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Research Study

Language Tenacity of Ukrainians in the 20th Century as a Means of National Self-Assertion

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ABSTRACT. The goal of this article is to analyze language tenacity of Ukrainians in the first half of the twentieth century as well as geographical and historical factors that have influenced language behaviour and language choice. The data set used for the analysis comes from a collection of interviews "Unusual Fates of Usual Women. Oral History of the 20th Century" (Vynnytska, 2013). These texts are chosen as they represent demonstrative samples of women's language practices and interviewees' reflections on the language situation in Ukraine in the first half of the 20th century. The women-interviewees explain their language choices and define how it has influenced national identity of the individuals and groups. In total, 21 interviews, which I view as discourse (text in context), are studied. The analysis is informed by critical discourse studies and reveals that the concepts of language stability and language tenacity describe the language situation studied. Language attitudes are also shown to be instrumental in creating the sociolinguistic conditions which support language stability. The discussion focuses on the concept of language tenacity as the most relevant notion in preserving or maintaining a language in a society.

RÉSUMÉ. Le but principal de cet article est d'analyser l'acharnement des ukrainiens à leur langue au début du XX siècle autant que l'influence des facteurs historiques et géographiques sur leur comportement ainsi que leur choix de la langue parlée. L'ensemble des données utilisées proviennent des interviews « Unusual Fates of Usual Women. Oral History of the 20th Century » (Vynnytska, 2013). Ces textes étaient sélectionnés comme un exemple le plus éloquent du langage des femmes et leurs opinions concernant ce sujet, au début du XX siècle. Des femmes interviewées expliquent comment le choix de la langue parlée déterminait une identité nationale des individus ou des groupes. En totalité, 21 entretiens étaient étudiés. L'analyse résultant des études critiques des discours, - appelé l'approche socio-cognitif. Les résultats de ces analyses sont étroitement liés avec des concepts de la stabilité et pertinence de la langue. Les attitudes linguistiques sont également démontrées comme un déterminant sociolinguistique et le support de la stabilité de la langue parlée. La pertinence de la langue parlée est également dans le collimateur de la discussion, explorant l'importance de préserver la langue dans une société.

Keywords: *language tenacity, language behaviour, language stability, memories, Ukrainian language.*

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INTRODUCTION

In this article, I examine language behaviour, particularly language tenacity, of Ukrainians in the first half of the 20th century. Language tenacity is a key theoretical concern in sociolinguistics and is now becoming a practical issue in contexts where language assimilation processes threaten the existence of a certain language. Language tenacity encompasses language stability, viability, and vitality, which "from the point of view of ethnolinguistics depends on a number of factors, namely, the presence and antiquity of written traditions, the number of speakers, and a given sociopolitical situation" (Batsevych, 2007, p. 35). National consciousness and solidarity contribute to how a language is positioned throughout all layers of society, and how it forms a foundation for creating a nationwide culture and spiritual culture.

In this article, I explore language tenacity with a specific focus on the language behaviour of Ukrainians in the first half of the 20th century. In sociolinguistic terms, the territory of Ukraine was far from being homogeneous in the first half of the 20th century, which makes this a relevant historical period to study with respect to the language tenacity of Ukrainian people. Despite the fact that there are studies that deal with language tenacity and language behaviour, the historical perspective that this article presents is relatively novel. Masenko (2002) noted that the concepts of language stability and language tenacity are significant for understanding modern sociolinguistics. Indeed, in present-day Ukrainian sociolinguistics, they recently have become widespread for the analysis of the linguistic situation. In this regard, Renchka (2020), has analyzed the language behavior of Ukrainians under the Russian-Ukrainian war (2014-ongoing), and has underlined that "in the context of military conflict in the Donbas region, language becomes a means of preserving one's own identity as well as the "friend-or-foe" marker" (p. 88). Thus, the historical perspective presented in this article will enrich these scholarly discussions on language tenacity with voices from the past that can inform how language tenacity is understood in the current context.

My research is based on an analysis of interviews that were conducted with women who were born between 1893 and 1934 in different parts of what is now Ukraine. The interviews were published in the book "Незвичайні долі звичайних жінок. Усна історія XX століття" [Eng. "Unusual Fates of Usual Women. Oral History of the 20th Century" (Lviv Polytechnic Publishing House, 2013, ed. Vynnytska, I.)]. All translations from the quotations from the Ukrainian original text in this article are mine. The book consists of 21 transcribed interviews with women from different social strata, of different ages and belonging to post-war emigration. This collection of interviews aims to transmit "to the reader the atmosphere of the first half of the 20th century as seen by the women, illustrating with their voices the events and phenomena occurring at that time and showing how various events were affecting the fate of the Ukrainian women" (Vynnytska, 2013, p. 29).

