The effect of the violent conflict in Ukraine on language use and language attitudes

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1. Introduction

In 2014 violent conflict erupted in eastern Ukraine, and, despite several international cease fire agreements signed by all parties involved, not a single day goes by without a violation (*Status Report as of 14 June 2017 OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine*, 2017). In a discussion on the development and future of the conflict, a Ukrainian citizen argued that 'it is because of the language that Russians are not able to beat Ukraine: as Ukrainians speak both the Russian and the Ukrainian language, they can withstand the more experienced Russian army: knowing the language of their enemy gives them a huge advantage. Russia, on the other hand, has a hard time beating Ukraine because they do not know the Ukrainian language, and thus they cannot fully understand their enemy.' (PS). Many readers who are unfamiliar with the language situation in Ukraine might deduce from this statement that within Ukraine most people speak Ukrainian and know Russian as a second language, while in Russia most people speak and know only Russian. Those readers, like most first-time visitors to Ukraine, would be surprised to hear that the majority of the inhabitants of Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, actually speak Russian (Pavlenko, 2010, p. 148). Even within the Ukrainian army and in this very conflict, half of the Ukrainian soldiers are Russian speakers according to estimates by journalists (Rudoms'kyj, 2016). Russian is the native language and most used language of many Ukrainians, but at the same time it is considered to be the language of their enemy. These characteristics seem contradictory, yet both of them exist alongside each other. This appears to be problematic, and therefore it seems possible that the contradictory characteristics could cause changes in language attitudes and/or language use. These observations form the main motivation for choosing the language situation in Ukraine, and more specifically the possible developments in language use and language attitudes, as the topic of this thesis.

Language and conflict

Whenever there is contact between two (or more) linguistic groups, there are bound to be tensions; and these tensions are likely to result in language conflict. A language conflict is usually defined as a situation of asymmetrical multilingualism, i.e. a situation in which there are differences between the social status, economic wellbeing, and political and religious values of speakers of different language varieties, and these social differences become connected with the linguistic differences (Darquennes, 2015, p. 13). Contrary to what the term 'conflict' might suggest, language conflict generally does not include violent actions like riots or all-out war but is limited to 'fighting' on a discursive level: opposing opinions on the use and institutionalization of different language varieties are discussed and debated in politics and in the media (Darquennes, 2015, pp. 13-14). In Ukraine, a non-violent language conflict was already present before 2014, but it is expected that the outbreak of the violent conflict will affect the language conflict that already existed. The pre-existing language conflict, i.e. the competition between the official status and institutionalization of the Ukrainian and Russian languages in Ukraine, has become part of the violent conflict as one of the languages is now marked as the language of the 'enemy of Ukraine' in that violent conflict. Furthermore, the status and use of the Russian language are an important factor within the conflict (cf. Ghosh (2014) and the Minsk Agreements); some politicians and scholars even argue that it is primarily an ethnolinguistic conflict (cf. Wade (2015)). If language was indeed one of the main causes of the violence, it would mean that the pre-existing language conflict had turned violent, but a careful analysis of censusdata and other factors that can cause violence indicates that the conflict is not along ethnic or linguistic lines (e.g. according to the latest Census ethnic Ukrainians formed an absolute majority in both Donec'k and Luhans'k regions (*All-Ukrainian Census 2001: national and linguistic affiliations*, 2001); Mylovanov (2016) shows that economic characteristics of a region are stronger and more robust predictors to rebel activities than the spread of the Russian language; and Wilson (2016) argues that the war is also due to Russian sponsorship and the actions of the local elite). These studies provide substantial evidence that

the violence is not caused by the language conflict, yet the framing of the conflict as ethnic means that the language issue is playing a significant role in the peace negotiations and the discourse about the conflict.

Theoretical framework

Taking a military conflict as the starting point to analyze a language conflict is an angle within conflict linguistics that, as far as I know, has not been used in previous studies. In order to provide a clear and complete theoretical background for this new angle of research, a general overview of the main issues and ideas from the research fields that are most relevant for this topic will be given in the next chapter. These fields are contact linguistics and conflict linguistics (e.g. Darquennes (2015) and Vetter (2015)); conflict studies (e.g. Footitt and Kelly (2012)); translation studies (e.g. Rafael (2010) and Baker (2010)); and language and identity studies (e.g. Edwards (2009)).

From these fields, three important concepts have been selected that are central to the analysis of the data and form the basis for the development of a framework of how a conflict affects language use and language attitudes. These concepts are 'divergence', a strategy used to dissociate oneself from an interlocutor by increasing the linguistic distance (Giles (1973)); 'intentional language change', i.e. the idea that people can consciously change their language (Thomason, 2006); and 'indexicality', the notion that the use of a certain language variety indexes many social meanings (Johnstone, Andrus, & Danielson, 2006); see for a more detailed description section 2.5.

Research questions

On the basis of the theoretical concepts described above it is expected that Ukrainians might change their language use in order to create more linguistic distance between the groups fighting on opposite sides of the military conflict. This thesis will therefore focus on whether the current military conflict in Ukraine affects the language use and attitudes of Ukrainians, and, if it does, which changes can be observed. This topic has been split into the following three subquestions:

    I. Are Ukrainians changing their language use since violent conflict erupted in 2014?
    II. Are Ukrainians changing their language attitudes since violent conflict erupted in 2014?
    III. Can the conflict be seen as causing these changes or are they due to other factors?

To find an answer to these research questions, the developments in the language use and attitudes were analyzed based on relevant scholarly literature on the topic and an empirical study of the results of language monitoring, surveys, and other relevant data on social media which will be discussed in chapter 4. This study was complemented by an online survey, which was developed as part of this thesis and included questions on language use, language attitudes, and possible changes since 2014. Furthermore, qualitative data were gathered during a field trip to Ukraine in the spring of 2017; the methodology and results of the survey and the fieldwork will be discussed in chapter 5. These chapters are preceded by an overview of the language situation in Ukraine before 2014 in chapter 3, which will provide a solid background for the understanding of the recent developments. In chapter 6 the results of the empirical study, survey, and fieldwork are discussed, and on the basis of the results a framework of how a military conflict can affect language use and language attitudes is developed. This chapter is followed by the conclusion, the bibliography, and the appendices.

2. Theoretical Framework

To the best of my knowledge there is not (yet) an encompassing theory on the effects of a (military) conflict on language use and language attitudes (neither in a bilingual nor in a monolingual setting). Therefore, several linguistic theories that relate to (a part of) this topic or explore it from a different angle will be discussed in this chapter in order to create a clear and complete theoretical framework for the research presented in this thesis. These theories will be followed by a more detailed description of the three main theoretical concepts of this thesis, i.e. divergence, intentional language change, and indexicality.

2.1 Conflict and language

Conflict, like most human phenomena, cannot happen without language. Even though we all intuitively know this, it is hard to determine what 'language' contributes to conflict specifically. As Chilton points out, language is part of most human social behaviors, and therefore it is impossible to isolate 'language' as a specific factor (Chilton, 1998, p. 2). He further argues that language cannot be seen as the cause of violent conflict despite the close links and definite contributions to it. One of the ways in which language contributes to conflict is through discourse: it is within a discourse that our concepts of 'war' and 'violent conflict' are conceptualized, and it is also through discourse that a rivalry or enmity between two or more groups is promoted (ibid. (pp. 6-10)). Secondly, language plays a fundamental role in communication. In a conflict situation this refers to both the communication between the different agents on one side of the conflict, i.e. the commander and soldiers, and the communication between the parties on opposite sides when declaring war and in peace negotiations (ibid. (pp. 11-14)). The final link between conflict and language is found in the idea of linguistic homogenization: the conviction that one nation should speak only one language. This idea causes tensions and can lead to violent conflict when nations want to conquer areas where the same language is spoken or groups that speak a different language variety want to form an independent nation (ibid. (pp. 4-5)). Chilton argues that in such instances 'linguistic difference [is] being selected and given political significance specifically to create identity through difference. To this extent the activity of codifying what may be naturally occurring differences contributes to cultural structures maintaining structures of hostility, violence, and warfare.'(ibid. (p. 5)).This is not only the case in wars: in her newest book, Piller shows extensively how many forms of social injustice and discrimination are anchored in linguistic differences (Piller, 2016). This thesis will build on the idea that linguistic differences are used and manipulated for political purposes in times of conflict: it is expected that the language use and language attitudes in Ukraine are changing as a result of the ongoing war.

2.2 Contact linguistics and conflict linguistics

Besides Chilton's article on the relation between conflict and language, there is actually a whole field of study devoted to language conflict: conflict linguistics (which was already mentioned in the introduction). The field of conflict linguistics is furthermore closely related to contact linguistics, both in methodology and the topics of research. 'Nelde's law' even states that there cannot be language contact without language conflict: even in situations where people might not be aware of a conflict, there is still latent tension between speakers of different languages (Nelde, 1995; Vetter, 2015, p. 107). The most important argument in favor of this law is the fact that there are no communities (known to us) that exhibit real and long-term symmetrical bilingualism; and, as was said before, whenever there is asymmetrical bilingualism, there will inevitably be (latent) tensions between speakers of the different languages or language varieties. This is also reflected in the idea that in every multilingual community there is a dominant and a dominated group/language, usually corresponding to the absolute majority and minority groups (Vetter, 2015, p. 106). Despite criticism on Nelde's law, there is a clear

consensus in the field that language contact very often results in language conflict (cf. Jahr (1993), and Fraenkel and Kramer (1993)).

However, it is not the contact between different language varieties that leads to the conflict: the linguistic differences are the more visible signs of underlying tensions between different linguistic groups, usually due to differences in social status, economic position, prestige etc. These socio-economic differences become associated with the linguistic differences and thus linguistic differences become a symbol for the conflict between the different groups. Therefore, language conflicts are also referred to as 'umgeleitete Sozialkonflikte' (diverted social conflicts) (Mattheier as quoted in Darquennes (2015, p. 12)).

Because the socio-economic and historical circumstances are different in each situation, Kramer (1993) distinguishes between different 'faces' of language conflicts: the conflict can be a language internal conflict between different varieties or standards of one language (cf. Mackridge (2012) on the conflict between different standards of Greek and Bull (1993) on the conflict between different standards in Norway), but it can also be an interaction between two languages or language varieties within a state (cf. Darquennes (2010) on minority languages in a European context), or it can be an intergroup conflict (cf. Bugarski (2012) on the languages, identities and borders in the Serbo-Croatian area). This latter 'face' of language conflict is similar to the situation in Ukraine: a military conflict between two groups, who stereotypically speak different language varieties.

Following the general trend in linguistics studies, the traditional approaches to conflict linguistics have been criticized in recent years for using macro-categories like 'standard language' and a 'minority' versus a 'dominant language' (Darquennes, 2015; Vetter, 2015). These categories do not take into account all the possible variations and combinations in language use and identification, i.e. the super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007), that can be distinguished when analyzing a language conflict at a micro-level, as, for example, Janssens did in his study of the language situation in Brussels (Janssens, 2015).(Janssens, 2015)(Janssens, 2015)

Conflict resolution: language planning

Whenever languages are in contact and a conflict arises, the tensions can be solved by applying language planning. However, as Jahr remarks: 'language planning activity may itself ultimately be the cause of serious problems as well as major conflicts'(Jahr, 1993, p. 1). There are (as of yet) no clear guidelines or universal solutions how to de-escalate a language conflict (Spolsky, 2012), but scholars in the academic field of language planning and policy, often abbreviated to LPP, are committed to describing different language situations and analyzing what kind of policies are successful. The description of the language situation is based on a language ecology, a framework developed by Haugen that does not only contain data on actual language use, language ideologies, and legislation, but also includes a historical, social, and geographical background (Dil, 1972). Most studies focus on language policy and planning at the level of a state or international bodies like the EU, but recently smaller levels of language 'governing' have also been included, see for example Liddicoat and Baldauf (2008) on language policy at a local level, and Spolsky (2009) on language management in the family, religion, workplace, media, schools, health institutions and the military. In this thesis, language policy is defined as 'an officially mandated set of rules for language use and form within a nation-state' (Spolsky, 2012, p. 3).

2.3 Other related fields

Apart from conflict linguistics there are two other academic fields in which the language use and/or language policy in times of conflict are studied: translation studies and military studies.

A certain branch within translation studies is focused on translators who work in conflict situations; these studies mostly discuss ethical issues translators face (cf. Salama-Carr (2007) and Stahuljak

(2010)). Military studies recently also started to do research on language use and policy in international peace-keeping missions; an overview of this field can be found in the book by Hilary Foottit and Michael Kelly, 'Languages at war' (2012). However, the research of this thesis does not touch upon these fields and thus they will not be discussed in detail.

2.4 Language and identity

After discussing the different theories and angles of research on language conflict and conflict linguistics, this section will address the relationship between language and identity. Even though the focus of this thesis is on conflict and language, 'the issues of group identity and linguistic allegiance are paramount [in each case of language conflict]' (Kramer, 1993, p. 3). Language and identity are two closely related terms; in fact, language is often taken as one of the most important markers of a person's identity, both their personal identity, i.e. their ethnicity, and their group identity, i.e. the nation to which they belong (Edwards, 2009). This view is part of the objectivist school of ethnicity that argues that concrete cultural institutions and patterns such as language and clothing define a person's ethnicity (Ross, 1979). It is indeed true that many ethnic groups have their own distinct languages, but there are also distinct ethnic groups that share a common language: 'ethnic differences do not always find parallels in linguistic differences and vice versa' (Lieberson as quoted in Appel & Muysken (2006, p. 15)). The subjectivist school of ethnicity accounts for this apparent lack of shared cultural institutions within certain ethnic groups by viewing ethnicity as defined by a subjective feeling of belonging, a shared us-feeling or us-against-them-feeling, which can override differences in other objective factors that are not shared, such as language (Ross, 1979). In this thesis the following definition of ethnicity will be used: 'ethnicity refers to an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group' (Isajiw as quoted in Edwards (2009, pp. 161-162)).

Language and nationalism

As mentioned earlier, language is not only connected to ethnicity, but also to nationalism. Parallel to the two schools of ethnicity, there are also two types of nationalism: ethnic nationalism, which promotes the idea that all those sharing the same ethnicity should be part of one nation (usually in the sense of those sharing primordial characteristics such as parental lineage and language); and civic nationalism, which is 'based on the voluntary association of individual citizens who agree to live according to common values and laws. […] The nation itself is seen as an autonomous legal-political community, defined by common territory, shared civic history and common laws, its members united by a common public culture' (Smith, 2007, p. 325). This distinction implies that civic nationalism is good and desirable, while ethnic nationalism is bad because it is exclusive, i.e. only those belonging to the same ethnic group can be included in the nation; civic nationalism is supposedly morally superior because it is open to all members of society, whatever language they speak or whoever their parents are (Edwards, 2009, pp. 175-180). Brubaker criticizes this stance by problematizing the terms 'inclusive' and 'exclusive': it can be argued that civic nationalism is equally exclusive to those who are not legal citizens of a state, like refugees, as ethnic nationalism is exclusive to those who speak a different language (Brubaker, 2004, pp. 141-144).

