



May 30, 2024. Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin. 15h-18h:

International workshop

“Language and the War in Ukraine and among refugee communities in Germany: Shifts in Use and Attitudes”

Location: Centre Marc Bloch, Simmel room 3floor,
Friedrichstr. 191, 10117 Berlin. U-Bahn Stadtmitte.

Moderator: Dr. Sophie Lambroschini (Centre Marc Bloch, LimSpaces project)

Panellists: Dr. Natalia Kudriavtseva (CAS Sofia/Pedag. U Kryvyi Rih) “Reversing Language Shift: New Speakers of Ukrainian in Wartime Ukraine”

Dr. Liudmyla Pidkuimukha (JLU Giessen/Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine) “Killing Ukrainian Language and Culture: how Russia Commits Linguicide on Ukraine’s Occupied Territories”

Dr. Nadiya Kiss (JLU Giessen) “Languages and War: Changes of Language Use and Attitudes with a Focus on Refugees from Ukraine in Germany”

Dr. Daria Orobchuk (U Hildesheim) “Language Shift Abroad: Navigating Linguistic Identities and Multilingualism among Ukrainian Refugees in Germany”

Discussant: Dr. Volodymyr Kulyk (Columbia U/ National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Abstract:

The beginning of Russian aggression in 2014 and the 2022 full-scale Russian invasion have exerted a significant influence on language practices within Ukraine as well as on linguistic repertoires of Ukrainian refugees staying abroad. In Ukraine, the most prominent trend since 2014 has been linguistic conversion – a transition to speaking Ukrainian with or without abandoning Russian – which intensified after February 2022. Triggered primarily by the ongoing war, the transition is also sustained by the 2019 Ukraine’s legislation on language that prioritises the use of Ukrainian in public domains. By contrast, the sociolinguistic

developments on the territories temporarily occupied by Russia since 2014 and 2022 show signs of what has been described as a linguicide manifested through the suppression of the Ukrainian language across public spheres, such as education, culture, linguistic landscape, advertisement, document management and the media. Ukrainian refugees, many of whom had to flee the battlegrounds and occupied territories in the largely Russian-speaking eastern parts of Ukraine, appear to exhibit greater use of Ukrainian as they form migrant communities abroad. The million Ukrainian refugees who have sought safety in Germany are also confronting the need to add German to their everyday language practices, augmenting their multilingual repertoires which showcase complex dynamics of migration and identity building.

The panel brings together leading sociolinguists from Ukraine who draw on first-hand personal testimonies and participant observations of the situation on the ground.

This event is organised jointly by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia (CAS), Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University and the CMB, and supported by VolkswagenStiftung under the “Sustaining Ukrainian Scholarship” programme.



Photo caption and credit: A hand-made banner in occupied Kherson, 22 March, 2022. Photo: Natalia Kudriavtseva