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Ukrainian, Russian, English: Language Use and Attitudes of Students at a  
Ukrainian University

# Ukrainian, Russian, English: Language Use and Attitudes of Students at a Ukrainian University<sup>1</sup>

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This article presents results of an exploratory survey conducted at a central-western Ukrainian university of students' current usage of and attitudes towards Ukrainian, Russian, and English. Before 1989, Soviet language policy positioned Russian over Ukrainian as the language of power and as the sole language of higher education. The effectiveness of national policies in post-Soviet Ukraine aimed at affirmative action for the Ukrainian language has been debatable and constrained by geographical factors of language use and language policy. The political and economic status of English has the potential to impact the position of both Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine. Survey results show that students continue to report high rates of usage of both Ukrainian and Russian in many areas of life, with higher Ukrainian usage than in surveys of cities to the east of the current survey site. Ukrainian has greater symbolic support than Russian or English now and for the future. English is considered more important than Ukrainian and Russian in the domains of international business and travel. While all three languages are seen as important for school and employment, Ukrainian is seen as most important in school, whereas English is considered most important for finding work. The data suggest teachers can and should draw on multiple language resources in the classroom, and they should encourage students to embrace multilingualism in the classroom in preparation for future study and work.

## Introduction

**I**n Ukraine, nation building and language development have historically been inseparable goals. In the 1800s, Russian imperialists were so concerned that the cultivation of a Ukrainian language would lead to Ukrainian independence, they banned the use of Ukrainian (Hrycak, 2006; Shevelov, 1989; Solchanyk, 1985). While such Russification policies were reversed in favor of "Ukrainianization" in the ear-

ly years of the Soviet Union, Russification policies became the norm again in the early 1930s.

In the nearly 20 years since Ukraine has been an independent country, the Ukrainian Parliament has developed new Ukrainianization policies to ensure that Ukrainian is recognized and used as the national language (Arel, 1996; Pavlenko, 2008). These laws stipulate that Ukrainian is the language of the government, law, and official documentation (Pavlenko, 2008) as well as television programs, movies, and advertising (Bilaniuk, in press; Borisow, 2008; Friedman, 2006; Poludenko, 2008; Sewall, 2008). Elementary and secondary schools have relatively more flexibility; by law there should be Ukrainian- or Russian-language classes in equal proportion to the percentage of ethnic Ukrainians in the population (Hrycak, 2006; Janmaat, 1999). At the tertiary level, professors are required to use only Ukrainian when teaching classes.

Ukrainianization policies have been criticized by Ukrainian scholars for being poorly implemented and weakly enforced. Cherednychenko (1997) says the 1989 Law of Languages, passed two years before independence in 1991, has no provisions for sanctions against elected officials and senior civil servants who do not use Ukrainian. Bilaniuk (in press) cites research showing that even after President Viktor Yushchenko revised television programming laws to specify that 75 percent of programming should be in Ukrainian, only 48 percent of programming was in Ukrainian. Hrycak (2006) reports that the Ukrainian government does not punish school systems that fail to implement Ukrainian language-in-education policy according to national guidelines. All of these *implementational spaces* (Hornberger, 2003), in the Ukrainian case, aspects of Ukrainianization policies that are not clearly defined or strongly enforced, generally lead to the continued use of Russian.

### *Geographic Dimensions of Language Use and Language Policy*

There is a notable geographic pattern in the choice not to implement or enforce Ukrainian language policies in Ukraine. The eastern and southern *oblasts* (political regions) of Ukraine have larger ethnic Russian populations and higher reported rates of Russian use among both ethnic Russians and Ukrainians than in western oblasts (Arel, 2002; Bilaniuk & Melnyk, 2008; Goodman, 2009). They tend to have lower percentages of Ukrainian-language schools than their corresponding Ukrainian populations (Goodman, 2009; Hrycak, 2006), and have disregarded recent Ukrainian-language media laws (Bilaniuk, in press; Søvik, 2007).

These patterns of language use correspond with the personal experiences in Ukraine of the first author, who lived for a year in Kharkiv and then for a year in Khmel'nyts'kyi. Kharkiv, a large city in one of the easternmost oblasts of Ukraine, seemed to be primarily Russian speaking. Ukrainian was noticeable only at school assemblies or announcements over the metro (subway) loudspeakers. Both domains can be characterized as public, formal, or official. In Khmel'nyts'kyi, a smaller city approximately 900 km west of Kharkiv, Ukrainian was used much more frequently in conversation. On the other hand, it seemed Russian was used and tolerated more in Khmel'nyts'kyi than in places west of Khmel'nyts'kyi, where the use of Russian by Ukrainians was reportedly highly frowned upon.