Continuing the thought that language and identity are linked, some people go even further and argue that language is pivotal for the survival and also right to existence of a people or nation, an idea that has been very popular since the late 18th century (Edwards, 2009, pp. 205-206). When people get the feeling that their language is under threat, for example when their native language becomes marginalized, efforts will be made to 'protect' the language by purist and prescriptivist actions (for a detailed overview of prescriptivism across time and space see Tieken-Boon van Ostade and Percy (2017)). However, the aim of this language protectionism is not only to protect the language but to

protect 'identity' in general, especially if there is a strong relationship between language and identity in a certain community (Edwards, 2009, pp. 212-216). Continuing this thought, it is likely that if the connections between a national language and the legitimization of a nation are strong, a threat to the nation will also lead to language protection.

Apart from the close relation with ethnicity and nationalism, language is also connected with other parts of identity, for example religion and regional identity (cf. Edwards (2009)). Not all these identities are relevant for this research, so they will not be discussed here. However, it is important to note that because language and different forms of identity are linked, certain stereotypes develop as people start associating a certain language variety with a particular identity; the development of these associations leads to certain attitudes towards speakers of that language variety and as a result, different language varieties express more or less prestige and power independently from the personal identity of the speaker (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 16).

2.5 Main theoretical concepts

Divergence (Accommodation Theory)

Accommodation Theory (AT) describes how and why people seem adjust their speech depending on (the speech of) their interlocutor, in other words how and why they accommodate. Giles (1973) argues that accommodation can happen in two directions: convergence and divergence. Convergence is a strategy used by a speaker to stress the similarities between themselves and the addressee, for example to receive the addressee's approval and to establish a common group identity. The strategy of divergence is the opposite: it stresses the differences and dissimilarities between the interlocutors and thus creates distance between them. Speakers can use divergence to dissociate themselves from their interlocutor and to show that they do not belong to the same group. The changes in speech can be small - in AT they are usually confined to slight changes in pronunciation or accent - and interlocutors might not be consciously aware of them (Giles, 1973). However, for bilingual interlocutors accommodation can be a change in language; a bilingual can switch to the language of the addressee, for instance because the addressee does not understand the first language of the speaker in which case accommodation has a communicative goal. When interlocutors are both bi- or multilingual, language choice also expresses their attitudes towards each other, and strategies of divergence and convergence can be used to indicate the social distance between the speakers (Sachdev, Giles, & Pauwels, 2013). For example, Gasiorek and Vincze (2016) found that by speaking only the minority language Swedish, even when addressed in the majority language Finnish, speakers stress their belonging to the Swedish minority group. In this case, not switching to the majority language is already a strategy of divergence. In Ukraine many people have a strong competence in both Ukrainian and Russian (at least passively), and thus language competence is usually not the cause for switching languages. Strategies of non-accommodation are indeed fairly common, especially in the capital Kyiv and on TV-shows (Bilaniuk, 2010). However, according to Bilaniuk non-accommodation is not necessarily a strategy of divergence in the Ukrainian context, but rather a method by which interlocutors can give expression to the equal status of both languages and the right of each individual speaker to use the language of their own preference. Nevertheless, language choice does often reflect a person's ethnic and political affiliations, and thus it can be used to stress the (dis)similarities between interlocutors (ibid.). This complicates the model of AT, as in Ukraine non-accommodation is not necessarily a strategy of divergence. However, this thesis will test whether strategies of divergence (including non-accommodation) have possibly become more common in Ukraine in the last few years, for instance because those who support the Ukrainian side in the war want to diverge from their Russian speaking 'enemies'.

Intentional language change

Traditionally language change is seen as 'inexorable': something that is not controlled by the speakers of a language (Thomason, 2006). Within historical linguistics the regularity of language change, i.e. the existence of sound laws, stipulates that language change cannot be influenced intentionally by an individual or group. But Thomason argues that 'deliberate and conscious decisions taken by speakers can be shown to be responsible for nontrivial changes in various grammatical subsystems in numerous languages' (2006, p. 347). First and foremost language is deliberately changed during campaigns of language planning, especially during standardization efforts: language agencies or academies often strongly advocate the use of certain linguistic features over others, mostly in vocabulary but there are examples of structural changes as well. Another type of deliberate language change can be found in slang which contains numerous conscious lexical innovations. Lastly, deliberate language change can be motivated by 'a concern to emphasize a group's identity vis-à-vis some other group(s)'(Thomason, 2006, p. 347).This type of change can also be a part of language planning, but it rarely involves official or governmental agencies. It is likely that Ukrainians currently also want to emphasize their group's identity vis-á-vis the Russian identity and thus are motivated to intentionally change their language use.

Indexicality

As already discussed, the use of certain language varieties can be associated with certain groups of speakers, for example an ethnic group. Speakers can also consciously use a certain language variety or linguistic form to express an identity that is associated with that language variety, i.e. they can index an identity by their language use (Bassiouney, 2015, p. 58). According to Johnstone et al. (2006, p. 81)() '[the] relationships between linguistic forms and social meaning can stabilize at various levels of abstraction or 'orders of indexicality''. These orders of indexicality were developed by Silverstein (2003) and describe the relations between language and social meaning in an increasingly abstract order. The first order of indexicality reflects the more direct relations between local, demographic identities and language use, for example to index place of origin (Johnstone et al., 2006, p. 78); the linguistic differences at this level are usually not consciously noticed or performed. The second order of indexicality requires more awareness and is more abstract: it is based on language ideologies and correlations with speech styles (Bassiouney, 2015, p. 60). In a conflict situation such as in Ukraine, it is likely that the awareness of linguistic differences between the people on opposite sides of the conflict increases. The increased awareness can become a trigger to change one's language use so that it is in better accordance with the social meaning that is indexed by this language use.

Using the concepts of divergence, intentional language change, and indexicality this thesis will analyze whether the language use and language attitudes of Ukrainians have changed since violent conflict erupted in 2014. It is expected that they will feel the need to strengthen their group identity and distance themselves from Russian by deliberately changing their language use.

3. Background: linguistic situation Ukraine

In order to properly understand the recent developments and the current linguistic situation in Ukraine, a general background of the country and the main linguistic developments up to 2014 will be given in this chapter. Ukraine is located on the steppe lands in the east of Europe, north of the Black Sea. It has been an independent country since 1991 and has a population of about 45 million people. The land presently belonging to Ukraine has often been split up and different parts for many years belonged to different (super)powers, e.g. the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Russian Empire. The southeastern regions already became a part of the Russian Empire in the 18th century, but the westernmost regions were still part of Poland, Romania and the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the end of the Second World War. After 1945, the Ukrainian lands as we know them now were united as the Socialist Soviet Republic (SSR) of Ukraine, which was part of the Soviet Union. The Crimean peninsula has a very different historical development from the rest of Ukraine[1] and was added to the Ukrainian SSR only in 1954. However, since 2014 the peninsula is de facto part of the Russian Federation. Due to the fact that Crimea is currently disputed territory, it is no longer included in Ukrainian nationwide surveys, which makes it hard to objectively discern what the current linguistic situation is. Therefore its linguistic peculiarities will not be treated in this thesis.

3.1 Language ecology

The two main languages of Ukraine are Ukrainian and Russian, two closely related East Slavic languages. According to the latest Census (2001) they are spoken natively by 68% and 30% of the citizens of Ukraine respectively, while 2% of the population has another native language. The Ukrainian and Russian standard languages arose from the East Slavic dialect continuum, and the dialects spoken on the territory of Ukraine still reflect that continuum: western Ukrainian dialects share many features with Polish, and northeastern Ukrainian dialects share features with standard Russian (Bilaniuk, 2004, pp. 412-413, 417-418).

As a result of the different historical developments of the eastern and western regions of Ukraine, the language use and attitudes differ significantly. After more than 250 years of Russian domination, the southeastern regions of Ukraine have had a much more significant influx of Russian settlers and a stronger dominance of the Russian language than the western regions. Therefore a significant part of the population in the eastern regions is ethnic Russian and/or speaks Russian natively. In the west, Polish (and to some extent Romanian, Hungarian and German) have been the language(s) of the elite, and today small pockets of speakers of these languages remain in the border areas. However, these minorities total no more than 1% of the population of Ukraine according to the 2001 Census. Figure 1 and Figure 2 provide an overview of the spread of Ukrainian as a native language and ethnic Ukrainians. In most regions the percentage of Ukrainian speakers and the percentage of Russian speakers add up to 95-100% so that if the percentage for Ukrainian is high, the percentage for Russian is low and vice versa. The main exceptions are the regions along the western border where native language and identity are from northwest to south: Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian.

As already mentioned (and clearly visible in Figure 1 and Figure 2), both the Russian language and a Russian identity are hardly present in western Ukraine, but have a strong presence in southern and eastern regions. Furthermore, a close look at the figures shows that in almost every region the dot that represents the main city or cities of that region is of a (slightly) lighter color than the surrounding area,

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[1] Crimea has never been part of Poland or Lithuania. From the 15th until the 18th century it was the center of the Crimean Khanate and inhabited by a majority of (Crimean) Tatars. In the 18th century it was annexed by the Russian empire and over time the Crimean Tatar population was slowly replaced by Russian settlers, until Stalin ordered the deportation of all Crimean Tatars to Siberia in 1943 after which ethnic Russians became the vast majority. Ukrainians have always formed a (small) minority on the peninsula as opposed to all other regions of the country where they form a majority, see for more details Magosci (2007).

indicating that every city is less Ukrainophone than the surrounding countryside. This fits with the historical development of Ukraine: in western regions the elite (mostly living in the cities) was not Ukrainian, but belonged to a regional (super)power, thus leading the stronger presence of a language like Polish in the city than on the countryside; in eastern regions, on the other hand, migration patterns account for the difference: the industrialization in these regions was accompanied by migrants who mainly came from Russia, and thus the cities in the east have a stronger presence of Russian.

A comparison of the Census data from 1989 and 2001 shows that there is an increase in the number of citizens declaring Ukrainian as their native language following independence: in 1989 33% of the population declared Russian as their native language against 30% in 2001, while Ukrainian was declared as native language by 65% in 1989, but by 68% in 2001 (*All-Ukrainian Census 1989: national and linguistic affiliations*, 1989; *All-Ukrainian Census 2001: national and linguistic affiliations*, 2001). The increased use of Ukrainian is also visible in the results of several sociological polls cited by Moser (2013, pp. 49-50) that show that the declared use of Ukrainian at home increased from 37% in1992 to 42% in 2011, but Moser stresses that the use of Russian increased even more in this period from 29% to 39% (at the expense of those reporting to use both Russian and Ukrainian).

Figure 1: percentage of inhabitants declaring Ukrainian as native language according to the 2001 Census.

Figure 2: percentage of inhabitants with Ukrainian ethnicity according to the 2001 Census.

The intense contact between Russian and Ukrainian has resulted in mixed varieties that are often referred to by the term 'Surzhyk' (literally 'impure language'). Surzhyk has a strong connotation of being a non-language and its speakers are often seen as backward by both Ukrainians and Russians (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 103-141). Surzhyk has become an umbrella term for many different types of mixed language use: it can refer to the mixed speech that is spoken natively by Ukrainians in certain areas, the code-switching of bilinguals, and the interference of one's native language when speaking the other language (for a detailed typology of the different kinds of Surzhyk see Bilaniuk (2004)). Moreover, by the majority of contemporary Ukrainians even many rural dialects are perceived as Surzhyk or as containing many Russian elements, especially the southeastern dialects (Del Gaudio, 2010). Because practically every language monitoring and all surveys do not take dialects and Surzhyk into account, very little is known about their usage. Whenever the sources mention dialects or Surzhyk it will be included, but the analysis will mostly focus on the Ukrainian and Russian standard languages.

As Ukrainians were divided over different states for many centuries, multiple standards were developed. Up until the formation of the Soviet Union, the western 'Galician' standard and the eastern standard competed (Shevelov, 1980, pp. 153-154). Furthermore, the use of Ukrainian was often restricted or partly forbidden: for example, it was forbidden to print Ukrainian books and to speak Ukrainian in public in the Russian Empire in the 19th century (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 74-78). In the 20th century, periods of Russification/Polonization alternated with short intervals of Ukrainization, the latter mostly during the short-lived independence in 1918-1920 and the 'korenizacija' (nativization) policy in the twenties. During the periods of Russification, not only was the use and knowledge of Russian promoted at the cost of Ukrainian, efforts were also made to assimilate the Ukrainian language to Russian by altering the grammar and vocabulary to make it more similar (see for examples Bilaniuk (2005, pp. 86-93)). Following independence in 1991, the norms of the standard are again debated as some people now want to undo the previous waves of Russification (Del Gaudio, 2015, pp. 151-153). However, these changes are not part of the official language policy, as will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.

3.2 Language practices and ideologies

As already mentioned in the previous section and illustrated by Figure 1 and Figure 2, the use of Russian and Ukrainian is not evenly spread across the country: Ukrainian is the native language and ethnicity in the west, center and in rural areas, while Russian is most strongly present in the east, south, and in cities. The uneven spread of languages over rural and urban areas corresponds to the stereotypical representation of the Ukrainian language as a 'farmer language', and Russian as the language of development and higher prestige (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 79, 90-91). Somewhat less apparent in Figure 1 and Figure 2 is the fact that a significant part (almost 15%) of ethnic Ukrainians does not speak Ukrainian natively but Russian, and a small part of ethnic Russians speaks Ukrainian natively, see Table 1. So even though ethnic Ukrainians in general speak Ukrainian and ethnic Russians Russian, this is not true for everyone.

Nationality	Native language Ukrainian	Native language Russian
Ukrainian	85%	15%
Russian	4%	96%

Table 1: native language per nationality according to the 2001 Census.

However, the figures from the 2001 Census do not necessarily reflect the actual use of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine today. Not only are the data 16 years old, the use of the term '*ridna mova*' (native language, Russian '*rodnoj jazyk*') is also problematic as its meaning is ambiguous: participants in the

Census have interpreted this term in very different ways, including as the language in which they think and can speak fluently or the language of the nationality to which they belong (see Moser (2013, pp. 45-46) for a discussion of this ambiguity). Many ethnic Ukrainians therefore listed Ukrainian as 'native language' while they do not actually speak it, which means other data are needed to analyze the actual language use. Several surveys held by sociological research institutes included questions on which language(s) people mainly use in certain domains and the results of these survey indicate that the use of Russian is much more widespread than the Census data on native language would suggest and in some polls almost equals the use of Ukrainian (*Stanovyšče ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Povnyj tekst*, 2012).

