

Abstract

Despite already thirty years after gaining independence, Ukraine is still having difficulties forming an integral and united national identity. The language issue in Ukraine is a vivid example of the problem Ukraine is confronting. Numerous efforts have been made with the aim to strengthen the role of the Ukrainian language, but the presence of the Russian language in Ukraine is still strong. Furthermore, the battle between these two languages often provokes huge public debates, and the debates do not revolve around the language use itself, but usually associate it with the wider debate of the Ukrainian common memory. Although much research has been devoted to analysing the narratives of relevant language laws, the discourses of Ukrainian politicians, or public opinions of the language issue and their links with people's political orientation, this thesis will focus on the discourses of media, an equally important site which represents and reproduces everyday nationalism. By adopting the methodology of critical discourse analysis, this work aims to uncover what are the common themes behind the everyday debate on the language issue in Ukrainian media and what are the typical mechanisms and strategies in the language use of media discourses to facilitate propagating their language ideologies. After a comparison of discourses from various media outlets, this work finds even though the polarisation of different language ideologies seems to be weaker nationwide after the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the war in Donbas in 2014, the polarisation is still evident across Ukrainian-controlled and non-Ukrainian controlled territories.

Keywords: Ukraine, language politics, media discourse, nationalism, Ukrainian, Russian, critical discourse analysis