14,4%	62,7%	2,5%
<i>Non-Permanent %</i>	5,2%	6,2%	1,2%	1,6%	18,2%	0,5%	8,4%	0,1%	0,9%	3,1%	24,2%	0,6%
Total	810	145	267	510	499	205	487	7	156	230	304	162
<i>Total %</i>	63,9%	11,4%	21,1%	40,6%	39,8%	16,3%	70,5%	1,0%	22,6%	32,2%	42,5%	22,7%