Another source for information on the actual use of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine is the language monitoring by the NGO Prostir Svobody. The results of the monitoring in 2012 and 2013 indicate that Russian is the dominant language in most domains in the southeastern regions of Ukraine, and in the media and the provision of information and services nationwide. Ukrainian, on the other hand, is dominant in all domains in the western regions and in the spheres of education and official (state) signage nationwide (*Stanovyšče ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Povnyj tekst*, 2012; *Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Prezentacija*, 2012; *Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2013 roci. Prezentacija*, 2013). This means that while on almost all train stations the official information relays are in the Ukrainian language, only in half of them does the personnel respond in Ukrainian to a question asked in that language (cf. Figure 4 in section 4.1 where a more detailed overview of the results of the monitoring before and after 2014 will be given).

The use of both Ukrainian and Russian is common in many regions in Ukraine, especially in the central regions. This has resulted in the popularity of the practice of 'non-accommodation', which, as already discussed in the previous chapter (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 175-177). Since it is expected that each citizen of Ukraine has at least passive knowledge of both Ukrainian and Russian, non-accommodation allows speakers to use the language they prefer underlining the equal status of the languages and pertaining to the ideology that languages should not be mixed (each speaker can speak 'pure', non-mixed language) (ibid.). Non-accommodation further illustrates the fact that in Ukraine speakers of different languages interact peacefully and little discrimination based on language use is reported (research by Hromads'ka Dumka found that a majority of Ukrainians has never experienced discrimination of Russian speakers by Ukrainian speakers (74%), or vice versa of Ukrainian speakers by Russian speakers (67%) (Masenko, 2009, pp. 117-119)). Interestingly, more people witnessed discrimination of Ukrainian speakers than of Russian speakers, but it confirms what is also argued by Moser (2013, pp. 46-47): that the Ukrainian language is in some respects similar to a minority language in that its use is still frowned upon or seen as 'marked' behavior in several regions.

Even though in day-to-day conversations both languages coexist peacefully, the language ideologies people adhere to are often opposing: on the one hand there are supporters of Russification, who want to restore the previous prestige of the Russian language within Ukraine; on the other hand there are Ukrainian nationalists, who see the Ukrainian language as the only language for the Ukrainian nation-state. Furthermore, there are many variations in between: some people prefer an extended use of Ukrainian or Russian; others support different forms of bilingualism (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 93-102; Kulyk, 2009, pp. 18-22). It is important to note that the kind of language policy people claim to support does not necessarily coincide with what they would see as the preferred outcome: some groups claim to support 'bilingualism', but in effect they are proponents of the continued dominance of the Russian language (Moser, 2013, pp. 69-70).

3.3 Language policy

Language policy in Ukraine is a sensitive topic because the strengthening of the Ukrainian language and the recognition of Russian lie at the heart of many people's national identity (Bilaniuk, 2015). While there may be peaceful coexistence in everyday communication, language ideologies are almost diametrically opposed, which has resulted in many demonstrations on the street and even fights in parliament (Elder, 2012). Despite, or maybe because of this, the official language policy of Ukraine is mostly maintaining the status quo and not making substantial changes to strengthen the position of either Ukrainian or Russian. From independence until 2010 the use of Ukrainian was stimulated, especially in education and state institutions, but in most other domains, such as media and business, Russian remained the dominant language (Bilaniuk, 2005, pp. 93-102; Kulyk, 2009, pp. 18-22).

The lack of a clear central policy resulted in regional differences in the implementation of various language policies. In the west, most schools became Ukrainian language schools, but Russian schools remain available and most Ukrainian language schools also offered Russian as a 'foreign language' (Janmaat, 2000; Wylegała, 2010, pp. 33-34). However, in the eastern regions of Donec'k and Luhans'k, less than half of the pupils were attending a Ukrainian language school in 2012 (*Stanovyšče ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Povnyj tekst*, 2012).

Under president Janukovyč (2010-2014) state support for Ukrainian declined and in 2012 a new law on languages was adopted. This law states that: 'a language can become an official regional language if at least 10% of the inhabitants of the region declare that language to be their native language'. The law and its adoption were highly disputed and there were fierce demonstrations against it in western Ukraine. Many feared that this law would undermine the position of Ukrainian, especially in those regions where its position was already weak, as it gave Russian speakers an excuse not to learn Ukrainian at all. The law was also criticized by international institutions like the Venice Commission and the OSCE, mainly because it would in effect support only the Russian language and to some extent Hungarian and Romanian, but not small minority languages like Bulgarian and Greek. However, in southeastern regions the law was met with joy, and many city and regional councils adopted Russian as their official language (Moser, 2013, pp. 269-290, 297-312, 385-395, 413-417).

4 Developments in the language situation since 2014

This chapter will discuss empirical data as well as recent language monitoring and surveys to investigate whether these data point to changes in the language use and language attitudes in the last three years and whether these changes are related to the outbreak of violent conflict. This analysis will provide preliminary answers to the research questions that will be compared to the results of the thesis survey and fieldwork in chapter 6.

4.1 Recent changes in language use

In order to see whether the reported language use has changed since 2014 it is best to compare the results of nationwide surveys held before and after 2014. Both Prostir Svobody and Razumkov Center have continued doing nationwide monitoring and surveys using the same questions and methodologies, which ensures an optimal comparability of the results. However, due to the conflict some parts of the territory of Ukraine were not under the control of Ukrainian authorities during this period, and surveys taken at different points in time do not necessarily cover the same territory. Unless specified otherwise, the survey results that are compared here will cover the same territories, meaning they most likely do not include Crimea and (part of) Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts.

In December 2015 and March 2017 Razumkov Center held nationwide surveys in which they asked respondents about their language use at home and outside of their home. Comparing the results to a poll held by the Research & Branding Group (R&BG), it seems that there is an increase in the use of Ukrainian and also in the use of both languages, while there is a decrease in the use of Russian (see also Figure 3). However, unfortunately the results of the 2011 survey are not split up per region and they do include Crimea and Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts, while the surveys from 2015 and 2017 do not. Thus, it is not clear to which extent the relative increase of people who speak mostly Ukrainian is due to an absolute increase of people speaking Ukrainian or merely a result of the exclusion of the three regions with the highest number of Russian speakers (according to the census). However, the changes between 2015 and 2017 cannot be the result of a difference in the regional coverage of the surveys, which means that the relative increase in the use of Ukrainian over this period is an indication that more Ukrainians are reporting to speak Ukrainian inside and outside of their homes.
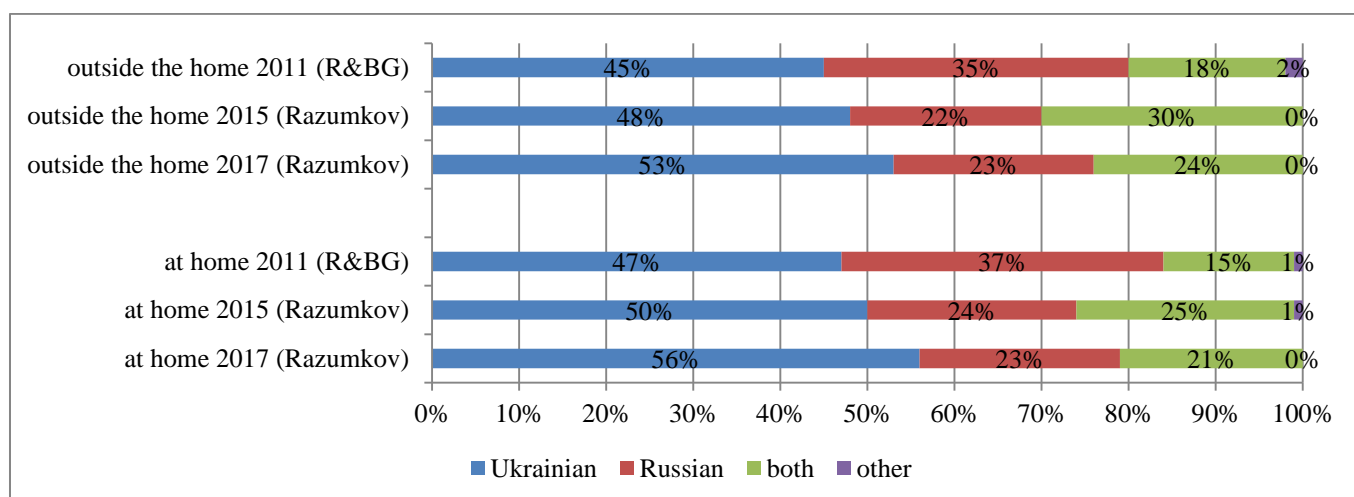

Figure 3: language use at home and outside the home 2011-2015-2017 (*Osnovni zasady ta šljaxy formuvannja spil'noï identyčnosti hromadjan ukraïny*, 2017; *Osoblyvosti identyčnosti okremyx movnyx i nacional'nyx hrup*, 2016; *Stanovyšče ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Povnyj tekst*, 2012).

Within the domain of education Ukrainian is still the dominant language, and the statistics show an increase of 8% (from 82% to 90%) in pupils receiving education with Ukrainian as the language of instruction (*Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2016 roci. Analityčnyj ohljad*, 2016). However,

in his blog at the Portal of Language Policy Stanislav Svidlov shows that this increase is only the effect of the exclusion of Crimea and parts of Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts from these statistics: if Crimea, Donec'k Oblast and Luhans'k Oblast are excluded from the pre-2014 data, the percentage of pupils having Ukrainian as the language of instruction is a stable 91% over the period 2012-2016 (Svidlov, 2017). However, Svidlov also shows that there are significant changes in the number of pupils learning Russian: while from 2012 to 2014 half of the pupils studied Russian the percentage decreased sharply to 36% in the 2016-2017 school year (Svidlov, 2017).
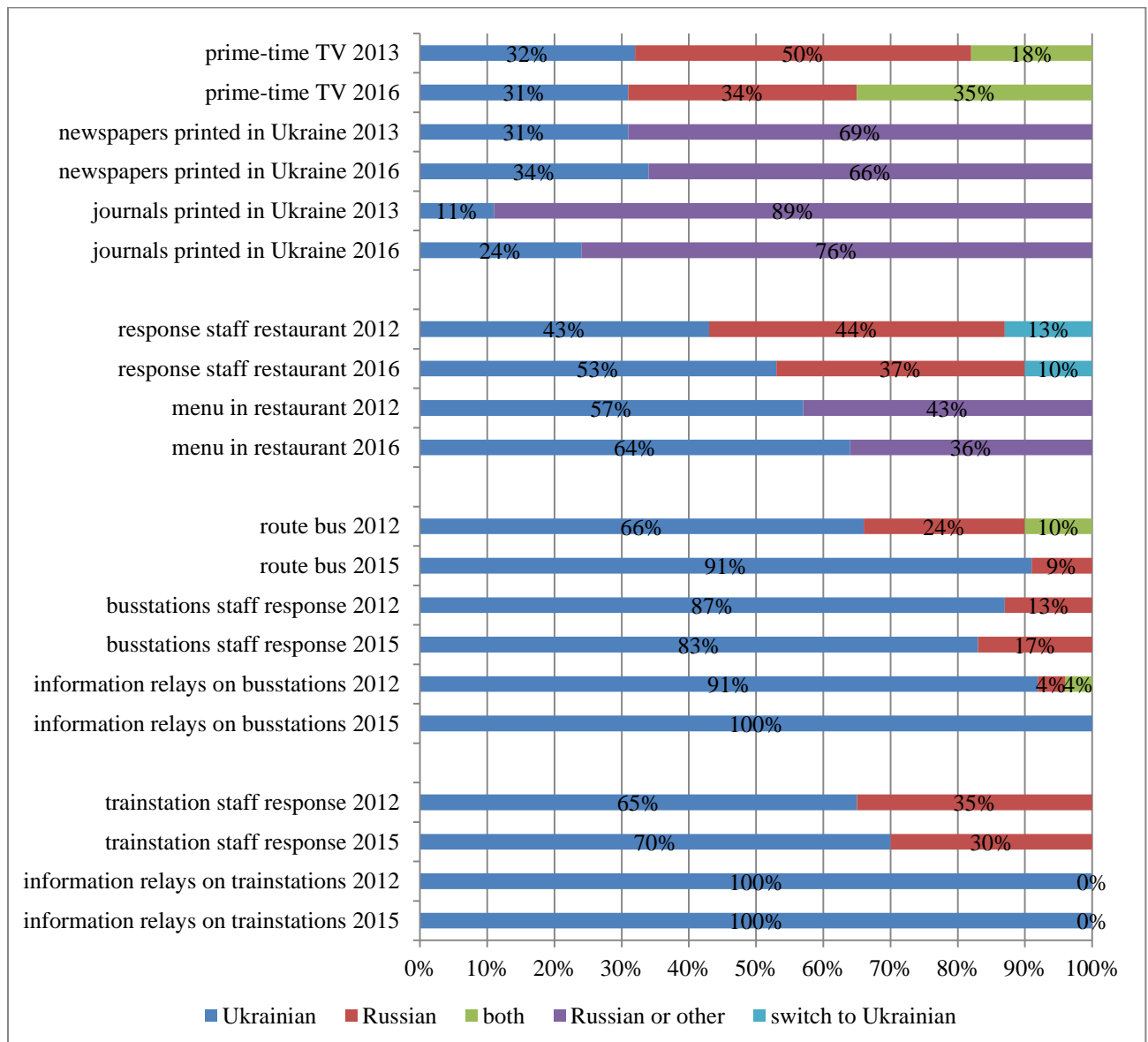

Figure 4: language use in the media and in the sphere of information and services 2012-2016 (*Stanovyšče ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2012 roci. Povnyj tekst*, 2012; *Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2014-15 rokax. Analityčnyj ohljad (infohrafika)*, 2015; *Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2016 roci. Analityčnyj ohljad*, 2016).

Monitoring by Prostir Svobody further indicates that in the domains of media and information provision there is also a decrease in the use of Russian (see also Figure 4). However, in the media Russian is still clearly the dominant language: two out of three newspapers and three out of four journals printed in Ukraine in 2016 were in Russian, and 69% of the monitored TV content was fully or partially in Russian. At first glance, the graph seems to indicate a substantial decrease of Russian from 50% in 2013 to 34% in 2016, but, due to an increase in the bilingual content from 18% to 35%,

Russian is still used more than Ukrainian, and the increase of Ukrainian occurs only alongside Russian. The data from the sphere of information and services in Figure 4 are only based on the monitoring of mainland Ukraine excluding (most of) Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts[2], and thus differences in percentages can only express changes in observed language use. In 2016 the responses of restaurant staff were 10% more in Ukrainian and the availability of a menu in Ukrainian increased with 7%. The information provision at train and bus stations has also become more Ukrainian: the official signage is now for over 90% in Ukrainian. However, the language in which personnel responds to a question asked in Ukrainian did not change much and at bus stations the monitoring even shows an increase of responses in Russian from 13% in 2012 to 17% in 2015.