The more balanced use of Ukrainian and Russian in Khmel'nyts'kyi is likely due to a mix of geography, the history of the city, and language-in-education pol-

icy. Khmel'nyts'kyi has a historical relationship with Russia--and by default the Russian language--dating back to 1795, when the Russian Empire annexed the Podillya region of Ukraine (Slobodyaniuk, 2002). This timeline puts Khmel'nyts'kyi historically and linguistically closer to the eastern and southern sections of the country, which became part of the Russian Empire in the 1600s and 1700s, than with the westernmost portions of the country, which were not added until 1944 and which show higher rates of Ukrainian use and Ukrainian-language support. On the other hand, 99.1% of ethnic Ukrainians in the Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast claimed Ukrainian as their *ridna mova* (native language), compared with 74.1% in the Kharkiv oblast (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2003-2004). Bilaniuk and Melnyk (2008) report that 92% of pupils in Khmel'nyts'kyi attended Ukrainian language schools in 1995-96; by the 2006 school year, that number had risen to 99.3%. The post-independence shift to Ukrainian as a medium of instruction and the concomitant selection of Ukrainian as the *ridna mova* in the census indicate that Khmel'nyts'kyi administrators and residents support the implementation of Ukrainianization policies. This is likely due to the fact that the Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast borders the most recently annexed western section of the country. However, these statistics do not indicate whether there is a corresponding reduction in Russian use in Khmel'nyts'kyi.

### *The Future of Languages in Ukraine*

Despite the current prevalence of Russian and the limited impact of Ukrainian-language policies, the future of Russian in Ukraine is more uncertain from the point of view of Russian scholars due to language-in-education practices. Aref'ev (2006) predicts that the number of Russian-speaking people in the former Soviet Union will decrease by 50 percent in ten years. Aref'ev (2006) adds that "particularly fast reduction of those who speak Russian is noticed among the young of the former Soviet republics" and explains the situation by the diminution of Russian language at schools. This explanation certainly applies in the Ukrainian context. Nationwide, the Ministry of Education reported that in the 2005-2006 school year, 78% of elementary and secondary students were in Ukrainian-language schools, an increase of 30% since Ukraine declared independence eighteen years earlier ago (Goodman, 2009).

Although English is neither a national language nor a post-colonial language of wider communication in Ukraine, as a language of international communication it is poised to impact policy, practice, and attitudes towards all languages in Ukraine. Despite the Ukrainian-language advertising laws and the social stigma of mixing Russian and Ukrainian (Bernsand, 2006; Bilaniuk, 2005), mixing English with Ukrainian in speech is considered fashionable. In advertising, it achieves a particular stylistic effect (Bilaniuk, 2003, 2005; Bilaniuk & Melnyk 2008). English speakers have received more positive personality ratings than Ukrainian speakers from both Ukrainian and Russian speakers (Bilaniuk, 2003). There is even evidence that English is competing directly with Ukrainian in language-in-education policy. A local school official reported that the number of Ukrainian class hours had to be cut to accommodate English lessons (Friedman, 2006). Søvik (2007) interviewed students in Eastern Ukraine who assert that because of a lack of economic incentives for Russian speakers to attend Ukrainian classes, they study English

or German instead. Some universities in Ukraine are beginning to teach multiple subjects in English rather than Ukrainian (Laada Bilaniuk, personal communication; Goodman, 2009; Tarnopolsky, Momot, Kozhushko, Korneva, Vysenko, & Zhevaga, 2008). These previous findings suggest that the future language in and out of school may be neither Russian nor Ukrainian but English. On the other hand, the Ukrainian language survived two hundred years of Russian or Soviet oppression. Likewise, the Russian language has its own rich history and has been described as the language closest to one's soul (Søvik, 2007). Thus, the spread of English may not be a threat to either language.

We wondered, what do Ukrainian university students in the central-west part of Ukraine think about the future of these three languages in their country? Is the development of an independent nation, the removal of Soviet ideology in schools, the relatively stronger implementation of Ukrainization policies, and the spread of English worldwide changing this generation's language ideologies from those of previous generations? Do Ukrainian university students' attitudes towards and usage of these three languages support the assertion that English is impacting both efforts to "maintain the position of national languages, and...secure linguistic diversity and the implementation of language rights" (Phillipson, 2006, p. 346)? To answer these questions, we conducted an exploratory survey of Ukrainian university students' usage and attitudes towards these three languages.