The texts that I have included in the analysis in this article contain several discussions about the languages that were used by the women and how they were used in a variety of situations

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and contexts. The interviews illustrate the women's reported language practices and explore their memories about the overall language situation in Ukraine during the interwar period. The interviewees discussed their language choices and how their language behaviours related to their national identity. Memories "lift from an ordinary historical sequence those extraordinary historical events which embody our deepest and most fundamental values" (Schwartz, 1982, p. 377), and thus provide a rich territory to explore my research objectives. These are:

1. to explore (or understand) language behaviour of Ukrainians in the first half of the 20th century as reflected in the interviews under the analysis; and
2. to relate this language behaviour to the concepts of language stability and language tenacity.

In this article, I focus on the language choices that the women, who are representatives of population from the occupied territories of Ukraine during the interwar period as well as the period after the Soviet annexation of Eastern Galicia in 1939, demonstrate in their memories. This analysis allows me to explore language tenacity as a constituent of language viability, with language vitality, from the ethnolinguistics point of view, which is dependent "on a number of factors, namely, the presence and antiquity of written traditions, the number of speakers, and a given sociopolitical situation" (Batsevych, 2007, p. 35). Moreover, I will connect my analysis of language behaviour of Ukrainians in the first half of the 20th century to the concept of language tenacity, which depends not so much on circumstances, but rather on the nation's will and willingness to engage in certain behaviours, such as defending the language and not switching into the languages of occupants.

BACKGROUND

During the interwar period, which is the focus of this article, the Western Ukraine was as part of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, and Central and Eastern Ukraine was occupied by Bolshevik Russia.The women whose interviews are included in the book, "Unusual Fates of Usual Women: Oral History of the 20th Century", particularly Halyna Skaskiv, Mariia Horban, Nadiia Oliinyk, were originally from the Eastern Galicia - a geographical region in Western Ukraine that belonged to Poland in 1918-1939. Currently, it includes all of the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts (regions) of Ukraine as well as Ternopil Oblast, with its northern strip bordering the Raions of Kremenets, Shumsk and Lanivci and the northern part of Zbarazh Raion (see Figure 1 below).

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Figure 1: Ukraine in the interwar period
Source: https://geomap.com.ua/en-uh5/711.html#&gid=maps&pid=1

It is difficult to say how many West Ukrainians there were between the wars, because the censuses of most interwar East Europeans states were notoriously inaccurate (Himka, 1992, p. 394). According to official Polish statistics, there were 3,898,431 Ukrainians in Poland in 1921 and 4,441,622 in 1931, accounting for about 14 percent of Poland's total population (Rothschild, 1974, p. 36). Ukrainian demographers have argued that these figures are low and that there were closer to five to six million Ukrainians in Poland in 1931. Kubiiovych (1963), for instance, estimated 5,902,000 Ukrainians in Poland in 1931, and Torzecki (1989), a prominent Polish scholar, estimated that there were about 5.1 or 5.2 million Ukrainians in Poland in 1929 . About two thirds of the Ukrainians lived in Galicia (the palatinates [województwa] of Lviv, Ternopil and Stanyslaviv); the rest lived mainly in the palatinates of Volhynia and Polissia, although there were also Ukrainian populations near Chetm (Kholm) in the Lublin palatinate and in the Lemko region in the Western Carpathians (Cracow palatinate) (Papierzyńska-Turek, 1979).

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In general, Ukrainians in the Eastern Galicia lived in the countryside, while Poles and Jews lived in the cities. The census of Poland in 1931 revealed that 63 % of the population of Lviv spoke Polish, 11.3 percent Ukrainian, 0.8 percent German, and 24.1 percent Yiddish (Habela & Kurzowa 1989: 12). In his book of memoirs *Literaturnyj Lviv 1939–1944: Spomyny* [Literary Lviv 1939–1944: Memories] Ostap Tarnavskyi (1995) wrote, that "even though a considerably small number of Ukrainians lived in Lviv, Lviv was the center of Ukrainian life" (pp. 13–14). While there was a small number of Ukrainian speakers in the cities, they were involved in the public life of the city.

Figure 2: Poland borders from 1921 to 1939 with red showing today's map
*Source:*https://www.deviantart.com/politicalflags/art/Poland-interwar-borders-on-todays-map-716131063

The language situation in interwar Galicia was analyzed by George J. Shevelov (1989), who noted that "the peculiar combination of suppression with certain liberties, of legal regulations with total arbitrariness by some officials, had an impact on the status of the Ukrainian language and on the psychology of its speakers in the Polish Ukraine" (p. 184). The linguist mentioned memories of Stepan Shakh how, as first-graders, he and his classmates undertook a trip by rail from Lviv. Each of them went to the ticket counter at the main station in Lviv and asked for his ticket in Ukrainian. Each boy was met with abuse and insult by the Polish cashiers, but the tickets were purchased, and the ride took place. In Shevelov's opinion, this minor episode reflects the status of the Ukrainian language under Polish domination and the experience of

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Ukrainian speakers in the interwar period (Shevelov, 1989). Because of language behaviour, including sustaining language choices, Ukrainians managed to oppose the process of linguistic and cultural assimilation in the first half of the 20th century – under Polish and Soviet occupation.