Apart from the increased use of Ukrainian indicated by the surveys and monitoring mentioned above, there is also a surge in grassroots movements supporting and popularizing the use of Ukrainian following the Euromaidan revolution (Bilaniuk, 2016a). Some of those movements encourage Ukrainians to learn (more pure) Ukrainian, others to speak it more, and some assist Russian speakers in switching to Ukrainian in everyday life. An example is 'Perexod' na ukraïns'ku' (switch to Ukrainian), an initiative that shares stories of Russian speakers who switched to Ukrainian and tries to encourage others to follow their example ("Perexod' na ukraïns'ku,"). The popularity of such language movements is a further indication that the use of Ukrainian is increasing, thus supporting the data of the surveys and the monitoring discussed above.

4.2 Recent changes in language attitudes

There are not as many detailed surveys on language attitudes as there are on language use, especially not ones asking the same questions before and after 2014. However, in 2016 Volodymyr Kulyk published an article in which he discusses the results of a survey in which people were asked whether their attitudes towards the Ukrainian and Russian languages had changed in the previous year (i.e. 2014). He shows that the majority of the population did not report changes in their language attitudes, but those who reported changes, mostly reported a more positive attitude towards Ukrainian and a more negative attitude towards Russian (Kulyk, 2016), see Figure 5. A more positive attitude was also reported for the Ukrainian flag and anthem, and according to Kulyk, the similar development of these national symbols of Ukraine indicates that Ukrainian is not just seen as the legal official language, but as the language of the Ukrainian nation. The worsening in the attitude towards the Russian language was most strongly in the western regions, while in some eastern regions there was a worsening in attitudes towards Ukrainian. Focus group discussions confirmed that these changes are often due to the negative sentiments stemming from the current conflict (Kulyk, 2016, pp. 599-602).
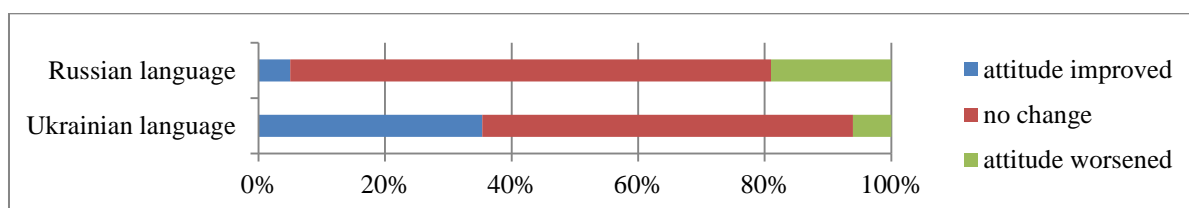

Figure 5: answers to the question: 'How has your attitude towards the following changed for the last year?' from a survey held by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology in September 2014 (Kulyk, 2016, p. 599).

In their nationwide surveys Razumkov Center frequently asks respondents how they think the Ukrainian and Russian languages should coexist in Ukraine, i.e. what status they should have on the national and regional level. Figure 6 shows the results of surveys taken in 2005, 2012, and 2015. It is

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[2] The data on the language use in restaurants do include the monitoring in the city of Mariupol' in Donec'k Oblast in both 2012 and 2016. The data on language use on train and bus stations do not include any city in Donec'k or Luhans'k Oblasts in both 2012 and 2015.

striking how over these years the support for Ukrainian as the sole state and official language has grown, whereas the percentage of people in favor of two state languages has declined from 37% in 2005 to 14% in 2015. However, in the results for 2015 Crimea and Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts are not included. As Crimea and Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts were the Ukrainian regions with the highest percentage of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers, the exclusion of these regions will have contributed to the relative increase of support for Ukrainian as the only official state language in 2015. The 2015 Razumkov survey also asked a question about the prestige of the Russian and Ukrainian languages in respondents' direct social environment, which was not included in previous surveys. Overall, 43% of the respondents said Ukrainian was more prestigious, and only 22% said Russian was more prestigious, but there were very strong regional differences: in the western regions Ukrainian was chosen as more prestigious by 88% , however, in Donec'k and Luhans'k Oblasts, Russian was considered more prestigious by 50% and Ukrainian by only 11% (*Stanovyšče Ukraïns'koï movy v Ukraïni v 2016 roci. Analityčnyj ohljad*, 2016). Thus, with regards to language ideology the opposition between supporters of Ukrainization, bilingualism, and Russification remains, but with a shift towards stronger support for Ukrainization.
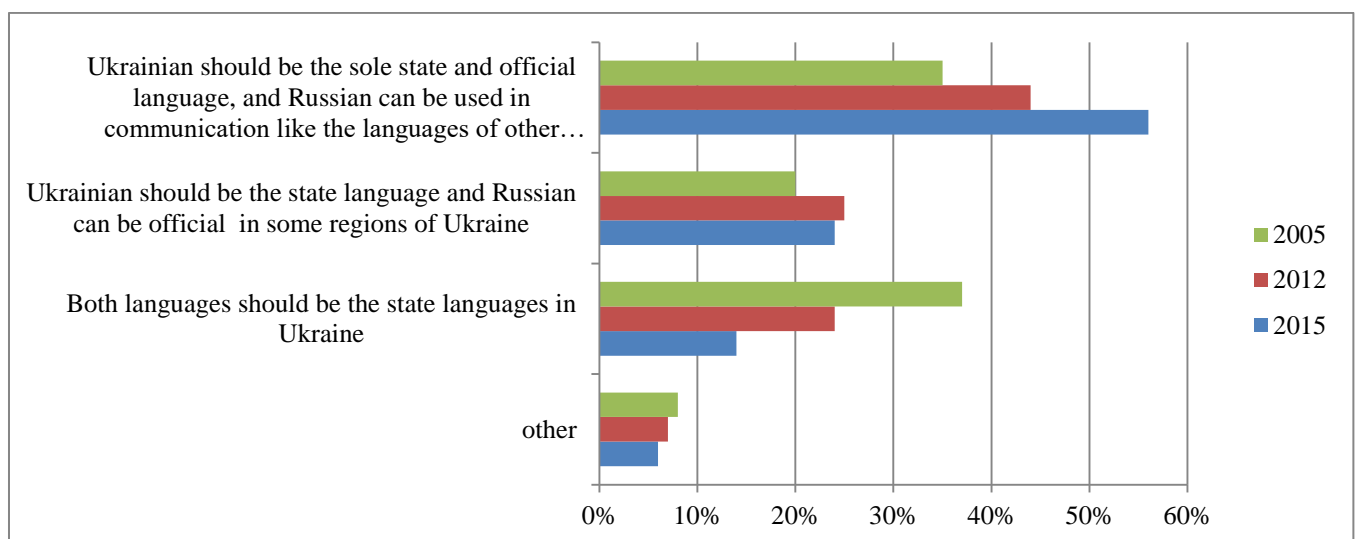

Figure 6: development of support for official status Russian and Ukrainian 2005-2015 (Moser, 2013, p. 66; *Osoblyvosti identyčnosti okremyx movnyx i nacional'nyx hrup*, 2016).

Yet according to Bilaniuk (2016b) the opposition between supporters of Ukrainian and Russian is no longer the only dichotomy in the language attitudes of Ukrainians: since 2014 there is also an opposition between people for whom language practices and policy are very important, so to whom 'language matters', and a group to whom 'language does not matter'. This opposition is not just about whether or not it matters which language someone speaks, i.e. Ukrainian or Russian, but also the kind of language, i.e. whether it is the 'pure' and 'correct' form of the language or Surzhyk. There are many groups and initiatives on social media that are concerned with 'correct' language use; an example is the organization 'Mova – DNK naciï', that posts cartoons promoting correct language use on their website and social media pages ("Mova - DNK naciï," ; "Mova Facebook,") For those to whom language does not matter, it is not about the language you use but about what you say, not about the medium but the content. They mostly support a form of bilingualism, either because it is the status quo or because they reject the idea that a (nation-)state should be ethnolinguistically unitary (Bilaniuk, 2015). For example, in June 2014 a group of bloggers founded the online platform 'Repka Club' where they publish blogs using many nonstandard linguistic forms including Surzhyk, and there are

several organizations uniting Russophone Ukrainian nationalists, who do not think that speaking Russian is an obstacle for Ukrainian nationalism ("Repka Club website," ; "RUN Facebook page,"). However, there are also Ukrainians who believe that the development of the national language and the development of the nation-state are intertwined, and for them the use of (the right kind of) Ukrainian is very important. Those people are mostly in favor of a comprehensive Ukrainization policy that will undo the previous Russification, which they believe is justified because it will merely correct the historical wrongdoings of the Russian and Soviet 'occupation' of Ukraine; even though they do not advocate the prohibition of the Russian language, many would prefer a monolingual Ukrainian state. Moreover, many adhere to an extensive narrative in which the bond between language and nation is elaborated. This bond includes, for example, the idea that if the language is weak, the nation will be weak, and as long as the language thrives, so will the state. These strong associations between language, identity, nationalism, and the state can subsequently be interpreted as causations: by speaking Ukrainian, you are supporting not just linguistic independence but the sovereignty of the Ukrainian state in general. Following this narrative, speaking Ukrainian becomes a weapon in the war against Russia, but at the same time these ideas make the use of Russian in Ukraine problematic. If speaking Ukrainian equals building a strong Ukrainian state and supporting its independence, then speaking Russian, the language of the enemy and (former) occupier, would equal supporting the Russian state or conceding to your (former) Russian masters like a slave. For some nationalists the Ukrainian language is not only a symbol for the Ukrainian state and nation, but also for democracy, European values and basically everything that is 'good', while the Russian language is a symbol for the Russian state, the enemy, totalitarianism and corruption. An example of how these ideas are expressed in social media can be found in Figure 7, a picture in which Russophone Ukrainian patriotism is discredited as a form of Ukrainian patriotism that covertly enables Russia to infiltrate Ukraine.

Figure 7: a picture shared on Ukrainian social media with the caption: Russophone Ukrainian patriotism ("Mova Facebook,").

The idea that speaking Russian actually enables Russia to infiltrate Ukraine is derived from Russian propaganda surrounding the annexation of Crimea and the formation of the Donec'k and Luhans'k People's Republics. As part of this propaganda, Russian authorities argued that Russian troops came to 'protect their Russian(speaking) compatriots' in these regions and that they reserve the right to protect Russians in other regions in the future (Lally & Englund, 2014). Following this line of thought,

speaking Russian can be interpreted as an invitation for Russian troops. For a significant number of Russian speakers who switched to Ukrainian in 2014, this rhetoric was one of the main reasons to switch: 'not to give the Russians an excuse to send their troops' ("Perexod' na ukraïns'ku,").

4.3 Recent developments in language policy

In February 2014, just days after president Janukovyč had fled the country, the Ukrainian parliament voted to abolish the 2012 language law. Even though this law was not abolished in the end (because acting President Turchynov vetoed it), this action resulted in widespread distrust of the new authorities in the east and south, and it can be seen as a contributor to the current conflict ("Johnson: different tongues, common homes," 2014). Following the elections of a new President and parliament in May and October 2014 respectively, the language policy has again been focused on maintaining the status quo. President Porošenko and his government advocate the strengthening of Ukrainian as the only official state language while guaranteeing the rights of speakers of all minority languages, a policy highly resembling the language policy before 2010 ("Jacenjuk propyše v Konstytuciï rosijs'ku movu dlja Donbasu," 2014; "Porošenko: v Ukraïni zavždy bude lyše odna deržavna mova," 2015; Syvačuk, 2017). Since the 2012 language law is still in place, Russian is allowed to have official status on a regional level; this frustrates Ukrainian nationalists, but the President and government have not touched upon this issue, trying to strike a balance between supporters of Ukrainization and Russification and to prevent both from revolting against authorities (Babich, 2014).

Nevertheless, civil society organizations are demanding more decisive changes to the existing laws on the status of languages and their use in public domains: by actively participating in writing and lobbying for new laws, they push the government towards more comprehensive Ukrainization policies. So far this has resulted in two laws providing language quotas for the use of Ukrainian on TV and in songs on the radio ("Pro vnesennja zmin do Zakonu Ukraïny "Pro telebačennja i radiomovlennja"," 2016). In addition to these laws, the parliament currently reviews three comprehensive proposals on the status and use of the official state language, i.e. Ukrainian. The adoption of any one of these proposals would foresee in a full-scale Ukrainization, as all three impose quota for the use of Ukrainian in broadcast media and make it obligatory for all civil servants to be fluent in Ukrainian. These measures are not supported by everyone and there is a lot of criticism on the laws, especially from Russian speakers and representatives of linguistic minorities in Ukraine (Studennikova, 2017). According to the results of the 2015 survey by Razumkov Center, a large proportion (45%) of Ukrainians do not think the authorities have the right to restrict the use of non-state languages (compared to 33% who think it is within the rights of the authorities ("Osoblyvosti identyčnosti okremyx movnyx i nacional'nyx hrup," 2017)), and a quota for Ukrainian in the media would inevitably restrict the use of Russian. Nevertheless, the results of that survey also show that there is broad support among the population for the strengthening and development of the Ukrainian language as the only official state language: 59% say authorities should promote Ukrainian regardless of how that affects other languages. Thus as long as the laws stipulate an increase in the share of Ukrainian as a result of which the share of Russian decreases, a majority of the population supports such measures; if, however, the formulation was the other way around, they would not support the measures.

Summary

The empirical research discussed in this chapter has provided a preliminary answer to the research question whether there have been changes in the language use and attitudes of Ukrainians: the analysis of data from before and after 2014 shows that there have been changes in the last three years. Most data point to an increase in the reported use of Ukrainian. It is hard to tell whether the changes in reported use reflect changes in actual language use, but the flourishing of all kinds of initiatives promoting and supporting the use of Ukrainian indicate that there is a stronger societal demand for the

use of Ukrainian. The stories shared on 'Perexod' na ukraïns'ku' furthermore confirm that there is a group of Russian speakers who have switched to Ukrainian. There are also changes in language attitudes: the attitudes towards Ukrainian became more positive and there is now stronger support for its status as the only official state language; the attitudes towards Russian became somewhat more negative. For some people, the importance of the Ukrainian language for the Ukrainian identity and nation has increased: they are convinced that language matters a lot and therefore they have become active in the language initiatives to advocate for a stronger Ukrainization policy. However, there are also people for whom language does not matter and who are using Surzhyk and Russian irrespective of their political views, like the bloggers of Repka club.