### **Previous Research on Language Use and Attitudes in Ukraine**

The current study is informed by two prior studies that focus on Ukrainian and Russian language use and attitudes among youth in single-city contexts in Ukraine. Camelot Ann Marshall (2002) conducted survey research in Kyiv, a city that is geographically, politically, and socially the center of Ukraine and has a historical preference for Russian (c.f. Arel, 1996). She conducted a variable analysis of students' native language in relation to their grandparents', as a marker of language maintenance or language shift. There was no indication of a language maintenance or language shift pattern that favors either Ukrainian or Russian. When she analyzed descriptive statistics of Ukrainian and Russian use in interactive (conversant) and interpretive (listening or reading) modes, however, she found that an overwhelming majority of students used Russian. When analyzed by grade level, these same indicators showed that younger children were likely to use more Ukrainian than older children, a sign of the growing effects of Ukrainization.

Søvik (2007) used a mixed-methods approach for her dissertation, collecting survey data from 400 students and conducting focus groups with ten groups of six students and individual interviews with five students and professionals in Kharkiv. Her goal was to examine their language practices, language beliefs, and language management. Søvik found that respondents and interviewees recognized the importance of Ukrainian, but their actual practices reflected a high degree of Russian usage.

Although Søvik's research questions did not focus on English in relation to Ukrainian and Russian, English emerged as a competing factor when students discussed their motivation to learn Ukrainian. She found that "the Ukrainian lan-

guage was talked about as having little to offer in contrast to English or German... knowledge [of] Ukrainian does not lead to success" (Søvik, 2007, p. 189). She offers further evidence that students complain that the government does not provide financial incentives to study Ukrainian; as a result students "would rather invest time and money in learning foreign languages that 'pay off'" (Søvik, 2007, p. 190). Both statements imply that students believe knowing English offers economic advantages over knowing Ukrainian.

Another study that most closely matches our research interests and approach was conducted not in Ukraine but Moldova, a post-Soviet republic adjacent to Ukraine. Cisel (2002) conducted a survey with a convenience sample of 72 of young adults in the capital city, Chisinau, on their usage and attitudes towards Romanian/Moldovan, Russian, and English. Cisel (2002) found that students rated English more positively than their first languages. He describes this result as an indicator of *linguistic opportunism*, which he defines as a weaker form of linguistic imperialism based on the economic opportunities associated with English.

### Theoretical Approach to the Current Study

Both Cisel (2002) and Søvik (2007) explore aspects of motivation in language use in their survey research. Our survey includes questions designed to capture data on two forms of motivation, instrumental and integrative motivation. *Instrumental motivation* is defined here as the need for a language for a job, status, or basic security, and *integrative orientation* is defined here as a social, interpersonal desire to belong to a community through the use of language (Baker, 1992, 2006). Because of the alleged competition among Ukrainian, Russian, and English, we also consider the *ethnolinguistic vitality* of the three languages in the country. Cartwright (2006) cites the seminal 1977 work by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor, who provide a taxonomy of vitality in three domains: status vitality (e.g., economic status, social status), demographic vitality, and institutional vitality (use across institutional settings). The more status and use a language has across these variables, the more likely a language is to survive any threats by other languages (Cartwright, 2006). Finally, we consider *language ideologies*, the economic value and social prestige associated with languages (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). In this case, we consider the relative economic and social value of Ukrainian, Russian, and English.

### Research Questions

Our specific research questions were: (1) What is the current usage of Ukrainian, Russian, and English among university business students in one city in Ukraine?, (2) What is the relative, explicit status of Ukrainian, Russian, and English for this population?, Does this status vary within different domains of life (home, school, work, etc.)?, and (3) How do respondents perceive the future of these three languages in Ukraine?

Although the university business student population was convenient to access, there are three principled reasons we wanted to study this population. First, these students were born between the time of the Law of Languages in

1989 and independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. They are part of the first generation of young people to go through the entire Ukrainian educational system during an age of Ukrainianization. In fact, the second author's personal experience with students at this university reveals they are uncomfortable in Russian at all in the classroom. They never learned Russian in school, and even feel various difficulties understanding some special notions. A number of the students ask Russian-speaking teachers to translate or explain material in Ukrainian instead. This experience is already qualitatively different from Søvik's (2007) findings through interviews that students in Kharkiv reportedly cannot understand university lectures given in the *derzhavna mova* [state language, i.e. Ukrainian,] and that a teacher will use Ukrainian if students ask for it, although this rarely occurs. Second, because of the financial cost of being at a university, these students are likely to be members of the upper class of society. Since historically in Ukraine the language of power has been the language of the elite class, these students' attitudes could be indicators of the future status or hierarchy of languages in the country. Third, business students are more likely aware of the view that "as the cross-cultural medium of choice in the latter years of the twentieth century, English has become—or at least is perceived as—indispensable in many areas of international business" (Kachru & Nelson, 1996, p. 96). Thus, they may be more disposed than other groups of Ukrainians or Ukrainian students to positive attitudes towards the role of English in their country and their lives.

