

Title: Borderlanguage: Language Policy and Ideology in Ukraine

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Language and identity are inextricably intertwined, and language policy directly impacts people's lives for more than just communication. In Ukraine, the official language was changed from Russian to Ukrainian after the fall of the USSR; nearly two decades later, language issues are still critical in politics, in part because of the link between language and identity. Once a language perceived as only for village use and seen as substandard, Ukrainian has become the language of education and government. This transition has been difficult for some, particularly those who may feel that their identity as Russian speakers is being attacked; in many parts of Ukraine, negative stereotypes about Ukrainian and its speakers remain. Preliminary online research showed that underlying negative attitudes towards Ukrainian permeate many circles, and this paper looks at the results of surveys and interviews conducted in Simferopol, Kherson, Kyiv, and Kharkiv to tease out stereotypes and look for speaker correlations. Specifically, the data are analyzed for types of stereotypes that may persist, and how these stereotypes play across gender, geographical region, age, and education level. Additionally, motivations for such stereotypes are explored, and connections among language policy, identity, and language attitudes are sought out. Expected outcomes are that negative attitudes and stereotypes are diminishing over time, with strongholds remaining in areas of high Russophone concentration, and with older and less educated Ukrainians holding more tightly to the negative attitudes. Determining how, why, and for whom the linguistic transition is the most difficult helps to shed light on what factors influence successful language policy implementation, as well as how language ideology affects the lives of Ukrainians today.