In the following chapter the results of the thesis survey and fieldwork will be treated and in chapter 6 these results will be compared to the results of the empirical research discussed in this chapter.

5. Survey and Fieldwork

As part of this thesis a survey on the language use and attitudes of Ukrainians was developed, and it was shared online in spring 2017. The optimal method for this research would have been to compare the results of a survey held before 2014 with a survey asking the same/similar questions after 2014. Unfortunately, such a survey was not carried out before 2014 and only the data from 2017 are available. To complement the quantitative data from the online survey, fieldwork was carried out during a trip to Ukraine in spring 2017, which included street surveys in four different cities as well as interviews with Ukrainians from different walks of life. The methodologies and results of the survey will be treated in section 5.1, followed by the methodologies and results of the fieldwork in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

5.1 Survey on language use and language attitudes

5.1.1 Methodology

In order to reach as many Ukrainians as possible from different regions, ages etc., an online survey was created and spread via Facebook. Of course, the Ukrainian community on Facebook is not representative for the whole Ukrainian society[3], but it was the easiest platform to reach Ukrainians while being located in the Netherlands. The online survey was developed using Qualtrix.com and was shared on Facebook from February 15th until March 1st, 2017. In total over a thousand people participated, 873 of whom completed all the questions. Only the data of respondents who completed the survey were included in the analysis.

The survey was designed as follows: first some general questions were asked about age, gender and occupation, as well as questions on native language and ethnic identity; these were followed by more detailed questions on the knowledge of different languages and their usage; then some questions on language attitudes were asked including two questions about language change and finally respondents were asked about whether or not they agreed to 12 statements on language policy and language use (see Appendix 1 for the English translation of the survey). The survey was designed in English and then translated into Ukrainian and Russian. The translations were checked by native speakers to make sure the questions were clear and contained no grammatical mistakes. The idea was that the first screen would show a menu where respondents could choose the language of their preference, but this was impossible using the Qualtrix design. Instead there was a menu on the upper right side of the screen where respondents could alter the language settings. From several comments made by respondents it can be deducted that for some of them the default language was Ukrainian and for others it was Russian. Furthermore, it was not clear for all respondents that they could change the language settings as some added a comment saying that they became aware of this option only near the end of the survey. As the user language does not necessarily reflect the preference or choice of the respondents, it was decided not to take the language settings into account when analyzing the results.

5.1.2 Respondents

As already mentioned, 873 respondents completed the survey. The majority of the respondents are female and one third is male, see Table 2. This Table also shows the distribution of the respondents

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[3] According to the website www.watcher.com.ua the number of Ukrainian Facebook users was 5,4 million in June 2016 (which is about 12% of the whole population). Furthermore, the statistical analysis of the website shows that in March 2017 the websites of VKontakte and Odnoklasnyky (other social media websites) were visited by a larger share of the Ukrainian internet users than Facebook http://watcher.com.ua/2017/04/13/olx-ta-pryvatbank-obiyshly-facebook-za-misyachnym-ohoplennyam-internet-audytoriyi-v-ukrayini/. Finally, as Onuch (2015) mentions, the users of social media are mostly young and middle aged people, living in western or central regions of Ukraine, mostly professionals with high education, typically Russian-Ukrainian bilinguals, thus not a representative sample of the whole Ukrainian population.

over the five age groups: over half of the respondents are in the middle age group of 26 to 40, followed by a quarter aged 41 to 65, and one sixth aged 18 to 25. Because only a handful of respondents are younger than 18 or older than 65, these categories were merged into one group of those 25 and younger, and a group with respondents of 41 and older.

	Male	Female	Other	Total
<18	2	1	1	4
18-25	55	86	0	141
26-40	171	305	1	477
41-65	76	165	0	241
>65	4	6	0	10
Total	308	563	2	873

Table 2: age and gender of the survey respondents.

Almost all respondents completed higher education (94%), while the other respondents completed secondary education (5%), or primary education (less than 1%); 1% did not want to say.

Because it was intended to do a detailed analysis based on the regional origin of respondents including their rural or urban background, it was considered useful to ask respondents an open question about their place of residence, so that one question would suffice for making different categorizations. However, as it was an open question, a number of respondents did not give their specific place of residence but instead answered 'Ukraine'. Because these respondents could not be categorized in a specific region in Ukraine, they were included in the category 'other', see Table 3.

	Ethnic Ukrainian	Ethnic Russian	Bi-ethnic	Other	Total
Western Ukraine	208	3	4	10	225
Central Ukraine	375	16	25	38	454
Southern Ukraine	26	1	1	1	29
Eastern Ukraine	44	9	8	8	69
Other	81	3	4	8	96
Total	734	32	42	65	873

Table 3: region of residence and ethnicity of survey respondents.

Overall, more than half of the respondents reside in the central regions of Ukraine[4]; a quarter resides in western regions[5]; only 3% of the respondents are from the southern regions of Ukraine[6]; and 8% live in the eastern regions[7]; 11% fall within the category 'other' including some respondents who did not declare a specific place of residence (within Ukraine), or who are currently living abroad, see Table 3 for an overview of these data. This table also shows the ethnicity of the respondents: 84% report to be ethnic Ukrainians, a rather small minority declared to be ethnic Russian (3%), a slightly bigger group report to be both ethnic Ukrainian and ethnic Russian (5%), and 8% of the respondents have a different ethnic identity.

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[4] Kyiv city, Kyïvs'ka Oblast, Žytomyrs'ka Oblast, Xmel'nyc'ka Oblast, Vinnyc'ka Oblast, Čerkas'ka Oblast, Kirovohrads'ka Oblast, Poltavs'ka Oblast, Sums'ka Oblast, and Černihivs'ka Oblast

[5] Volyns'ka Oblast, Rivnens'ka Oblast, L'vivs'ka Oblast, Ternopil's'ka Oblast, Zakarpats'ka Oblast, Ivano-Frankivs'ka Oblast, and Černivec'ka Oblast

[6] Odes'ka Oblast, Mykolaïvs'ka Oblast, and Xersons'ka Oblast

[7] Xarkivs'ka Oblast, Dnipropetrovs'ka Oblast, Zaporiz'ka Oblast, Donec'ka Oblast, and Luhans'ka Oblast

Finally, the political views of the respondents were distilled by asking a question about their participation in and views on the Euromaidan and Antimaidan movements. The assumption is that if they supported Euromaidan, they most likely have rather pro-European and nationalistic political views; if they supported Antimaidan they most likely have pro-Russian political views. The vast majority of respondents either actively participated (33%) or supported (52%) Euromaidan; there were no active participants of Antimaidan, but 13 respondents said they supported the movement; 6% was neutral, 4% was against both, and 3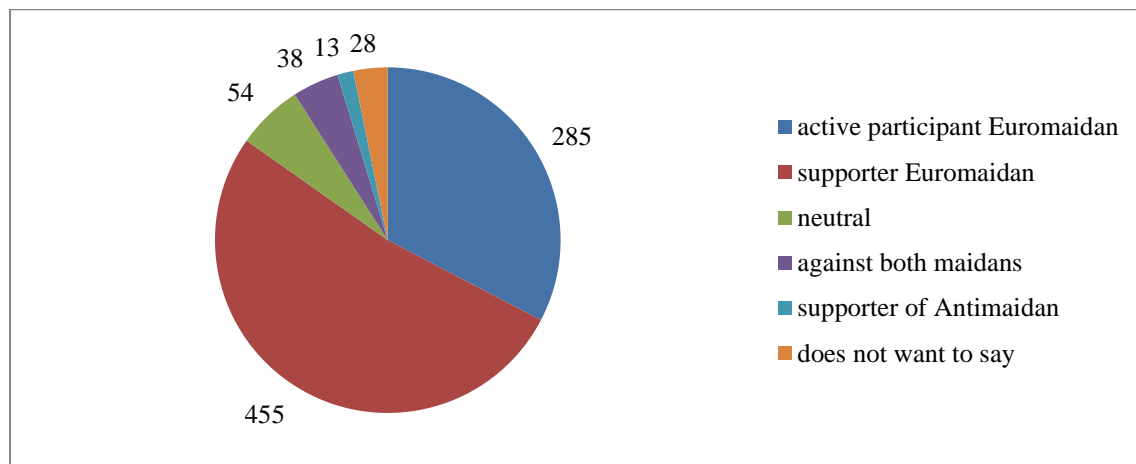% did not want to say, see also Figure 8**Figure 8: political stance of survey respondents****Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.**.

Figure 8: political stance of survey respondents.

Thus, the respondents of the survey mostly represent ethnic Ukrainians from central and western regions with higher education and pro-Ukrainian and/or nationalistic political views, almost all working age and with a female bias.

5.1.3 Results

In the survey three questions were asked about language use and identification: what is your native language; which language(s) do you speak at home; and which language(s) did you speak at home in your childhood. The distribution of the languages is different for each question: while Ukrainian is reported as native language by a clear majority of the respondents, it is reported as current home language by significantly fewer respondents, and less than an absolute majority reports it as childhood home language. Especially in the latter category respondents report to use only Russian more often than in the other categories (35% versus 26% as current home language and 15% as native language). In Figure 9 these differences are clearly visible.
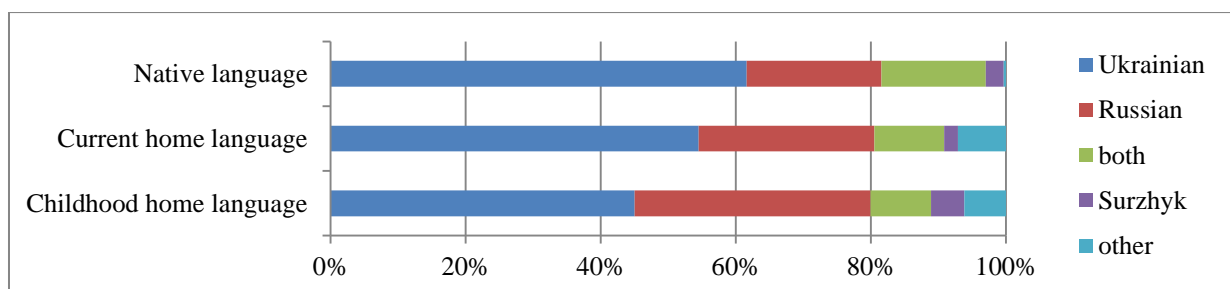

Figure 9: reported language use (n = 873).

In Figure 10, the data on reported language use are split up according to age group. It is clear that there is not only a persistent increase of Ukrainian from childhood home language to current home language

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and native language, but also from respondents aged over 41 to respondents aged 26 until 40 and respondents aged 25 and younger. A χ-square test was performed for each question to determine whether there is an association between age group and reported language. The tests showed that there is a significant association between a younger age and reporting Ukrainian instead of Russian: for native language x^2 (8) = 26.28, p = 0.001; for home language x^2 (8) = 24.11, p < 0.05; and for childhood home language x^2 (8) = 29.35, p < 0.001.
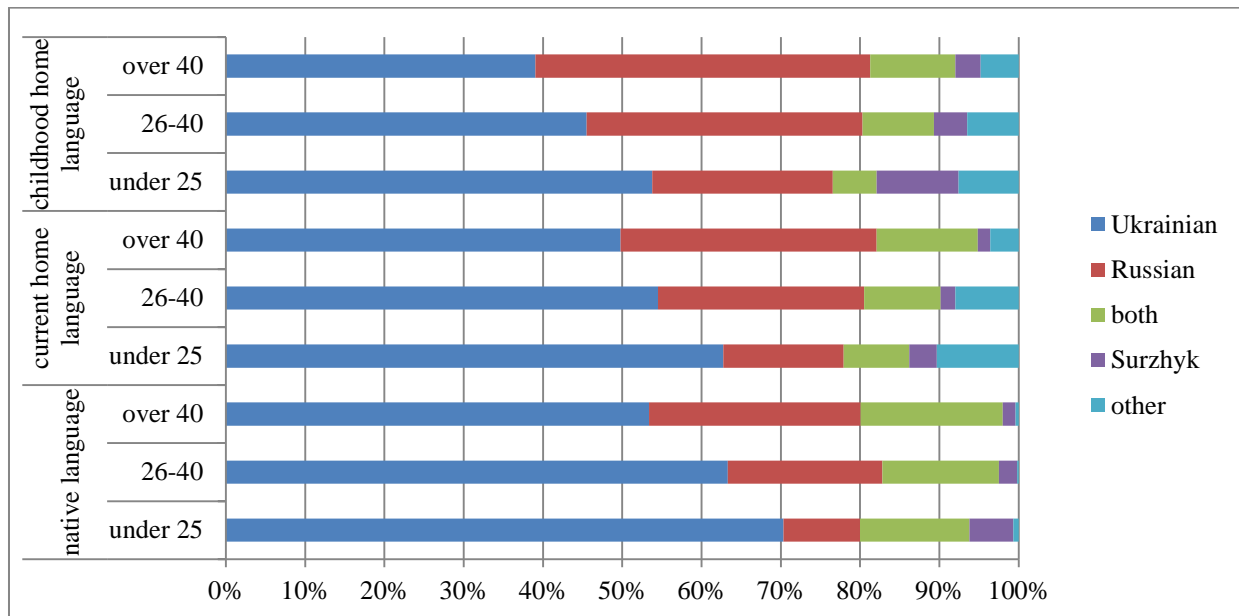

Figure 10: reported language use by age group (under 25: n = 145; 26-40: n = 477; over 40: n = 251).

Changes in language use:

In the survey, there were two direct questions about changes in language use:

> Q23: Did you ever consciously change you language behavior? If yes, when and why?

> Q24: Have you noticed changes in the language behavior of friends/acquaintances/on the street/on TV since Euromaidan? If yes, what kind of changes?

The answers to these questions indicate that the use of languages is very dynamic: 46% said that they consciously changed their language use in the past and 68% noticed changes in the language behavior of others following Euromaidan.

Zooming in on the answers of those who changed their language behavior, it was found that 43%[8] report they switched to Ukrainian in the past. Although this question did not specifically ask about changes since 2014, 14%[9] of those who changed their language behavior report that they switched to Ukrainian since 2014, often directly stating the war or Euromaidan as the reason. Other specific moments people refer to as the reason for their switch to Ukrainian were amongst others the independence of Ukraine in 1991, the adoption of the 2012 language law, or the birth of their first child. Furthermore, 6% of those reporting changes said they will no longer use or accommodate to Russian. However, there are also three respondents who say that following Euromaidan they decided to speak only Russian and refrain from using Ukrainian.

When analyzing the changes respondents observed in the language behavior of friends/acquaintances/in the street/on TV it is clear that most people notice an increase in the use of Ukrainian in general (38%[10]); many respondents also refer to (a small group of) Russian speakers who

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[8] 43% of those who changed their language behavior, so 19% of all respondents.