### Data Collection

At the first author's request, the second author translated the English-language version of the survey into Ukrainian and Russian.<sup>2</sup> The Ukrainian and Russian versions were loaded into [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com), a free online survey website. A total of 30 students began the survey in March 2008 and 27 students completed it, a 90 percent completion rate. When the Internet service at the university was unavailable or disrupted, students completed the survey on paper, and the second author entered the data into [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com).<sup>3</sup> As the second author predicted, all students who took the survey used the Ukrainian-language version, not the Russian language version. There were slightly more women (15) than men (12) in the survey. All but one of the respondents were from the Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast, and two-thirds of those from the Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast were from Khmel'nyts'kyi city. All students in the survey were between the ages of 17 and 19. Until the year 2000, Ukraine had an 11-grade school system which children entered at age seven. Since almost all respondents are former students from the Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast and, based on their age, all must have started school around 1995-1996, we assumed that over 90% of them attended Ukrainian-language schools.

## Survey Design

Baker's (1992) survey of youths' usage of and attitudes towards Welsh and English was the foundation for our instrument. Our changes to the instrument were designed primarily to account for factors that are specific to the Ukrainian context, to collect data on not two but three languages, and to elicit students' predictions about the future of languages in Ukraine.

The survey consists of five major sections and question types. First, respondents were asked which language(s) they use across home, school, business and social domains, and which language(s) people from those domains use to communicate with them. Respondents chose one answer from among a six-point scale: Always Ukrainian/More often Ukrainian than Russian/Sometimes Ukrainian, Sometimes Russian/More Often Russian than Ukrainian/Always Russian/Another Language/I can't answer. Second, respondents were asked which languages they use with television, books, newspapers, the Internet, and music media. Since it is possible to access these media in more than one language, respondents could choose more than one answer (Ukrainian, Russian, English, another language) for each medium. Third, respondents were asked to assess the importance of Ukrainian, Russian, and English respectively on a 3-point scale (very important, somewhat important, or not important) for aspects of life in Ukraine such as: reading and writing, getting a job, getting married, raising children, or traveling. Fourth, respondents read a series of statements about Ukrainian, Russian, English, or a combination, e.g., "If Russian becomes an official language in Ukraine, the Ukrainian language will not survive" or "To get a good job in Ukraine, it is necessary to know three languages (Ukrainian, Russian, and English)." Respondents agreed or disagreed with each statement on a five-point scale. Finally, respondents wrote answers to the open-ended question, "25 years from now, which language or languages do you think will be commonly used in Ukraine? Why? How do you feel about that?"

## Limitations

Because this is the initial use of this survey instrument and a small convenience sample was used, only descriptive statistics are provided here. The data are generalizable only to university students in Khmel'nyts'kyi.

## Findings on Language Use

### *Interpersonal Language Use*

Across all domains of interpersonal language use, a large majority of respondents either speak predominantly Ukrainian or speak Ukrainian and Russian equally with others. In other words, for each of the 11 items in this section, 85-90% percent of respondents chose "Always Ukrainian", "More Ukrainian than Russian", or "Sometimes Ukrainian, Sometimes Russian". Only a slight

majority report using Ukrainian only, and not in all situations. Respondents seem to alternate more between Ukrainian and Russian when speaking to friends who are not university students, and with people selling goods in stores or at bazaars. Table 1 shows the percentage of responses for all parts of this question.

Table 1

*Language(s) Respondents Speak with Others by Relationship and Context (Only One Answer Possible)*

Note. N=27. Each row of the table totals 27 (100%).