The level of national consciousness was higher in Galicia than in Transcarpathia or Bukovina, mostly because of the long-standing influence of and rivalry with the well-developed Polish national movement. As Himka (1992) wrote, "The rivalry, and consequent intensification of national consciousness, reached a culmination after the collapse of Austria in 1918-19 when Galician Ukrainians waged an armed struggle for independence against the Poles" (pp. 395-396).

According to the relatively credible official statistics of Czechoslovakia, there were 461,849 Ukrainians (Ruthenians, Rusyns) in the country in 1921 and 549,169 in 1930, accounting for 3 to 4 percent of the total population of Czechoslovakia (Rothschild, 1974). Over 80 percent of the Ukrainians lived in the province of Subcaipathian Rus and over 15 percent lived in the adjacent Preshov region in the province of Slovakia (Magocsi, 1978).

The Czechoslovak language policy in relation to national minorities, in particular, Ukrainians, was different from the language policy situation in Poland. Ruda (2016) analysed the main provisions of the international treaties and constitutional legal acts which defined the legal regime of the Ukrainian language in Galicia and Subcarpathian Rus. The Czechoslovak Republic provided broad linguistic rights of the Transcarpathian Ukrainians and contributed to their cultural and educational development. Hence, resulting from such language policy in Transcarpathia, Ukrainian-language folk and secondary schools were open as well as course books in Ukrainian were realised. In Transcarpathia, where Mariia Logush, one of the women whose memories are included in the book I am analyzing, was born, three languages functioned – Ukrainian, Russian, and Ruthenian, and those "three hostile camps were not so distant from each other as the era's polemical articles would indicate. Publications in pure Standard Ukrainian were very hard to find, and the few in Russian were mostly by non-native (to the region) authors" (Shevelov, 1989, p. 211). As Shevelov pointed out, "the chaotic language situation in schools and in publications may have reflected such a trend" (p. 211). In oral speech, Standard Ukrainian was not used by Transcarpathian natives during the Czech period, nor was its Galician variant. Speaking of the central part of Ukraine, the time of Hetmanate, Liudmyla Bryzhun is talking about in her interview, "was marred by strong Russian influences on all levels of government. . . . Both city and town old-fashioned *dumy* and the newly formed municipal soviets were strongholds of Russian. . . . Very often the official use of Ukrainian was more of a challenge than a 'natural' routine" (p. 73).

In the interwar period, Ukrainian lands were divided between four states. Accordingly, the South-Eastern and Central parts belonged to the Soviet Union, and Eastern Galicia, formerly part of Austria-Hungary, was ceded to Poland. Romania occupied the Austro-Hungarian province of Bukovina and Transcarpathian Ukraine passed to Czechoslovakia. In that time, the language

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of everyday communication in the Soviet Ukraine was Russian; in Galicia - Polish; in Bukovyna - German and/or Romanian, and in Transcarpathia present the linguistic chaos, the society of the region remained on "a preindustrial level" (Shevelov, 1989, p. 213). However, in the West of Ukraine, there were individual and group attempts to use of Ukrainian consistently in the everyday communication by the Ukrainian inteligencia itself. This brief historical summary provides the background context for study of language tenacity of Ukrainians in the 20th century.

THE TEXT

The collection of interviews that I have used for this study is a part of a large-scale oral history project managed by Iroiida Vynnytska, and founded by the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre (UCRDC) based in Toronto, in cooperation with The Ivan Franko Lviv National University Institute for Historical Research (Lviv). The authors and compilers ensured that each interview contained full details about the circumstances in which it was recorded, as well as providing a short biographical note about the narrator, which has enabled researchers to use these memories as a meaningful scientific source. Moreover, the verbatim transcriptions of the interviews have been published, involving minimal editing, which is of utmost importance for the analysis of their contents.

Most of the interviewees featured in this collection had an intelligentsia background. For instance, Vasylyna Salamon was born into the family of a priest, and Nadiia Oliinyk's father was a teacher, and a former Ukrainian Galician Army (*UHA, Ukraiinska Halytska Armiia*) colonel *[TN Ukr. "sotnyk"]*; Volodymyra Luchkiv had wealthy parents who were able to give their daughter an education and raise her in a "religious and national spirit" (p. 251); Halyna Skaskiv was the daughter of a Ukraine People's Republic (*UNR Ukraiinska Narodna Respublika)* officer, who was also an activist of the Galician Educational movement. Each of the interviewees received an education: Mariia Horban graduated from the Basilian Sisters' Gymnasium in Lviv; Anelia Varvaruk passed her final exams at the national Ukrainian gymnasium [TN - a type of secondary school] in Drohobych; Nadiia Oliinyk also passed her final exams at a state gymnasium in Sokal; Volodymyra Luchkiv was studying medicine at Lviv University. Tkach (2007) aptly noted in her work "Ukrainian Literary Language in Bukovyna of the late 19th – early 20th century" that the intelligent, well-educated, knowledgeable people in a few language strata of society had a decisive influence on the formation of the Western Ukrainian variety of the literary language. According to Tkach (2007), it was this layer of society that posed as "an object and a subject of interlingual cooperation; they served as the intermediaries of the foreign language influences, as happened to be the case in the history of almost any European literary language" (p. 362). It is worth mentioning that the representatives of this layer were also a trigger for the national revival, and the preservation of language and traditions.