[9] 14% of those who changed their language behavior, so 6% of all respondents.

[10] 38% of those who noticed changes, so 26% of all respondents.

switched to Ukrainian either in some domains or completely (38%[11]). Furthermore, some respondents make remarks on the kind of Ukrainian that was used: 20 people think that since 2014 a more pure variety of Ukrainian is spoken, but 9 respondents argue that the Russian speakers who are switching to Ukrainian cause an increase in flawed Ukrainian and/or Surzhyk. For 9 respondents the observed increase in the use of Ukrainian is accompanied by aggression towards the Russian language and its speakers. However, there were also some respondents who noticed an increase of Russian: 5 people refer to the increased use of Russian in western Ukraine (due to Internally Displaced Persons), and 8 people mention an increase of Russian on TV (due to the increase of bilingual programs).

Language attitude

In this section the results of the following four questions on language attitudes will be discussed:

Q18: what are reasons for you personally to speak Ukrainian?
Q19: what are reasons for you personally to speak Russian?
Q21: does the Ukrainian language have a symbolic meaning for you personally?
Q22: does the Russian language have a symbolic meaning for you personally?

For each question respondents could choose multiple answers, so the sum of the percentages is higher than 100%.

An overview of the answers given on Q18 and Q19 can be found in Table 4. As is clear from the table, the reasons to speak Ukrainian and Russian are distributed quite differently: most respondents speak Ukrainian because it is their native language, followed by political reasons and when it is the language of the interlocutor; for Russian, however, language of the interlocutor is chosen most, followed by other reasons and native language.

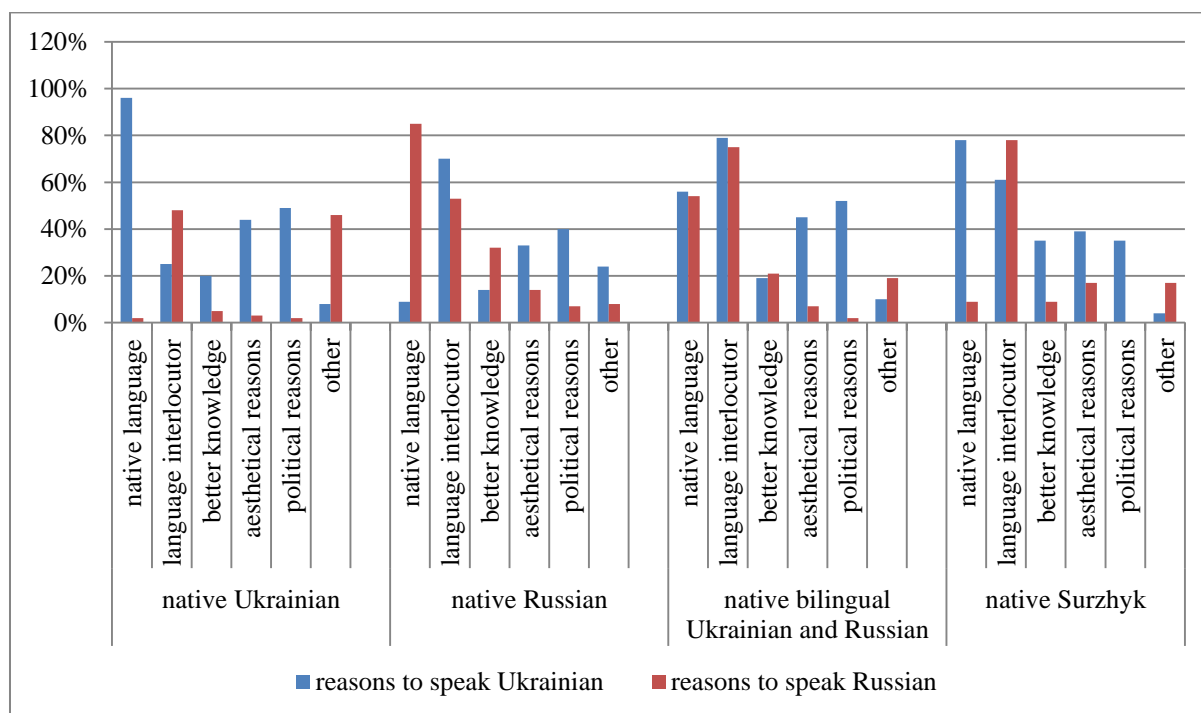|	Ukrainian	Russian
Native language	624 (72%)	235 (28%)
Language of the interlocutor	377 (44%)	471 (55%)
Political reasons	415 (48%)	26 (3%)
Aesthetical reasons	369 (43%)	52 (6%)
Better knowledge	163 (19%)	115 (14%)
Other	98 (11%)	291 (34%)

Table 4: reasons to speak Ukrainian and Russian (Ukrainian: n = 865; Russian: n = 850).

Because one third of the participants mention other reasons to speak Russian their answers were analyzed in more detail. The most cited other reason to speak Russian is if it is the only language in which the interlocutor can communicate (mentioned by 13% of all respondents); the second-most cited reason was actually that there are no reasons to speak Russian at all, or that the respondent never speaks Russian (11% of all respondents).

As many respondents report that the reason to speak a language is because it is their native language, it was decided to split up the answers in groups according to respondents' native language and see if there would be significant differences in the reasons to speak Russian and Ukrainian. In Figure 11 it is clearly visible that different reasons to speak a language are mentioned by people with different native languages. As expected, Ukrainian native speakers almost all mention that they speak Ukrainian because it is their native language, and most Russian native speakers report to speak Russian because it is their native language. It also works the other way around: most Ukrainian native speakers report to speak Russian 'because it is the language of their interlocutor', and most Russian native speakers say the same about speaking Ukrainian. Native bilinguals are mostly guided by the language of their interlocutor, but the fact that it is their native language is also for them an oft-cited reason. For

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[11] 38% of those who noticed changes, so 26% of all respondents.

respondents who speak Surzhyk natively 'native language' is often mentioned as a reason to speak Ukrainian (78%), but not frequently for Russian (9%).

Figure 11: reasons to speak Ukrainian/Russian by native language (Native language Ukrainian: reasons to speak Ukrainian: n = 537; reasons to speak Russian: n = 515. Native language Russian: reasons to speak Ukrainian n = 168; reasons to speak Russian: n = 174. Native language both: reasons to speak Ukrainian: n = 134; reasons to speak Russian: n = 135. Native language Surzhyk: reasons to speak Ukrainian: n = 23; reasons to speak Russian: n = 23.)

The analysis of the answers to Q21 and Q22 shows that the symbolic meanings that are attached to the Ukrainian language by the respondents are first of all that it is their native language (67%) and that it is the official state language (62%); these are followed by 'language of my ancestors' (45%) and 'love for the language' (38%). However, for the Russian language the majority of the respondents reports that it does not have a symbolic meaning (66%). For the respondents who do attach symbolic meaning to Russian, the most cited meanings are 'native language' (21%), 'language of international communication' (14%), 'literary language' (12%), and 'language of my ancestors' (7%), see Table 5 for a complete overview.

	Ukrainian	Russian
Native language	585 (67%)	179 (21%)
Official state language	543 (62%)	5 (0.6%)
Language of ancestors	393 (45%)	65 (8%)
Language of ethnicity	130 (15%)	34 (4%)
Love for the language	334 (38%)	37 (4%)
Literary language	105 (12%)	105 (12%)
Language of international communication	5 (0.5%)	125 (14%)
Other	42 (5%)	93 (11%)
No symbolic value	74 (8%)	572 (66%)

Table 5: symbolic value of the Ukrainian and Russian language (Ukrainian: n = 873; Russian: n = 866).

As again 'native language' is an oft-cited meaning, the results were split by respondents' reported native language, see also Figure 12. Again it is clear that for most Ukrainian native speakers Ukrainian is valued as native language (92%), and for most Russian native speakers Russian is valued as native

language (70%). Other important values Ukrainian native speakers attach to Ukrainian are 'language of my ancestors' (57%), 'official state language' (54%), and 'love for the language' (42%). However, for Russian native speakers the second most-cited meaning of Russian is 'no symbolic meaning' (34%), followed by 'literary language' (26%), and 'language of my ancestors' (20%). Most Ukrainian native speakers do not attach a symbolic meaning to Russian (80%), but if they do it is most often another meaning than those that were given (13%), or that Russian is a 'literary language (11%). The other meaning most-cited by Ukrainian native speakers is that Russian is the language of the enemy/occupier/aggressor (8% of the Ukrainian native speakers). For many Russian native speakers, however, Ukrainian has symbolic meaning as 'official state language' (75%, which is actually higher than among Ukrainian native speakers) and 'love for the language (26%); only 28% does not attach symbolic meaning to Ukrainian. The results for native bilinguals are also interesting as for them the most cited symbolic meaning for Ukrainian is 'official state language' (76%) followed by 'native language' (51%). For Russian the most cited meaning is 'language of international communication' (78%), followed by 'no symbolic meaning' (52%). Native speakers of Surzhyk again value Ukrainian as native language (65%), followed by 'language of my ancestors' (39%). They mostly do not value Russian (57%), but if they do, the most cited meaning is that Russian is the 'language of international communication' (30%).
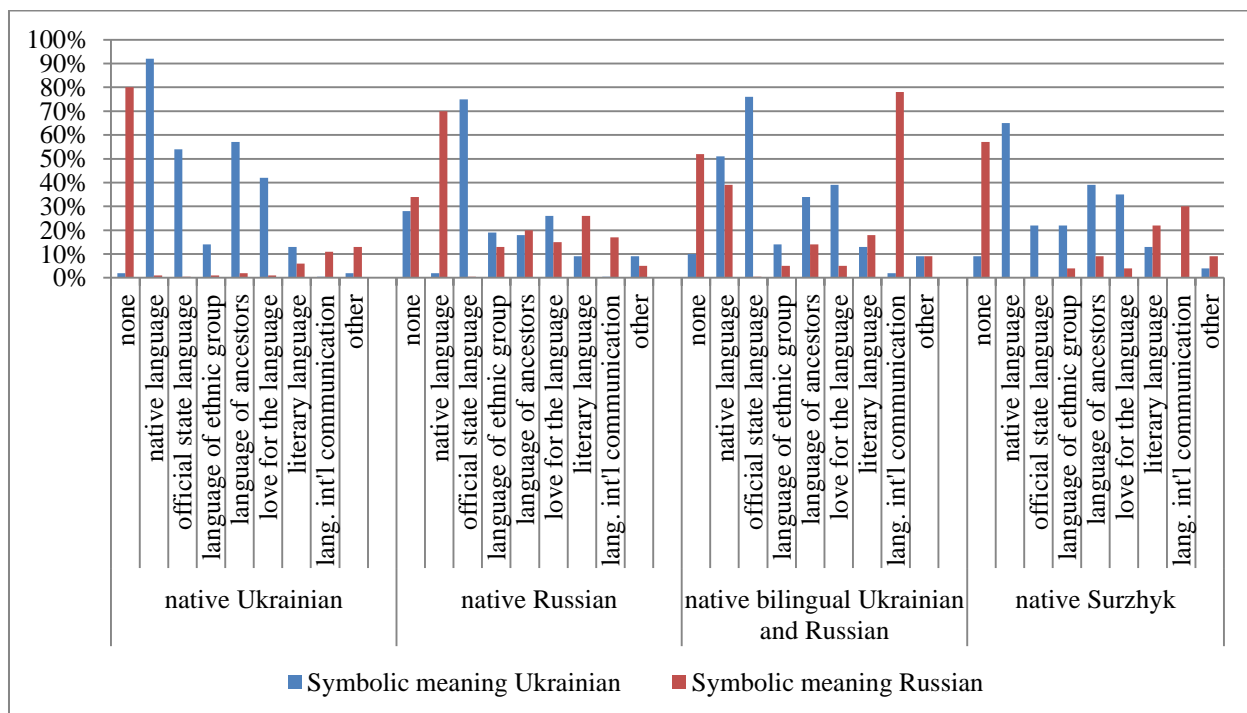

Figure 12: symbolic meaning of Russian/Ukrainian by native language (Native language Ukrainian: symbolic value Ukrainian: n = 538; symbolic value Russian: n = 531. Native language Russian: symbolic value Ukrainian: n = 174; symbolic value Russian: n = 174. Native language both: symbolic value Ukrainian: n = 135; symbolic value Russian: n = 135. Native language Surzhyk: symbolic value Ukrainian: n = 23; symbolic value Russian: n = 23.)

5.2 Fieldwork A: street surveys

In this section, the methodology and results of the street surveys that were conducted in Kyiv, Luc'k, Xarkiv, and Kramators'k will be discussed.

5.2.1 Methodology

A street survey is a method to gather objective data on the use of different languages in public places in a bilingual community. The main asset of the street survey is that it is not based on reported knowledge or use of languages, but on the observation of language use of non-suspecting speakers. A

pilot version of the street survey was developed by Basque language researchers in 1979 and it has been elaborated ever since (Altuna & Basurto, 2013): the basic idea of the street survey is to observe the languages used in conversations in the street in a specific place for a certain period of time. The place and time of the survey should be chosen carefully in order to optimally 'catch' people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds. Altuna and Basurto argue that it is best to walk along a specific route at the selected place while inconspicuously eaves-dropping on conversations of the passersby; during the observations the researchers should register which language is used in as many conversations as they can hear as well as some basic characteristics of the speakers, for example (an estimated guess of) age and sex.

Due to a limited amount of time in Ukraine, it was not possible to fully comply with the guidelines provided by Altuna and Basurto. The aim was to do observations twice in the same place on the same kind of day and around the same time. However, in Xarkiv and Kramators'k there was only time to do observations once in each place. Different audiences were caught by going to different kind of places: for example, in central streets of the city there were many people shopping and gallivanting, at a market there were many people from the surrounding villages, and in the park there were many families with (young) children. It was decided to do observations in the city center and at a market in Kramators'k and in Luc'k, in the city center and an entertainment park in Xarkiv, and in Kyiv sessions were held near three different metro stations: Kontraktova Plošča, a metro station in the city center in the Podil area; Poznjaky, a busy metro station in a residential area in the suburbs; and Lisova, also in the suburbs and surrounded by a big market.

In general the sessions lasted in between 30 and 60 minutes: those in the first week in Kyiv usually took about 60 minutes in which approximately 45-55 persons were observed. However, during the later sessions the weather was much better, which meant there were more people outside who were having conversations (when the weather was cold and rainy, most people hurried from one place to the next without saying much), and thus it was a lot easier to eavesdrop. To make sure the sample sizes were more balanced, it was decided to do shorter observations of approximately 30-45 minutes which would render a similar amount of observations.