	Always Ukrainian	More Often Ukrainian than Russian	Sometimes Ukrainian, Sometimes Russian	More Often Russian than Ukrainian	Always Russian	Another language	I can't answer
Father	13 (48.1%)	4 (14.8%)	2 (7.4%)	1 (3.7%)	4 (14.8%)	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)
Mother	14 (51.9%)	5 (18.5%)	3 (11.1%)	1 (3.7%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Brothers/Sisters	13 (48.1%)	5 (18.5%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)
Friends from the university	9 (33.3%)	7 (25.9%)	8 (29.6%)	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Friends outside the university	4 (14.8%)	8 (29.6%)	11 (40.7%)	1 (3.7%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Teachers (in a non-foreign language lecture)	13 (48.1%)	8 (29.6%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Shop clerks	8 (29.6%)	7 (25.9%)	8 (29.6%)	1 (3.7%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Sellers at the bazaar	9 (33.3%)	7 (25.9%)	7 (25.9%)	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Priests	17 (63.0%)	6 (22.2%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)
Churchgoers	14 (51.9%)	4 (14.8%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (14.8%)
Government employees	16 (59.3%)	6 (22.2%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)

When asked what language they hear others using in the same situations, respondents often reported hearing more Russian and less Ukrainian than they speak. For example, nine respondents (33%) say they use only Ukrainian with university friends, but no one said their university friends use only Ukrainian with them. A similar shift can be seen with university professors, shop clerks, friends outside the university, and even government employees. These findings need to be taken lightly because students' self-reports may represent a slight underreporting of language use. It may be easier for respondents to hear another person mixing languages than to hear oneself doing the same, or the answers may reflect an idealized version of the self who speaks purely Ukrainian. Table 2 shows the responses across domains for this question.

Table 2

*Language(s) Others Speak with Respondents by Relationship and Context (Only One Answer Possible)*

	Always Ukrainian	More Often Ukrainian than Russian	Sometimes Ukrainian, Sometimes Russian	More Often Russian than Ukrainian	Always Russian	Another language	I can't answer
Father	14 (51.9%)	2 (7.4%)	3 (11.1%)	3 (11.1%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)
Mother	15 (55.6%)	3 (11.1%)	3 (11.1%)	2 (7.4%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Brothers/Sisters	10 (37%)	5 (18.5%)	7 (25.9%)	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (7.4%)
Friends from the university	0 (0.0%)	11 (40.7%)	15 (55.6%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Friends outside the university	2 (7.4%)	6 (22.2%)	15 (55.6%)	2 (7.4%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Teachers (in a non-foreign language lecture)	7 (25.9%)	10 (37%)	10 (37%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Shop clerks	1 (3.7%)	9 (33.3%)	15 (55.6%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Sellers at the bazaar	1 (3.7%)	7 (25.9%)	15 (55.6%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Priests	13 (48.1%)	6 (22.2%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (14.8%)
Churchgoers	8 (29.6%)	6 (22.2%)	6 (22.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (22.2%)
Government employees	7 (25.9%)	7 (25.9%)	6 (22.2%)	2 (7.4%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (14.8%)

Note: N=27. Each row of the table totals 27 (100%).

The fact that students use more Ukrainian with professors than they hear is consistent with the second author's experiences with students preferring to use Ukrainian in the classroom. Given that over 50% of government employees are reported to use Russian, one may wonder why they are not making a faster switch to Ukrainian since state policy dictates that it is now the sole language for state business. This is an indicator that Ukrainianization policies may not be working in this domain for this particular city.

### *Language and the Media*

While respondents use multiple languages with media in Ukraine, the Ukrainian language was the most frequently reported language (74-85%) used with television, radio, music, books, and text messaging (SMS). Although Russian-language use is high with these media (59-74%), it is not as high as Ukrainian-language use. These data appear to reflect the effective implementation of Ukrainianization laws on the media in Khmel'nyts'kyi. While Russian-language newspapers and books are still available in Ukraine, access to Russian-language television or movies requires paying for cable or having access to the Internet--a relatively expensive and therefore less common option for students in Khmel'nyts'kyi. Russian-language use was most common among the three languages when using the Internet and email. These data correspond with the second author's observation that those who use the Internet for emailing or chat communicate mostly with Russians. Use of English with music was high (56%), but still lower than that of Ukrainian or Russian. The only category in which English is reportedly used more than any other language is in English classes at the university (89%). Table 3 shows the breakdown for respondents' language usage with media.

Table 3

*Language(s) Respondents Use By Medium or Context (More Than One Answer Possible)*

	Ukrainian	Russian	English	Another language	I can't answer
Watching TV	23 (85.2%)	16 (59.3%)	4 (14.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)
Listening to the radio	20 (74.1%)	16 (59.3%)	6 (22.2%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (14.8%)
Listening to CDs/MP3 files	22 (81.5%)	18 (66.7%)	15 (55.6%)	5 (18.5%)	2 (7.4%)
Reading books, newspapers or magazines for pleasure	22 (81.5%)	20 (74.1%)	4 (14.8%)	1 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Sending SMS	22 (81.5%)	19 (70.4%)	5 (18.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Writing email	13 (48.1%)	14 (51.9%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (29.6%)
Using the Internet	12 (44.4%)	21 (77.8%)	6 (22.2%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (22.2%)
English language classes at the university	13 (48.1%)	3 (11.1%)	24 (88.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.7%)

Note. N=27. Because multiple answers are possible, row totals are higher than 100%.