This collection has received scholarly attention. According to Kis (2004), this compilation of stories has an important social mission, as it will:

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Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
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> encourage the restoration of the continuance between generations in a country where there has been a decades-long silence about the fate of their ancestors. The fear of persecution forced many people to completely hide their past, even from their own children and grandchildren. For several generations of Ukrainians, such publications have been a way to restore the connection with their ancestors, as well as their own historical identity … from the stories told by these women we learn about their daily routine, where they drew their energy from and what they did to survive, not to give in, to resist the pressure of their circumstances and eventually win. (p. 425)

Undoubtedly, these interviews are of great value to historians, ethnographers, and sociologists. However, I believe that is an important source of analysis for linguists as well since these texts raise such important sociolinguistic issues as language situation in Ukraine in the first half of the 20th century. Moreover, they contain discussions about language behaviour of Ukrainians as well as their language choice that correlate with the concept of language tenacity I am examining in this article.

LITERATURE REVIEW: LANGUAGE BEHAVIOR, LANGUAGE STABILITY, AND LANGUAGE TENACITY

In this article, I focus on the analysis of the respondents' linguistic reflections at two levels: 1) language practices, that is, the actual language behaviour, including sustaining language choices and 2) thoughts about language, its use in a certain community and their views about the language situation in Ukraine in the interwar period. Yavorska (2000) considered linguistic behaviour to be one of the signs of linguistic consciousness, and the realization of linguistic reflections. Reflecting on a language (linguistic reflections), according to Yavorska, can be manifested in two main domains:

> the first (superficial) of their levels consists of views on the language characteristic of a certain language community or separate layers of society; the second (deep) level occurs in the language behaviour, namely in the active choice of the linguistic unit considered right or more appropriate as opposed to those which are seen as inappropriate. (p. 143)

In Ukrainian linguistics research, the notion of language behaviour is most frequently related to the practice of choosing a language code. This concept has close connections with the notions of language tenacity, linguistic identity, linguistic loyalty, code switching, code blending, interference, bilingualism, multilingualism, language situation, linguistic competence, interlingual connections among others.

Language behaviour implies

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2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

> choosing a language code, which is manifested through language activity or socially motivated changes in the linguistic consciousness of an individual speaker or a group of speakers, and is determined by a system of interconnected social, legal, psychological, and sociocultural factors, which are decisive in the language and individual, language and community, and language and social types of relations. (Mykhalchuk, 2014, p. 37; translation my own)

Sociolinguistic parameters of language behaviour are focused in three directions: 1) choosing a mother tongue; 2) choosing a language in a multilingual environment or choosing a language code; 3) language activity within one language code (Mykhalchuk, 2014). To simplify, "language behaviour means language use – the kind of things that are done with language" (Chumak, 1985, p. 187). The types of language behaviour result from language competence of speakers and relevant communication environment (Sokolova, 2013) as well as from the traditions and norms observed in society (Bikova, 2006).

Language behaviour in the sociocultural domain includes not only language practice, which often results from the social and linguistic environment and is therefore the language choice, but also "linguistic identity, manifested through the attitude towards a particular language. This attitude can be observed in the ethnolinguistic self-identification and linguistic orientation that are the most distinctive factors when choosing a language to be their mother tongue" (Mykhalchuk, 2014, p. 35). Mykhalchuk used the term *ridna mova* (Ukr. *Рідна мова*) or *mother tongue*. I assume that the author meant *first language*. Bloomfield (1993) defined a native language as one learned on one's mother's knee and claims that no one is perfectly sure in a language that is acquired later.

In this demonstration of linguistic behaviour, "linguistic identity occurs as a combination of the socially and culturally determined language traditions that reflect the common values of the orientation" (Yavorska, 2000, p. 143) and serves as a driving force behind the changes in individual language preferences. Moreover, sociolinguists point out that divergent use of language is the reflection of identities people adopt as a result of their membership in the different groups characterized by their race, ethnicity, gender, and social class (Labov, 1972; Moore, 2004). The way people use a variety of languages leads to their social identity identification. People may use a variety of languages to show specific or multiple group allegiances. This phenomenon is what Edwards (2007) has called "ethnonational solidarity" (p. 9): speakers construct and develop their linguistic identities by informed selection of the language varieties. As Bucholtz and Hall (2004) sustained, "language contributes to nationalist identity formation by providing a sense of cohesion and unity for its speakers'' (p. 385).

Ingroup speech is often used as a medium to remind and reestablish the cultural heritage in a given group of people. Mirdal and Ryynänen-Karjalainen (2004) described how speakers project themselves with a target identification social group using a certain speech behavior, in order to receive reinforcement from such group. The authors added that "people use their linguistic

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Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

resources to project an image of themselves, and use language differently to affiliate to certain social and ethnic categories'' (p. 34). This understanding of identity leads us to think about the reasons for and the conditions under which people use language, the way speakers are perceived by others as users of language, the meanings they want to convey in particular situations and the resources they draw upon in order to do so (Zotzmann & O'Regan, 2016, p. 1).