5.2.2 Results of the street surveys

The results of the street survey clearly illustrate the regional differences in language use: in the eastern Ukrainian cities of Xarkiv and Kramators'k almost exclusively Russian is spoken, but in the western city of Luc'k almost exclusively Ukrainian. The observed language use in Kyiv was more varied: while a majority of the observed conversations was in Russian, Ukrainian also had a clear presence and there were also several people mixing Russian and Ukrainian or speaking Surzhyk, especially at the market in Lisova. An overview of these results can be found in Figure 13.

Besides the language someone spoke, it was also registered whether the interlocutors in one conversation were speaking in the same language or whether they were using the strategy of 'non-accommodation' as described in chapter 3. In the eastern cities, Kramators'k and Xarkiv, all of the observed conversations were held in only one language. In the western city Luc'k all conversations observed in the city center were also in one language, but at the market in 2 out of the 34 observed conversations the interlocutors were not speaking the same language. The most non-accommodation was observed in Kyiv: in Podil 1 out of the 34 conversations was held in two language varieties; in Poznjaky 2 out of the 38 conversations in March, but in none of the conversations observed in April; in Lisova the most non-accommodated conversations were observed: 4 out of 31 in March, and 5 out of 44 in April.
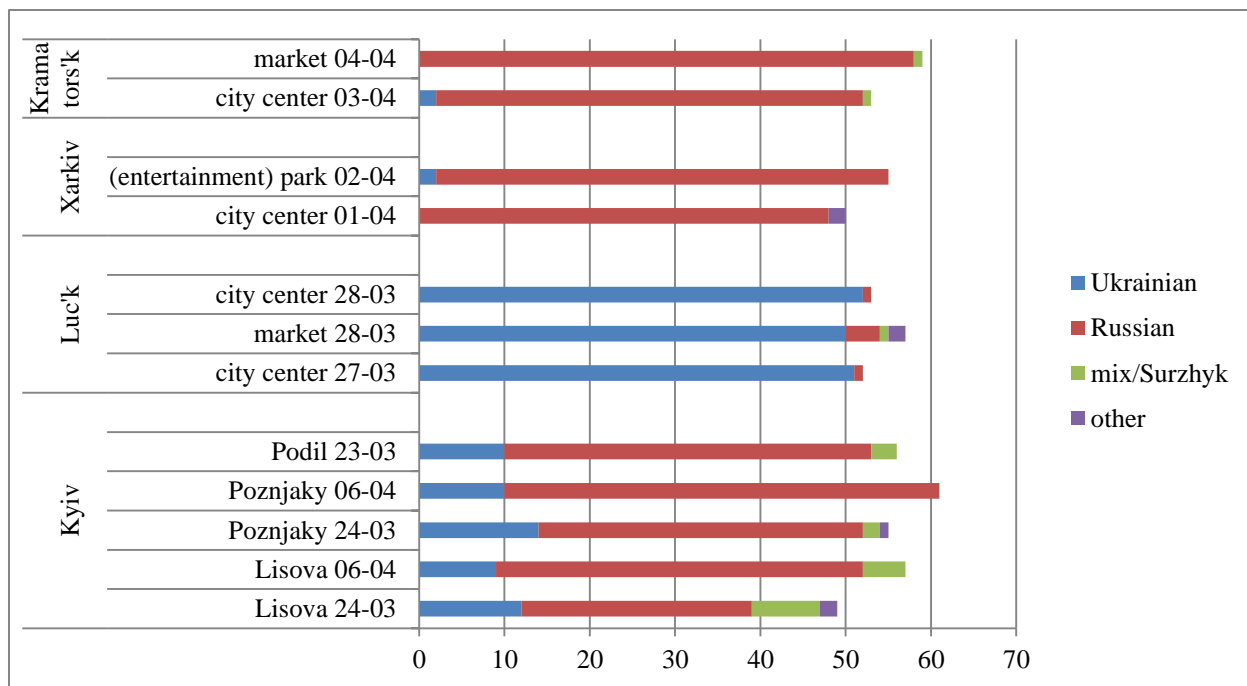
Figure 13: results of the street survey.

5.3 Fieldwork B: interviews

During the fieldwork in Ukraine in the spring of 2017, many conversations were held with Ukrainians about their thoughts on the language situation: with approximately 10 people semi-structured interviews were conducted based on a list of questions (the English translation of these questions can be found in Appendix 2), but many other people shared their views on language use and language policy in Ukraine in a more informal manner.

The most important finding of the interviews was that in real life the use of Ukrainian and Russian is not such an important issue as might be expected on the basis of the debates on the internet. One of the first things almost all interviewees said was that there is no language problem in Ukraine, and if there would be one, it is caused by politicians who manipulate and extort regional and linguistic differences in the Ukrainian society for their own gain. To some extent this does indeed seem to be reflected in real life: in the street both languages are used and when interlocutors speak in different languages they understand each other very well. Moreover, almost everyone seems to agree on the main pillars of language policy, i.e. that Ukrainian should be the only official state language and that its position should be strengthened, while at home everyone can decide for themselves in whichever language (variety) they wish to speak.

However, the devil is in the details: what exactly is the domain of the 'official state language' and what is still considered one's 'private sphere'? At which point does the 'strengthening' of the position of Ukrainian interfere with the rights and interests of native Russian speakers? If every child should learn Ukrainian properly, does that require all schools to have Ukrainian as the only language of instruction? When going to a store or café in one's neighborhood, is that to be considered a public domain, and should all personnel thus address customers in Ukrainian first? Or is this part of the private domain and should the owner of the restaurant decide in which language his personnel should address clients? Is putting quota's on the use of Ukrainian the same as officially limiting (forbidding) the use of Russian? Even though most respondents claimed that there was a general consensus on these issues, it was clear to me that what some considered their private right to choose which language to speak, was perceived by others as a continuation of Russification: while some think it is fair and justified to require public services to be in Ukrainian unless the client wants to be served in another

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language, others think the government should not interfere in this domain and it should be up to the market to adapt to the demands of the public.

When discussing recent changes, most people argued that the current conflict has an effect on language use and attitudes: they have the impression that language use has become more political and that language can now be used as a political instrument or to stress a certain identity. They also noticed that certain groups expressing aggressive attitudes towards the use of Russian have become more vocal. Russian speakers have noticed this especially on the internet and occasionally in real life, but in general they do not experience discrimination or aggression because of their language choice. In Kyiv and eastern Ukraine, some Ukrainian speakers mentioned aggressive reactions to the use of Ukrainian: sometimes people refused to provide services, for example in a taxi or in public transport. Nevertheless, they also mentioned that they received many positive reactions: people who would give a compliment on speaking Ukrainian so well or beautifully.

6. Discussion

The results of the survey and the fieldwork discussed in the previous chapter as well as the overview of changes in the language situation in Ukraine since 2014 in chapter 4 brought many interesting developments and findings to the fore. These findings illustrate that the language situation in Ukraine is highly dynamic, and it leaves no doubt that there have been changes in the language use and attitudes of Ukrainians over the past three years. This chapter will discuss the kind of changes that were found in more detail and will analyze whether these developments are (partly) caused by the eruption of violent conflict. In section 6.1 the changes in language use are analyzed and in 6.2 the changes in language attitudes; a possible framework for the effect of a violent conflict on language use and attitudes is developed in 6.3, followed by suggestions for future research in 6.4.

6.1 Analysis of changes in language use

Almost all sources on the language use of Ukrainians indicate that there is an increase in the use of the Ukrainian language: surveys on reported native and home language all show an increase of Ukrainian, and the monitoring by Prostir Svobody also shows an expansion of Ukrainian in most domains. However, most surveys only include data on reported language use, and it is unclear whether the increase in the reported use of Ukrainian reflects an increase in the actual use of Ukrainian. The blossoming of many newly developed language initiatives gives the impression that there are real new developments in the language situation in Ukraine. Especially the existence of groups for Russian speakers who are switching to Ukrainian proves that there are Ukrainians who did not or only rarely spoke Ukrainian before, but changed their language use and now speak almost exclusively Ukrainian. The results of the thesis survey support these findings: the respondents report an increase in the use of Ukrainian in general, and in particular they mention Russian speakers who are switching to Ukrainian, and Ukrainian speakers who no longer switch to Russian. The survey results furthermore seem to confirm that for many respondents the outbreak of the conflict was a turning point after which they consciously chose to speak (only) Ukrainian in order to express their Ukrainian identity. Such a switch is both confirming and denying the intrinsic link between language and identity: on the one hand, Russian speakers who want their language to be in accordance with their Ukrainian identity use the idea that language and identity should match as a reason to switch, but at the same time they proved that language and identity are not intrinsically linked, by previously speaking Russian while identifying themselves as Ukrainian (Bilaniuk, 2015). Either way, this line of reasoning does confirm that (some) Ukrainians are intentionally changing their language in order to dissociate themselves from Russia and a Russian identity because of the increased socio-political indexical meaning of the languages. Thus, the conflict is at least partly causing the shift towards Ukrainian.

However, the increase in declaring Ukrainian as native language already started after Ukrainian independence in 1991 as discussed in section 3.1. The results of the online survey also indicate that the use of Ukrainian increased over time: an analysis of apparent time shows that respondents report the use of Ukrainian more often as current home language than as childhood language, and Ukrainian is also reported more as native language and home language by younger respondents than by older respondents, see also Figure 9 and Figure 10 (partly repeated here for clarity's sake in Figure 14 and Figure 15). If this trend would have continued normally since 2014, it would already cause an increase in the use of Ukrainian and part of the increase in the use of Ukrainian thus has to be accounted for by the trend, not the conflict.
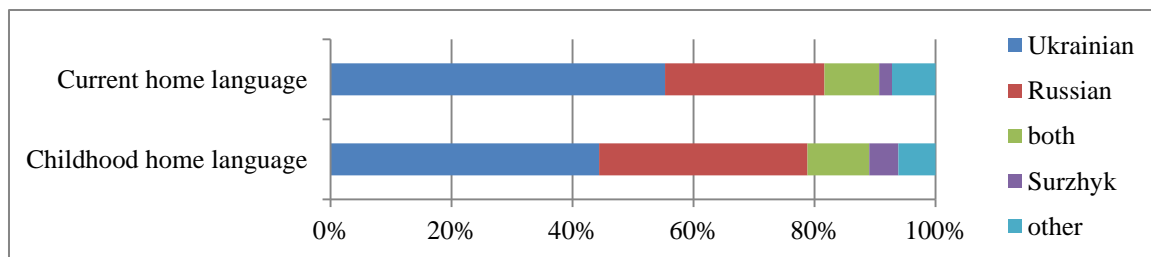
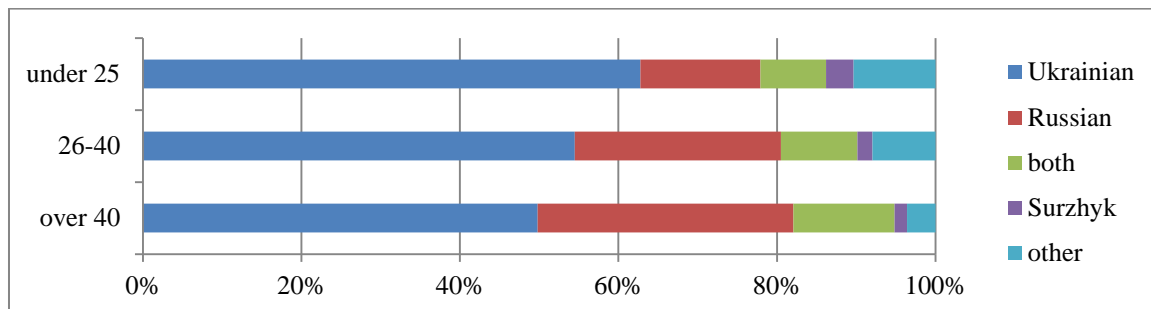**Figure 14: reported current and childhood home language (n = 873).**

Figure 15: current home language by age group (under 25: n = 145; 26-40: n = 477; over 40: n = 251).

Another change that was observed was a shift towards more 'pure' language use: there are many initiatives that advocate 'pure' Ukrainian, free of supposedly 'Russian elements'. However, it is unclear whether the growth of these initiatives also led to an increase in the use of pure Ukrainian: only a few survey respondents mentioned such a development while others claimed the opposite, i.e. that the use of impure Ukrainian increased, because of Russian speakers who try to switch to Ukrainian but in effect speak Surzhyk. These results also suggest that the group of people for whom 'language matters' (cf. Bilaniuk (2016a)) is maybe smaller than their vocal presence at social media might suggest: it is possible that there is a 'silent majority', for whom language use and purity do not matter.

Lastly, the observations made during the street surveys indicate that, while there can be changes in language use at a personal level, these are not (yet) observable at the level of language use in a city. In Kyiv, Xarkiv and Kramators'k Russian is still spoken by the majority of people in the street, as was expected on the basis of the reported language use before 2014. Even though it is possible that there is a slight increase in the use of Ukrainian, this cannot be established due to the absence of a street survey before 2014. Nevertheless it is probable that the language shift of a some Russian speakers does not have a noticeable impact at the level of big cities.

6.2 Analysis of change in language attitude

Most sources also point to changes in language attitudes. Although it is not easy to measure attitudes, Kulyk (2016) concluded on the basis of survey data that for most people the attitude towards the Ukrainian language had become more positive, while the attitude towards Russian mostly had not changed except for a small group that reported more negative attitudes. The survey results also indicated that the Ukrainian language is strongly connected to the Ukrainian state and is seen as a national symbol. Surveys by the Razumkov Center furthermore show that support for Ukrainian as the sole state language increased.

The results of the thesis survey again confirm these findings. Respondents' attitudes towards Ukrainian are very positive: the language is valued above all as native language and the official state language of Ukraine, which also illustrates the strong connection between the Ukrainian language and a Ukrainian identity. The importance of this connection also explains why Ukrainian is reported as

native language much more often than as home language and childhood home language, and in some cases even by people who do not have active knowledge of the language.

The survey respondents further reported slightly more negative attitudes towards Russian, and some also associate the language with the conflict. This was most clearly visible in their reasons to speak Russian and the symbolic value of the language. The former question was only asked if respondents had mentioned in an earlier question that they had active knowledge of Russian, but still 11% answered that there are no reasons to speak Russian and/or that they do not use this language; another 13% said they only spoke Russian if this was the sole shared language with the interlocutor, thus expressing a strong resistance towards speaking Russian. Moreover, 41 respondents independently from each other declared that for them the Russian language is the language of the enemy or occupier. Speaking Ukrainian, however, has become more politically relevant: almost half of the respondents said they spoke Ukrainian because of political reasons, while this was only mentioned by 3% with regards to Russian. This illustrates that Ukrainians are now more consciously paying attention to the socio-political meaning attached to certain language use and thus the indexical meaning of the languages has become more closely associated with a certain political stance.