Overall, students' reported interpersonal and media-related usage of Ukrainian is higher in Khmel'nyts'kyi than in Kyiv or Kharkiv (Marshall, 2002; Søvik, 2007), a finding consistent with the model that Ukrainian use is higher the further west in the country one goes.

### Findings on Language Attitudes and Ideologies

#### *The Importance of Ukrainian and Russian*

Across domains, respondents attributed low social value to Russian, but did not give a correspondingly high value to Ukrainian. The Russian language was rarely rated "very important" (1-2 respondents per situation), and was rated "not important" by a large majority for 10 of the 16 situations. However in only 5 out of 16 situations was Ukrainian rated "very important" by a majority of the respondents: (1) To read and write, (2) To find work, (3) To raise children, (4) To work/conduct business in Ukraine, and (5) To talk to teachers. Such a response pattern seems to indicate a struggle between supporting the symbolic ideal of the Ukrainian language and recognizing the reality of language use in the country. For example, although 52% said Ukrainian is important for raising children, nearly an equal percentage of respondents (56%) said Ukrainian is *not* important for finding a husband or wife. This may suggest that they value other qualities over language when selecting a partner.<sup>4</sup> It may also suggest respondents' openness to a two-language household. Table 4 contains other statements about the symbolic value of Ukrainian that were supported by an overwhelming majority of respondents, even though such statements do not always reflect the reality of language use.

Table 4

*Statements Supporting the Value of the Ukrainian Language*

Statement	Number and percent of respondents choosing "strongly agree" or "partially agree"
We need to preserve the Ukrainian language	27 (100%)
If I have children, I want them to speak Ukrainian	26 (96.2%)
Ukrainian is a symbol of our national identity	25 (92.6%)
I think all Ukrainians should speak Ukrainian, not Russian	22 (81.5%)

Note. N=27.

The last statement, "I think all Ukrainians should speak Ukrainian, not Russian," may be particularly perplexing not only because of the demonstrated rates of Russian usage, but also because 17 respondents (63%) agreed with the statement, "I think Ukrainians should be able to speak Russian or Ukrainian as they wish." It again underscores the ideal of what people should do (speak Ukrainian), while acknowledging that if people prefer to speak Russian they should have the right to do so.

*The Importance of English*

Unlike Russian, the English language was rated "very important" in 4 out of 16 situations by a majority of respondents: (1) earning a lot of money, (2) finding a job, (3) working or conducting business outside of Ukraine, and (4) travelling outside of Ukraine. Three of four of these answers reflect a perceived association between English and employment, and two of the four reflect a perception that English is important outside of Ukraine. All four situations reflect instrumental, not integrative, functions of English and suggest that English is associated with linguistic opportunism beyond Ukraine's borders. Within Ukraine, English is perceived as necessary in addition to Ukrainian or Russian but not instead of either language; 25 respondents (93%) agree with the statement, "To get a good job in Ukraine, it is necessary to know three languages (Ukrainian, Russian, and English)."

The perceived utility of English in relation to other languages outside of Ukraine is mixed. English was not perceived as a language that will replace Russian as a lingua franca in the former Soviet Union. Two-thirds of respondents disagreed with the statement "To communicate with people from other countries in the former Soviet Union, English is more useful than Russian." However, when the question is applied to general language use internation-

Я вважаю, що через 25 і навіть через 100 років Українська мова залишиться головною і загальноприйнятною мовою в Україні. Людина не повинна примусово розмовляти тією мовою, якою вона не хоче, це не правильно. Якщо їй легше спілкуватися російською, то нехай. Найголовніше те, щоб не забувала рідну мову, не забувала те ким вона є, свою історію, адже мова - це один із найголовніших факторів у створенні і житті держави. Я відчуваю,

ally for business or travel, a hierarchy of languages emerges in which English is most useful, followed by Russian and then Ukrainian. Table 5 shows the responses to the questions about how important or unimportant each language is for work or business outside Ukraine. Table 6 shows the responses to the questions about how important or unimportant each language is for travel outside Ukraine.

Table 5  
*The Importance of Languages for Work or Business Outside Ukraine*

	The language is very important	The language is somewhat important	The language is not important
English	21 (77.8%)	5 (18.5%)	1 (3.7%)
Russian	2 (7.4%)	15 (55.6%)	10 (37.0%)
Ukrainian	2 (7.4%)	10 (37.0%)	15 (55.6%)

Note. N=27. Each row of the table totals 27 (100%).