Attitudes towards languages and language use in general represent a rather complex set of factors. These include "attitudes towards linguistic change, loyalty towards one's own language (and culture) and, not to forget, attitudes towards bilingual/bilectal language use" (Kühl & Braunmüller, 2014, p. 14). Therefore, speakers' attitudes seem to be able to outdo any linguistic constraint and will be addressed in the present study as such.

Language stability is closely connected with the language situation, that is,the interaction of different languages in a certain country, region, or community with the view of the functional peculiarities and the area of language coverage at a certain moment of historical development. Shumarova (2000) noted that "the language situation is simultaneously a process and the result of the historical development of society. It forms and develops under the influence of objective and subjective factors of the socio-economic, demographic, national and cultural directions of language politics" (p. 151).

Tkachenko (1990) distinguished between the terms *language stability* and *language tenacity*. Accordingly, language tenacity is used to characterize individual or group language behavior. The concept of language stability is applied to denote the situation in which the language is. Tkachenko (2007) later noted that a nation's language tenacity is fueled by four sources which constitute the ultimate conditions for its [nation's] existence. They are: "national tradition (historical memory); national identity and solidarity, which must go hand-in-hand; national culture, both spiritual and material; national peace and collaboration with the other ethos living on the given territory as well as with other world nations" (p. 7).

Language tenacity is defined as "one of the characteristics of the individual and collective linguistic behaviour" (Masenko, 2002, p. 11). Language tenacity is the language behaviour of an individual or a group directed at the consistent use of the mother tongue (one's first language) depending on communicative conditions (Ruda, 2000).

There are two types of obstacles which can prevent language tenacity from developing: external, material obstacles (anti-national activities in the form of repression and terror) and internal, ideological obstacles (anti-national ideology in the form of respective views and theories). According to Stoikova (2015), internal obstacles are the most dangerous, as they make persons accept the external obstacles and disarm the nation. Consequently, people refuse to justify their national rights.

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Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

Language and society should be considered as a holistic system, in which speakers are seen like individuals interacting on the practical and spiritual levels. According to Stoikova, such interaction consists of the following constituents: linguistic self-identity, presence of a certain mentality, national dignity, and spirituality.

As stated by Tkachenko (1993), during the formation and strengthening of language tenacity, a key part is played by internal factors relating to each nation, its national tradition, national identity and solidarity as well as its national culture. When a clash between two languages occurs, caused by one of them on the other's territory, the affected language whose territory was infiltrated by the speakers of the other language, seen as victorious conquerors, faces an inevitably grave challenge which not every language can endure. It is worth noting that communication is not just an engagement between discourse, perception, and understanding, encouragement and sharing of information, but it is also an encounter of positions, norms, and value orientations.

Depending on the number of speakers, individual and group language stability can be differentiated. In the history of the development of European nations, there is a string of examples of the collective language tenacity of a nation, which enabled the nation to resist linguacultural assimilation under difficult political circumstances. Tyshchenko (2000), a researcher of the history of the Basques, used the term resilience. He has written about Basques' incredible ability to combine over the years "passive resistance and resilience when it comes to assimilation, which enabled their offspring to remain who they are much later during foreign rule" (Tyshchenko, 2000, p. 51).

Among Slavic nations, the Poles demonstrated a strong resistance to the imperial politics of assimilation at the time of the loss of their state independence. Masenko (2002) noted that for Polish elite, who lived on the territories of Russia-controlled Belarus and Ukraine, the Russian language was the language of the invader, and its usage even with Russian-speaking people was seen as an act of collaboration.

Masenko highlighted that such examples of language tenacity, when the language is the tool of resistance, were not just individual cases, but it was a kind of language behaviour of the Polish elite at that time.

Language tenacity is common for the Baltic nations as well; they kept their language through Soviet rule. As Kyrychenko (2016) argued, this language tenacity was what allowed the Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians to restore their statehood after World War II. Ukrainians also persisted with their language tenacity in the first half of the 20th century, which enabled them to avoid linguacultural assimilation and preserve their own identity.

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2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

Language tenacity is the main concept to be explored in my study. I define *language tenacity* as a behaviour of individuals (or groups) that is directed at consistent use of a certain language in different communicative situations regardless of the language of the interlocutor.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study, I used a qualitative approach for a historical analysis of language tenacity. Samples of discourse (text in context) have been collected and classified using the sociocognitive approach in critical discourse studies that allows for an understanding of social constructions of Us vs Them (van Dijk, 2009). Van Dijk pointed out that in "ideological discourse we may observe a positive representation of 'Our' group, and a negative representation of the 'Others' – always depending on the communicative situation, that is, our context models – at all levels of text or talk: topics, lexicon, descriptions, argumentation, storytelling, metaphors and so on" (van Dijk, 2009, p. 69). In this article, a line between "our" and "others", "us" and "them" in the respondents' memories is based on ethnic as well as language distinctions since the interviewees did not switch into the language of occupiers. In this regard, evaluative words and lexical units with a negative connotation have been used to create a "friend/foe" image. For instance, Poles were characterized by lexical units such as *very cruel*, *hostile,* and *chauvinists*: "Poles were great chauvinists. Even children behaved like chauvinists - they did not want to play with us" (Nezvychaini doli 2013,249; translation my own). Volodymyra Luchkiv pointed out that she had made friends only with Ukrainians since "it had been almost a sin to be friends with the Poles" (p. 250; translation my own). She also could not imagine the situation when she switched into Polish from Ukrainian since it was a manifestation of patriotism.