Nevertheless, it seems that the majority of the respondents are neutral towards Russian: for more than half, the language has no symbolic value, and the most cited reason to speak Russian is if it is the language of the interlocutor. Thus, while some negative attitudes are indeed present, for most people Russian is a neutral language, used mostly to communicate with Russian speakers. During the fieldwork, Russian speaking interviewees mentioned that they noticed some Ukrainian speakers had become more hostile towards the Russian language and Russian speakers since 2014. Some of them therefore decided not to switch to Ukrainian anymore, but they also admitted that the hostilities were mostly present on the internet and social media and that they did not experience it in their everyday life. However, the adoption of new language laws that anticipate extensive Ukrainization policies might alter this situation and cause Russian speakers to perceive the forced increase in Ukrainian as discrimination against Russian.

Although the general trends are a more positive attitude towards Ukrainian and a more negative attitude towards Russian, the survey data discussed by Kulyk (2016) also indicate that a small group of Ukrainians developed more negative associations with Ukrainian, in particular those who were against Euromaidan and who are critical of the Anti-Terrorist Operation that the Ukrainian army is conducting in eastern Ukraine. For these people, the Ukrainian language has become associated with the violence used by the Ukrainian military, and this has affected their attitudes to become more negative (Kulyk, 2016, p. 602). Unfortunately, there were hardly any respondents who had such views on the Ukrainian language in the thesis survey, so I can only conclude that among the group of respondents that participated in the thesis survey, i.e. high educated ethnic Ukrainians from western and central Ukraine, such views are rare.

6.3 Effects of a conflict on language use and attitudes

Now that the changes in language use and language attitudes since the conflict started have been established, it is possible to take the first steps towards a framework that can describe the effects of a conflict on language in general. The results of the different research methods used in this thesis all indicate that some Ukrainians are intentionally changing their language use, mostly to stress their Ukrainian identity and to dissociate from Russia, i.e. to diverge. This effect of the violent conflict on the language can be explained by changes in the indexicality of the Russian and Ukrainian language: due to the conflict, the socio-political meanings attached to each language have come to the fore and are more consciously noticed by the speakers, i.e. the languages have become more indexical of the political stance of the speaker. This is confirmed by the changes in language attitudes: a more negative

evaluation of Russian is mostly due to the negative association of the Russian language with the 'enemy' in the current conflict.

Based on these results the following two effects can be established. Firstly, language conflict leads to an increase in the significance of a person's political stance, which brings the socio-political meaning to the fore and thus increases the indexical function of the language; the increased indexical meaning subsequently becomes a reason for a certain group of people to change their language use so that it fits better with the socio-political meaning that this use indexes, see Figure 16 for a schematic overview. This framework explains why Russian speaking Ukrainians are switching to Ukrainian, and why some Ukrainian speakers are more reluctant to or even completely avoiding speaking Russian.

Figure 16: schematic overview effect conflict on language use.

The second effect of violent conflict is that it brings issues of group identity to the fore, which encourages people to protect their group, for instance by protecting the language of the group, see Figure 17 for a visualization. This effect is most clearly visible among those Ukrainians to whom 'language matters' and who want to create more linguistic distance between Russian and Ukrainian, for example by avoiding words and constructions that are perceived as 'Russian elements' in Ukrainian.

Figure 17: schematic overview effect conflict on language and identity.

These effects of violent conflict were also visible in Croatia and other former Yugoslav countries during and after the Yugoslav wars in the nineties: each newly established country developed their own standard language aiming to make it as linguistically distinct from the others as possible (cf. Bugarski (2012), and Dedaić and Nelson (2003)). The main difference is that while in Ukraine it is mostly civil society that is calling for changes and purification, in Croatia the linguistic changes were first and foremost carried out by official governmental and language institutions (Droogsma, 2016).

6.4 Suggestions for future research

The research presented in this thesis has touched upon many different topics related to conflict linguistics, bilingualism, and identity, and it has contributed to the development of a framework for how a violent conflict can affect the language use and language attitudes of the people directly affected by the conflict. However, this framework is based on the developments in Ukraine and it is possible that violent conflicts affect the language use and attitudes differently in another country or region. Future research should analyze other conflict situations and test whether the framework developed in this thesis is applicable in those situations.

The language use and attitudes of Ukrainians from eastern and southern regions should also be studied more intensively, as the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine were underrepresented in the thesis survey. Besides the regional spread, future research should make sure to include more ethnic Russians as well, because this group was also underrepresented in this thesis. The inclusion of these groups is important, especially because they most likely have very different language use and attitudes than the ethnic Ukrainians from western and central regions that were the vast majority of respondents in this thesis. If the respondents' sample is a better reflection of the Ukrainian society in general, the conclusions on language use and attitudes can show a clearer picture of the language situation and can contribute to a more balanced language policy.

Another angle for future research could be to disentangle the effects of the violent conflict that erupted in 2014 and the effect of Ukraine's independence in 1991: the Census and survey data suggest that the use of Ukrainian has increased since independence and as a result the younger generation of Ukrainians speaks Ukrainian more than the older generation. The already existing trend of increase in the use of Ukrainian made it harder to distinguish whether the increase since 2014 was due to the continuation of the general trend or the effect of the conflict. Future research can shed more light on this issue, for example by conducting qualitative interviews within a small community and analyzing the differences in language use and attitudes between the different age groups as well as when and why some people switched their language. Such a research could be complemented by an in-depth study of Russian speakers who switched to Ukrainian, i.e. analyze when and why they switched, their demographic characteristics etc. These detailed analyses will facilitate a distinction between the effect of the conflict and the general trend of increased use of Ukrainian.

Finally, if (one of) the proposed language laws is/are adopted, the language use and attitudes in Ukraine are likely to change even more and possibly also quicker. Future research should take the effects of these legislative changes into account.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has given a detailed overview of the language situation in Ukraine; based on three theoretical concepts, i.e. divergence, intentional language change, and indexicality, the recent developments in the language use and language attitudes of Ukrainians were analyzed and a framework of the effect of a military conflict on the language situation was developed. The analysis was based on the results of the most recent nationwide surveys, language monitoring, and empirical data from the internet, as well as the results of a survey and fieldwork which were carried out as part of this thesis.

The data discussed in chapters 4 and 5 as well as the analysis in chapter 6 have shown that the use of the Ukrainian language has increased since 2014 at the cost of Russian: there is a group of Russian speakers who have switched to Ukrainian, and there are also Ukrainian speakers who in recent years stopped using Russian when communicating with Russian speaking Ukrainians. Nevertheless, it seems that only a small group is changing their language use: the majority of the Russian speakers do not (consider to) switch to Ukrainian, and the results of the street survey proved that Russian is still spoken by a majority in formerly Russian speaking cities. The increase of Ukrainian is partly connected to the outbreak of violent conflict; as argued in 6.1, it incited a desire to align one's language use with one's stance in the conflict. This means that Russian speakers who are supporting the Ukrainian side of the conflict want to express this stance by intentionally diverging their language from the 'enemy' Russia and switching to Ukrainian.

Furthermore, it was found on the basis of the data in chapters 4 and 5 that there were also several developments in the language attitudes of Ukrainians since 2014. The analysis in 5.1 and 6.2 showed that for most people the Ukrainian language is appreciated more and it has become more closely associated with politics and with a Ukrainian identity. Ukrainians' attitudes towards Russian have become somewhat more negative: a certain group of Ukrainians sees Russian first and foremost as the language of the enemy or occupier, and some actively avoid the use of this language, cf. 5.1.3. However, for most people Russian is just a language that they know quite well and speak when their interlocutor speaks it. Secondly, there is a new dichotomy in language attitudes: Ukrainians are no longer just divided by their support for either Ukrainization or continued dominance of Russian, but also by whether they think language matters or not (Bilaniuk, 2016b). Among the former, linguistic purism is common, especially to avoid 'Russian elements', while the latter group consciously chooses to make use of non-standard language, for instance Surzhyk as discussed in 4.2. These observed changes are all connected to the conflict and can be explained by the increased political value that is indexed by the languages. This confirms that the indexical meaning of languages can change due to a violent conflict.

The observed changes can be explained by the concepts of divergence, intentional language change and indexicality and on the basis of these concepts a framework of the effects of a conflict on language use and attitudes was developed in 6.3. The two following effects have been established:

I.   violent conflict > increase significance political stance > increase indexical meaning language > match language to socio-political indexical meaning

II.   violent conflict > group identity becomes important > protection group identity > protection group language

These effects explain how and why Russian speakers are switching to Ukrainian and why Ukrainian speakers are more concerned with speaking 'pure' Ukrainian without 'Russian elements'. However, the conflict only affects a part of the population and many people seem to be neutral with regards to language use and attitudes. Future research should investigate whether these effects developed within the framework are also applicable to other conflict situations.

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Appendix A: English translation of survey questions

1. Age: <18; 18-25; 26-40; 41-65; >65
2. Sex: male; female; other
3. Place of residence
4. Previous place(s) of residence (please only mention those places where you lived 2 years or more)
5. Profession
6. Education level: higher education; secondary education; primary education; I don't want to say
7. Ethnicity (it is possible to choice multiple answers): Ukrainian; Russian; Crimean-Tatar; Belarussian; other, namely…
8. Did you participate in the events of 2013-2014: yes I actively participated in Euromaidan; yes, I actively participated in Antimaidan; no, I did not actively participate, but I supported Euromaidan; no, I did not actively participate, but I supported Antimaidan; no, I was neutral; no, I was against both Maidans; I don't want to say.
9. What is your native language: Ukrainian; Russian; Ukrainian and Russian; Crimean-Tatar; Surzhyk; other, namely…
10. Which language(s) do you know and at what level (I don't know it; I understand but do not speak it; basic level; intermediary level; high level; fluently): Ukrainian; Russian; Crimean-Tatar; Surzhyk; English; other, namely…
11. Which language(s) do you speak at home: Ukrainian; Russian; Crimean-Tatar; Surzhyk; other, namely…
12. Which language(s) did you speak at home during your childhood: Ukrainian; Russian; Crimean-Tatar; Surzhyk; other, namely…
13. With whom do you speak Ukrainian and how often (never, sometimes, often, always, not applicable): with family; with friends; with colleagues/classmates; with clients; with unknown people in the street; in shops/at the market/in restaurants
14. With whom do you speak Russian and how often (never, sometimes, often, always, not applicable): with family; with friends; with colleagues/classmates; with clients; with unknown people in the street; in shops/at the market/in restaurants
15. With whom do you speak Surzhyk and how often (never, sometimes, often, always, not applicable): with family; with friends; with colleagues/classmates; with clients; with unknown people in the street; in shops/at the market/in restaurants
16. When you are addressed by a stranger in the street in Russian, in which language do you reply: Ukrainian; Russian; it depends on…
17. When you are addressed by a stranger in the street in Ukrainian, in which language do you reply: Ukrainian; Russian; it depends on…
18. What are reasons for you personally to speak Ukrainian: native language; language of interlocutor; better knowledge; aesthetical reasons; political reasons; other, namely…
19. What are reasons for you personally to speak Russian: native language; language of interlocutor; better knowledge; aesthetical reasons; political reasons; other, namely…
20. What are reasons for you personally to speak Surzhyk: native language; language of interlocutor; better knowledge; aesthetical reasons; political reasons; other, namely…
21. Does the Ukrainian language have a symbolic meaning for you personally: no, the Ukrainian language has no symbolic meaning; native language; official state language; language of my ethnic group; language of my forefathers; love for the language; language of high literature; language of international communication; yeas another meaning, namely…

22. Does the Russian language have a symbolic meaning for you personally: no, the Russian language has no symbolic meaning; native language; official state language; language of my ethnic group; language of my forefathers; love for the language; language of high literature; language of international communication; yeas another meaning, namely…
23. Did you ever consciously change your language behavior? If yes, when and why?
24. Did you notice changes in the language behavior of friends/acquaintances/in the street/on TV following Euromaidan? If yes, what kind of changes?
25. To what extent do you agree with the following statements (completely disagree; somewhat disagree; somewhat agree; completely disagree; hard to say):
    a. Ukrainian should be the only official language in Ukraine
    b. Every Ukrainian should know the Ukrainian language
    c. Every Ukrainian citizen should speak only Ukrainian
    d. People should only speak pure Ukrainian
    e. If someone cannot speak pure Ukrainian, it is preferable that they speak Russian than mixed Ukrainian
    f. The status of the Ukrainian language is important for the stability of the state
    g. Every Ukrainian citizen should be able to understand Russian
    h. Russian should be an official state language in Ukraine
    i. Russian should have some official status on regional level
    j. Widespread use of Russian in Ukraine destabilizes the country
    k. The state should do more to support the use of Ukrainian
    l. The state should do more to support the needs of Russian-speaking Ukrainians
26. Do you have any further comments on the topic of the use of Russian and Ukrainian in Ukraine or remarks on this survey? Please, share them here.
27. Are you interested and available to do an interview on your language use and views on languages in Ukraine (in the period of 21 March-7 April)? If yes, please leave your contact details.

Appendix B: English translation of fieldwork question form

A. Language use
   1. How/where did you learn Ukrainian? How often do you speak Ukrainian? In which situations and with whom?
   2. How/where did you learn Russian? How often do you speak Russian? In which situations and with whom?
   3. Would you consider yourself to be primarily Ukrainophone, Russophone, bilingual, or other?
   4. Do you adapt your language to the language of your interlocutor, or not? Under which circumstances?
   5. Did you ever consciously change your language use? When, why and how?
   6. Do you sometimes speak Surzhyk, or did you speak in in the past? In which situations, for what kind of reasons?

B. Attitudes towards impure language
   1. What do you think about Surzhyk? What does this word refer to? Which associations do you have with this word?
   2. What do you think about people who mix languages (whose sentences are partly in Russian and partly in Ukrainian? And what do you think about situations in which one interlocutor speaks Ukrainian and the other Russian?
   3. What is more important: understanding each other or pure language use?

C. Language attitudes in general
   1. Do the Ukrainian and/or Russian languages have a symbolic value/meaning for you personally?
   2. What do you think about the state of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine? In your opinion, should the language change or be changed? Or the language laws? How?
   3. What do you think about the state of the Russian language in Ukraine? In your opinion, should the language change or be changed? Or the language laws? How?
   4. What do you think about the laws concerning languages? Do you know anything about the new law proposals? What do you think about the idea of creating a Ukrainian standard for the Russian language (like there is an American and a British standard of English)?
   5. In your opinion, what role should the Ukrainian language play in the Ukrainian state and/or in the Ukrainian society?
   6. In your opinion, what role should the Russian language play in the Ukrainian state and/or in the Ukrainian society?