Table 6  
*The Importance of Languages for Travel Outside Ukraine*

	The language is very important	The language is somewhat important	The language is not important
English	23 (85.2%)	3 (11.1%)	1 (3.7%)
Russian	2 (7.4%)	13 (48.1%)	12 (44.4%)
Ukrainian	1 (3.7%)	11 (40.7%)	15 (55.6%)

Note. N=27. Each row of the table totals 27 (100%).

*The Relative Importance of the Three Languages for Education in Ukraine*

Respondents indicated that Ukrainian, Russian, and English were all important languages for communicating with teachers. In this domain, however, the hierarchy favors Ukrainian, followed by Russian, then by English. Table 7 shows respondents' answers to the question of the importance of languages for educational communication.

Table 7  
*The Importance of Languages for Communicating with Teachers*

	The language is very important	The language is somewhat important	The language is not important
Ukrainian	15 (55.6%)	10 (37.0%)	2 (7.4%)
Russian	2 (7.4%)	17 (63.0%)	8 (29.6%)
English	3 (11.1%)	14 (51.9%)	10 (37.0%)

Note. N=27. Each row of the table totals 27 (100%).

In terms of explicit attitudes, students were more strongly oriented to supporting the use of Ukrainian in school; 25 (92.6%) agreed that all school and university exams should be given in Ukrainian, and 22 (81.5%) agreed all professors should use only Ukrainian in class. This is a clear shift from reportable expectations in higher education in Soviet times, when even thinking about doing schoolwork

in Ukrainian could be grounds for expulsion (Bilaniuk, 2005). It may also be an indicator that students from this generation have been socialized at the elementary and secondary level into believing that the only language appropriate in the classroom is Ukrainian (cf. Friedman, 2006).

### The Future of Language in Ukraine

First, it should be said respondents overwhelmingly supported the notion that only the Ukrainian language should be the official language of the nation; 21 respondents (78%) strongly disagreed with the notion that there should be two official languages (Ukrainian and Russian) and 24 respondents (89%) strongly disagreed with the statement, "To keep Ukrainian and Russian speakers from fighting about their language, English should become the official language of Ukraine." The remaining three respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

In the open-ended question, it became further clear that the majority predict the Ukrainian language will continue to be a part of Ukraine's future. Participants were divided on whether Ukraine will be the only common language in Ukraine or whether Russian will continue to be used alongside Ukraine. Only three respondents thought English would be a language of the future in Ukraine. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of these choices, based on the authors' coding of the open-ended answers. The y-axis reflects the number of respondents who indicated that language or language combination.

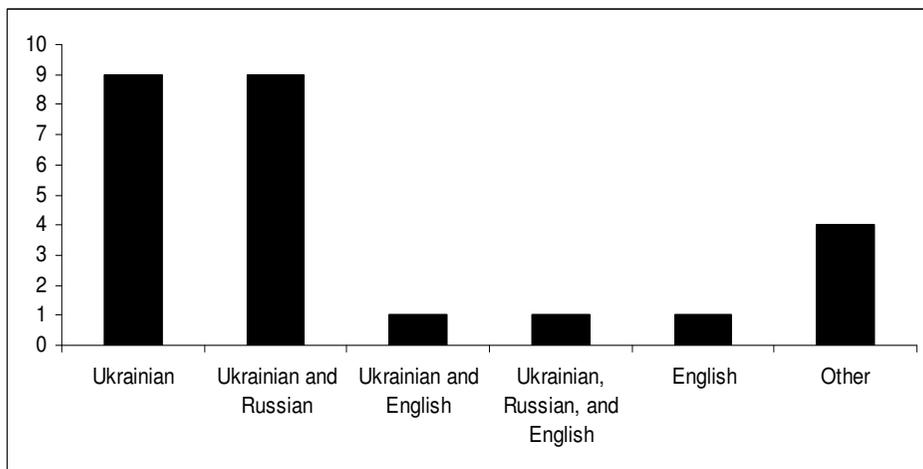


Figure 1. Predicted language(s) in Ukraine in 25 Years

Note. N=27.

While most respondents gave single-word language answers, about one-third chose to elaborate on their answers. One answer in particular seems to sum up the complexity and emotions of language in Ukraine (original in Ukrainian, transliteration and translation by the authors):

ЩО НАША МОВА НІКОЛИ НЕ ЗАБУДЕТЬСЯ, АДЖЕ ВОНА ТАКА ЧУДОВА І МИЛОЗВУЧНА, І ЗАБУТИ ЇЇ ЦЕ ПРОСТО БУДЕ ЗАБУТИ САМОГО СЕБЕ, СВОЄ ЄСТВО.