In contrast, the semantic nucleus of the lexical units used to identify Ukrainans - a "friend", "us"- in the analyzed texts is positively oriented. Adjectives such as *presentable, cultured, intellectual,* and *kind* act as epithets and carry a positive semantic evaluation. For instance, "He was such a very Ukrainian man, decent, intelligent and spoke excellent language" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 587; translation my own).

Additionally, the opposition of "friend or foe" is linked to the category of possessiveness, and verbally it is represented by the possessive pronouns and the lexical units whose semantics points to the belonging, kinship, ownership or estrangement, as well as stylistic figures of speech. For example, "Mostly Ukrainians lived in our village. There were several Poles, one Pole served in the Polish police, and then in the 35th year *our* people killed him" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 603; translation my own). A formula distinguished by Selivanova (2012) which manifests this semantics of possessiveness through "a possessive pronoun indicating the attitude of a certain possessor + a noun as an object of possessiveness" has become the basis of the category of "possessiveness" (Selivanova, p. 267).

My analysis is directed at the microlevel of the textual data. I have chosen excerpts that display a reference to language practices, language use, and discourse about languages. Firstly, I

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

focused on women's reporting on language choice and code-switching, including sustaining language choices, that is no switching to the language of the interlocutor, Polish or Russian, in the period while the territory of Ukraine was occupied by different political regimes. For instance, the Eastern Galicia was a part of the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939), Transcarpathia (Zakarpattia) belonged to Czechoslovakia (1919–1939), and Central and Eastern Parts of Ukraine – to the Soviet Union (1922 (1939[i]) – 1991). Therefore, chronological and geographical aspects were taken into account since language and cultural situation differed on those territories. In this regard, factors such as geographical region, time period, and speakers' social status are linked to people's language behavior and could influence the choice of the language of communication.

Through analyses of linguistic variations, sociolinguistics is concerned with the effects of societal factors on linguistic behavior. One significant dimension of sociolinguistic research is the investigation of the impact of social norms and roles on linguistic identity (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). Accordingly, researchers are interested in interactions between the identity of the speaker and the social context within which the speaking happens (Carranza, 2017). I see identity as relational – formed and played out in relation to those who are similar and those who are different, and language becomes a key site for the ongoing creation and negotiation of identity (Butler, 1990).

With reference to poststructuralist theories of identity, Weedon (1997) is centrally concerned with the conditions under which people speak, within both institutional and community contexts. Like other poststructuralist theorists who inform her work such as Norton (2013), Kramsch (2009), Morgan & Clarke (2011), Weedon foregrounds the role of language in her analysis of the relationship between the individual and the social, arguing that language not only defines institutional practices, but serves to construct identity.

As I suggested above, I will study language use on its microlevel, namely how women report about their language choice and how they describe language behaviour in Ukraine, and how their memories shape the linguistic situation in Ukraine in the interwar period. As van Dijk (1993) argued, the micro-level of language provides important insight and understandings of many postmodernist approaches which analyze discourse as a macro-phenomenon. Discourse is always embedded in a specific context and meaningful only when interpreted within its situational, cultural, ideological, and historical context (Wodak, 1996). Based on this reasoning, critical discourse analysis (CDA) allocates the analysis of context to a central place. CDA had become crucial for informing my research, since it aligns not only with poststructuralist, but also other sociolinguistic perspectives that do not focus upon "language or the use of language in and for themselves, but upon the partially linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 271).

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In the foreword to the book "Unusual Fates of Usual Women. Oral History of the 20th century", while discussing the interwar period, Hrytsak (2013) noted that

> one of the biggest changes which happened during those years was the rediscovery of their Motherland … The world before the First World War, and in some regions between the wars, was a world of ethnic, religious or local identities *(Pol. "tutejszy", literally "local").* In families whose members were well-educated, Ukrainian, or a dialect of it, was used primarily at home, depending on the place of living, Polish, Russian or Hungarian. (p. 13)

Liudmyla Bryzhun, one of the respondents, heard Ukrainian spoken only 15 times during her three-week stay in Kyiv in 1917, and later when she moved to Trypillia, where she got a job (TN *in the original text "got labour"*), she faced the following situation: "It was a lovely little town, I go there, speak Ukrainian. I am told there by those nurses, or as midwives called them, paramedics: 'Paniko [*TN lit. "Miss"*] (a *polite way of addressing a young unmarried woman, common in western parts of Ukraine*), speak our language…' I say to them, 'I speak Ukrainian, aren't you Ukrainian?' 'We're tuteishi'. There you have them. The year was 1917". (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 16). Despite thisocal identity outlived the global (the Ukrainian) one. Liudmyla Bryzhun managed to preserve the language and comprehension of national belonging, despite being born in Siberia, and having studied in Tomsk Medical University, where out of 500 students only about 20 were Ukrainian: "Ukrainian wasn't unknown. You know, we spoke Ukrainian even in the presence of the university professors" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 11). Liudmyla's formation as a nationally conscious citizen was aided by her family environment, as well as the activity of the local Ukrainian communities in Siberia, where everyone had to buy Ukrainian printed media and speak the mother tongue (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 11).

According to Hrytsak (2013), in the context of both World Wars and the ongoing violence in the years between the wars, national identity was often "a matter of life and death" (p. 14). In Soviet Ukraine, when the policy of Ukrainianization stopped, the Ukrainian language became an object of mockery among the Russian-speaking population of big cities (Hrytsak, 2013). Nadiia Yukhyma remembers when once in a rented flat in Odesa region "[she] couldn't please them [the landlords] how to speak. You know, whatever I say, everything's wrong. It seemed they were mocking my language" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 716). In the meantime, in Poland between the two world wars the choice in favor of the Ukrainian language could lead to difficulties at school (Nadiia Oliinyk), preventing somebody from getting a government job, and even repression. For others, the preference given to Ukrainian could lead to arrests or even death. For Mariia Horban and Nadiia Oliinyk, the choice to speak Ukrainian made it impossible to get a job. In the Ukrainian towns which were under Polish control, as a result of the humiliation policy towards the Ukrainian language, there came to be, according to Shevelov (1989), "a

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

peculiar kamikadze attitude, in which choosing to speak Ukrainian had elements of social hysteria and of the speaker's mutual quasi-hypnosis" (p. 185).

During the period between the two World Wars, Poles resorted to persecuting Ukrainian speakers. It is described in the story told by Halyna Skaskiv and it happened as the woman was returning to the town of Berezhany, a city in Podilia on the Zolota Lypa River, after her studies:

> didn't happen just once, when a Ukrainian spoke to a Pole in Ukrainian, then an older Pole would say: 'Czemu mówisz po rusku? Teraz jest Polska, nie Ukraina'.[ii] They didn't even let us speak, and in some other cases, we weren't allowed to even… they saw us modest girls, who were chatting to each other. 'Why aren't you? Speak Polish'. You see, those were terrible persecutions. (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 602)

Shevelov (1989), focusing on the state of the Ukrainian language during 1900-1941 time period, wrote that in Poland-controlled Ukraine the language was not only "a vehicle of communication among farmers, clergy, and intellectuals; it also was a means of national self-assertion and defiance against the existing political regime" (p. 184). Language as a tool for resistance and self-assertiveness acquired a special meaning for instance in the environment of school and gymnasium students.

According to Nadiia Oliinyk, the imposition of the Polish language in educational institutions encouraged youth to rebel, to speak Ukrainian only, and to register for the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Nadiia recounted a case when she once recited The Lord's Prayer (*Ukr. "Otche Nash"*) before the lessons, while the rest of the class were praying in Polish, because "[I was] brought up with a patriotic spirit, [I] read a lot and, and felt a proud Ukrainian at that time" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 626). This event, which the principal considered to be "deserving punishment for its impudence," triggered even greater animosity in the class, and further difficulties with studies for Nadiia. However, the girl continued to demonstrate her language tenacity, and she remembers that during the times that followed she did not pray, and when the shouting and accusations started, Nadiia "stood up, crossed herself three times, and said "Ave Maria" (*Ukr. Bohorodytse Divo*) (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 627). In this situation, language tenacity was an expression of the spiritual resistance to losing one's freedoms, since "switching to the language of the occupier is a step towards compromising with them" (Masenko, 2002, p. 12). Accordingly, in the interwar Poland, Ukrainian language was not only as a means of communication but also as a tool of resistance and it seemed as if "to the normal language functions of communication, appeal, and expression of affectivity the function of ostentation was added (Shevelov, 1989, p. 185).

Language tenacity is also evident from interviews of Western Ukrainian women studied. In their interviews, they stressed that they did not change to Russian with the Bolsheviks when the last occupied Western Ukraine's territories. This is seen in the following excerpt from Mariia Horban's memories (translations are mine):

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

- What language did he [a Russian officer] speak?
- He might've begun [speaking] in Russian. I said that I spoke Ukrainian. . . . And so, I said to him: 'I don't speak Russian, I speak Ukrainian'. 'Mariia Vasylivna, write everything in Ukrainian.' (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, pp. 203-206)

Halyna Skaskiv, a native of the Ternopil region, showed her own language tenacity when she continued to speak exclusively in Ukrainian with Russian officers in a central Moscow prison during court hearings:

- Was there any translation into Russian?
- Translation? I've no idea, they were listening to me in Ukrainian.
- Did they understand you?
- Yes, they did. They were all listening to me in Ukrainian. Perhaps, he [a general lieutenant, who knew some Ukrainian] was translating some of it. (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 588)

I can assume that Halyna Skaskiv did not switch into Russian consciously even though, as a third-year student at the department of classical philology, she would likely have understood Russian. Moreover, in her memories, she mentioned a grandfather who had been a Muscovite and a sister Mariia who had graduated in Russian philology from the Drohobych Pedagogical Institute (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 577). It is thus likely that she could speak Russian but refused to. Language tenacity enabled those women to resist the enemy in difficult political and life circumstances of the 20th century.