Ja vvazhaju, shcho cherez 25 i navit' cherez 100 rokov Ukrajin's'ka mova zalyshyt'sja holovnoju i zahal'nopryinjatoju movoju v Ukraini. Ljudyna ne povynna prymysovo rozmovljaty tieju movoju, jakuju vona nekhoch, tse ne pravyl'no. Jakshcho jij lehshe spilkuvatysja rosijs'koju, to nekhaj. Najholovnishe te, shchob ne zabuvala ridnu movu, ne zabuvala te kym vona e, svoju istoriju, adzhe mova—tse odin iz najholovnishykh faktoriv u stvorenni i zhitti derzhavy. Ja vidchuvaju, shcho nasha mova nikoly ne zabudet'sja, adzhe vona taka chudova i mylozvuchna, i zabuty iji tse prosto bude zabuty samoho sebe, svoe estvo.

I think that after 25 years or even after 100 years the Ukrainian language will remain the main and general language in Ukraine. People mustn't be forced to speak their language as they don't want, that's not right. If to them it's better to converse in Russian, let it be. What's more important is, they haven't forgotten their native language, they haven't forgotten that Ukrainian is their history. Certainly language is one of the most important factors of the creation and life of a state. I feel that our language never will be forgotten. Certainly it is so wonderful and melodious, and to forget it would simply be to forget oneself, one's being.

This respondent acknowledges and even supports the continued presence of the Russian language in the country, but concludes the Ukrainian language will predominate because “Ukrainian is their history.” Søvik (2007) argues there are two “grand narratives” of Ukrainian history: an “imperial grand narrative” that treats Ukrainians and Russians as people with a common ancestry, and the “Ukrainian” narrative that emphasize a separate Ukrainian statehood from Russia. As a result, “defining the origin of the Ukrainian language is in itself a political choice” (Søvik, 2007, p. 87). This respondent's identification with the Ukrainian language as Ukraine's history indexes an uptake of the Ukrainian historical narrative. Whether that narrative was learned in the home, school, or both is not clear.

### Conclusion

It has been shown in this study that for one group of students in one part of Ukraine, the Ukrainian language is regularly used, strongly valued, and has a high degree of vitality. While Russian does not have any symbolic power and is not used as much as Ukrainian is, it is still reported to have a high level of vitality, especially in the domains of communication with friends, shop workers, and people from other republics of the former Soviet Union. Russian is perceived as likely to exist in Ukraine for some time to come, suggesting that Ukrainianization has not led everyone to reject the use of Russian outright. English appears to be used within Ukraine only for listening to popular music and attending English classes. As Ciscel (2002) found in Moldova, English has a higher status than Ukrainian or Russian for employment within the country and for travel and business outside of Ukraine. Although this is a form of linguistic opportunism, English is perceived as an additional language alongside

Ukrainian and Russian, not as a language which supplants the usage or attitudes towards these languages.

It is worth noting methodologically that when conducting research in a “contested linguistic space” (Pavlenko, 2008, November 19), the language(s) of the research tools can themselves be sites of inquiry of language attitudes and practices. Given the survey in all three languages. The choice by all students to complete the survey in Ukrainian rather than Russian is yet another indicator of which language is the language of power or symbolic value in Khmel’nyts’kyi. When this survey is conducted again, students will be able to choose from all three languages (Ukrainian, Russian, and English) to provide further evidence that English is not the language of power or status within Ukraine. Finally, since Ukrainian, Russian, and English are seen by students as having high future vitality and instrumental value, all three languages have significance for communication, and consequently learning, in the classroom. Therefore, we encourage university teachers, administrators, and language policymakers to feel freer to draw on all three languages in classroom teaching. As Hornberger (2003) observes, the more linguistic resources that are drawn on, the better learning outcomes will be.

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#### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>This paper is based on “Will Ukrainian Survive Globalization?”, a presentation given by the authors at the National Council on Less Commonly Taught Languages Conference, Madison, WI, April 2008.

<sup>2</sup>A copy of the survey instrument can be obtained in English, Ukrainian or Russian by sending an email to bgoodman@dolphin.upenn.edu.

<sup>3</sup>This methodological pitfall is more likely associated with the unreliability of the Internet connection at the university than with any limitations of surveymonkey.com. When the second researcher accessed surveymonkey.com from her home computer, it did not crash.

<sup>4</sup>The authors thank Mariam Durrani for this observation.

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