To this point, I have shared an analysis of the women's language practices. The way they made references to languages are also revealing of their thoughts about those languages. As such, in my analysis, I also considered the adjectives the women used to describe the Ukrainian language. Such epithets as *beautiful, very nice, very beautiful* portray the Ukrainian language and accent in a positive way.

- Well, what did the school look like? Was it all in Russian?
- All in Russian. Absolutely everything.
- And what language did people talk to each other in?
- Oh, in Ukrainian. **Beautiful** Chernihiv Ukrainian, since it was Cherhihivshchyna [TN Areas included into Chernihiv region].
- So, are you saying that school and church were in Russian, but people spoke Ukrainian?
- Ukrainian, with a **very nice** Chernihiv accent: they used to pronounce their "lia" sound in a peculiar manner. A **very beautiful** language. (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 45)

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

The language situation in Zakarpattia (*TN is the southwestern part of Ukraine, sometimes referred to as Trans-Carpatia*) was slightly different to that in Galicia, but even here the Ukrainian intelligentsia preserved their language and fully understood their national belonging. Mariia Logush tells the following about a [language]-conscious group of people on these territories:

> There used to be a folk author, Luka Demian, who even at that time was recognized as a national writer. I remember I was small at that time, around 4-5 years old, and he used to visit us and talk to my father. When I became older, I once climbed to the attic and found a pile of some books in a language similar to that of my father" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 133).

According to Mariia, her father spoke "very beautiful Ukrainian" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 133); he managed to preserve his language identity under Hungarian rule: "Magyars used to be in charge, and they conducted an intensive denationalization campaign. At schools, children used to be punished for speaking their mother tongue. Father told us his fingers used to be beaten with a stick, and he was sent to the corner of the classroom to kneel on corn" (Nezvychaini doli, 2013, p. 133). Despite the fact that at that time there were no publications in pure literary Ukrainian, the things which were published had elements of the local proverbs, there still remained "conscious Ukrainians, who spoke a beautiful language", because they realized the severity of the conflict between Russian and Ukrainian. Shevelov notes that "they were locked in mortal combat in Transcarpathia, in a struggle for survival" (Shevelov, 1989, p. 212). Thanks to the perseverance of the local intelligentsia and educated classes as well as middle- and lower-middle class people, Ukrainians succeeded in the competitive battle.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I focused on the analysis of language behaviour of Ukrainians in the first half of the 20th century. The analysis shows that respondents of the aforementioned collection of interviews demonstrated sustaining language choice and did not switch to the language of the interlocutor. Despite the threat of losing one's job, getting arrested or even death, Ukrainians continued making their choice in favor of speaking their mother tongue or first language.

My results draw a situation that may be defined as 'language tenacity', which I define as a behaviour of individuals (or groups) that is directed at consistent use of a certain language in different communicative situations in order to resist linguacultural assimilation.
Therefore, the article contributes to a discussion about whether and how language behaviour plays a direct role in language stability. Moreover, it discusses whether language tenacity can be examined in much the same way as language change through categories such as age, social status, and region and whether tenacity can help to preserve language.

Journal of Belonging, Identity, Language, and Diversity (J-BILD)/
Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

It is important to highlight that the historical analysis of language tenacity and language behaviour of Ukrainians is not widely presented in scholarly discussions. Thus, my research can be beneficial not only for various academic fields, but also for elaborating appropriate language strategies in the recent circumstances, when the language issue became a factor for Russia's information and propaganda campaign as well as one of the reasons for armed aggression in 2014. Then, by extension, the answers to these questions will be utilized to seek answers to questions relating to links between language and society, language and identity, and the role of language in creating nationwide and spiritual culture.

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Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

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Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

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Revue de langage, d'identité, de diversité et d'appartenance (R-LIDA)
2021 • Vol. 5(1) • 187-207 • ISSN 2561-7982 •
Special Issue: *Boundaries and Belonging: Language, Diaspora, and Motherland*

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ENDNOTES

[i] On the basis of a secret clause of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet Union invaded Poland on September 17, 1939, capturing the eastern provinces of the Second Polish Republic. Lviv, the principal city and cultural center of the region of Galicia, was captured and occupied by September 22, 1939.

[ii] "Why are you speaking Rusyn (a term used to refer Ukrainian spoken in the Southwestern, among other regions of Ukraine)? It is Poland now here, not Ukraine. (trans. from Polish)