

**ДИСКУРС У МІЖКУЛЬТУРНІЙ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ**

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**THE PROBLEM OF MULTILINGUALISM AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY**

Mankind has achieved modern success in the field of science, culture, technology due to the fact that it was able to adapt to different circumstances, adapt to new conditions, and the most important due to exchange international acquired experience. The numerous ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences of Europeans are primarily indicated by peculiar historical and geographical factors, as well as great mobility of the population. The processes of globalization, the formation of interstate and supranational entities create a new situation in the field of language policy. In this regard, the European Union proposes and implements a complex and a typical for the world model of language construction.

Foreign scientists B. Gavring, R. Bell, I. Savikien and A. Sormunen made a significant contribution to the development of the language policy of the European Union. The problems of language variety are highlighted in the works by H. Haarmann, T. Bohn, R. Nordquist, etc. Among Ukrainian researchers, whose works are dedicated to the language matter as follows: V. Horbatenko, A. Kalinovsky, A. Korzh, V. Kulik, A. Medvedev, L. Nagorna and V. Radchuk.

**The relevance** of the study is determined by one of the problems of the development and coexistence of many languages and their varieties within Europe.

**The aim** of the proposed article is to determine the place of multilingualism, as well as linguistic diversity in the European society. **The scientific innovation** of the research is due to the phenomenon of multilingualism and linguistic diversity, which are relevant in accordance with the processes taking place in the global geopolitical space.

There are a lot of official, national and spoken languages within Europe.

*Multilingualism* is the use of more than one language, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers. It is believed that multilingual speakers outnumber monolingual speakers in the world's

population. More than half of all Europeans claim to speak at least one language other than their mother tongue; but many read and write in one language. Always useful to traders, multilingualism is advantageous for people wanting to participate in globalization and cultural openness. Owing to the ease of access to information facilitated by the Internet, individuals' exposure to multiple languages is becoming increasingly possible. People who speak several languages are also called polyglots (Nordquist, 2018). "*Majesty, the Herr Direttore, he has removed uno balletto that would have occurred at this place,*" – here is a bright example of multilingualism.

European continent is considered to have great linguistic and cultural differences, and Europeans have always been conscious of linguistic diversity. That's why the distribution of languages is extremely uneven. In the regions where the number of indigenous languages is relatively small (western Europe), the largest number of immigrant languages is encountered. In eastern Europe, for instance, the number of indigenous languages is considerably larger, but the number of immigrant languages is considerably smaller than in western Europe. The concentration of languages is proved to be the largest at the periphery in the Caucasus region. Thus, in this region, more than 50 languages are spoken, which belong to a half-dozen language families. From the perspective of historical linguistics, the history of Europe is the history of its Indo-Europeanization. The fact is that the area of distribution of languages of other language families has contracted continuously as increasing numbers of speakers of these languages have been assimilated over a long period of time.

The language communities in Europe consist of a total of 740 million inhabitants. These languages include autochthonous languages, such as Basque, German or Hungarian, as well as immigrant languages from other parts of the world, such as Amharic, Kurdish or Vietnamese. The numbers of speakers for the individual languages vary considerably. Top of the list in terms of number of speakers is Russian with 172 million speakers in Europe (native speakers and second language). Bottom of the list is the smallest language community of Europe, the Livonian speakers, who consist of less than ten people (Haarmann, 2017).

Europe has far exceeded all other continents regarding the export of languages. There is no other continent from which so many languages have been spread around the world, taking root elsewhere in the world and giving rise to global language communities. Most world languages, i.e. languages with global communicative functions, are European in origin and belong to the Indo-European family of languages. The result of this language export from the 15th century onward is a vast increase in the numbers of speakers (Haarmann, 2010).

According to Bohn's investigation (Bohn, 2018), nowadays the majority of speakers of languages such as English, Spanish and French live in regions outside of Europe. The proportion of speakers in Europe compared to

those in other continents varies considerably between the individual languages:

	<i>Total number speakers</i>	<i>Number in Europe</i>	<i>Number outside Europe</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>573 million</i>	<i>61.3 million (10.7%)</i>	<i>511.7 million (89.3%)</i>
<i>Spanish</i>	<i>352 million</i>	<i>39.4 million (11.2%)</i>	<i>312.6 million (88.8%)</i>
<i>Russian</i>	<i>242 million</i>	<i>172.8 million (71.4%)</i>	<i>69.2 million (28.6%)</i>
<i>French</i>	<i>131 million</i>	<i>62.4 million (47.6%)</i>	<i>68.6 million (52.4%)</i>
<i>German</i>	<i>101 million</i>	<i>96.9 million (96.0%)</i>	<i>4.1 million (4.0%)</i>
<i>Ukrainian</i>	<i>39 million</i>	<i>38 million (97.4%)</i>	<i>1 million (2.6%)</i>

As we can see, German and Russian are Europe-centred, with the vast majority of speakers of these languages living in Europe. Languages such as English and Spanish, on the other hand, have far more speakers overseas, and the speakers in the countries of origin constitute a minority of the total number of speakers.

According to a 2017 Eurobarometer survey:

<i>The most widely spoken foreign languages in the European society are:</i>	<i>The most useful foreign languages are:</i>
<i>English – 48%</i>	<i>English – 57%</i>
<i>French – 22%</i>	<i>German – 17%</i>
<i>German – 21%</i>	<i>French – 16%</i>
<i>Spanish – 8%</i>	<i>Spanish – 10%</i>

Thus, more than half of Europeans (54%) are able to have a conversation in a foreign language, due to a 2017 Eurobarometer survey, while 25% can speak at least two additional languages. Although the European Parliament is keen to promote language learning, it also believes it is important for people to be able to follow its work in their own language (Infographic, 2017).

It's no wonder, there are over 150 different languages spoken in this small continent. The majority of these languages evolved from the Indo-European family language tree.

### **1. English**

English, the global lingua franca has 400 million native speakers worldwide, with around 70 million living of those in Europe. It's the de facto (but not "official") language of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, but the large number of English-speaking expats residing in Europe also adds to this number. As for second language speakers, about a third of older Europeans can speak English, while nearly half of 15- to 35-year-olds have a mastery of the language. Though some scholars theorize that the

political realities of Brexit may weaken the dominance of English in Europe in the future (Bohn, 2018).

## **2. German**

The language of philosophers and thinkers, German comes in second for the largest native-speaking population in Europe. It's the sole official language of Germany, Austria and Liechtenstein, and it's a co-official language in Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg. With all of those countries combined, approximately 95 million people in Europe speak German as their first language. But do you know that German is the mostly widely-understood language after English? This is because it's popular as a second (or third, or fourth) language in Denmark, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Poland, Finland, Hungary, and many other European countries.

## **3. French**

After Russian and German, the next most spoken language in Europe is French, with about 80 million native speakers. It is the official language of France, as well as a co-official language of Belgium, Switzerland and Luxembourg. If you consider the percentage of the population that learn French as a second language, then over 30% of European inhabitants know the language, making it a great choice for those who want to travel around the continent. Therefore, French's global reach is even more impressive than its usefulness in Europe, as almost 30 countries claim French as an official language or an administrative language.

## **4. Spanish**

For years now, Spain has enjoyed a covetable position as one of Europe's best travel destinations — especially for other Europeans looking for a warm and relaxing summer vacation. Well, along with the fact that 45 million Europeans claim Spanish as their mother tongue, is reason enough to start learning this language. By the way, do you know that Spanish is one of the easiest languages for English speakers to learn? Spanish's prestige grows even more when leaving Europe: 20 countries have Spanish declared as an official language and over 480 million individuals are Spanish native speakers throughout the globe, making it the second most widely-spoken language in the world (Bohn, 2018).

But we are Ukrainians and we can't help mentioning our lingua franca or mother tongue.

## **5. Ukrainian**

The national language of Ukraine is spoken by 39 million native speakers, with the majority residing in Europe. Ukraine is actually the largest country by area in Europe (when one excludes France's overseas territories and the Asian continental portion of Russia). More than that, if you have knowledge of Ukrainian, you'll also end up understanding a lot of Russian.

The functioning and distribution of the Ukrainian language is traditionally explored from two perspectives: dialectological and sociolinguistic. Dialectology focuses on regional intra-language differences. Sociolinguistics considers the language in a wide extra-language public

context, uses a range of sociological techniques. According to the results of dialectological studies, the territory of the country is divided into various dialects, zones of concentration of characteristic linguistic phenomena, which, however, are not interpreted as separate linguistic communities, that is, groups of people who have common norms and ideas about the language (Belei, 2017).

There are countries with one and several state languages in the world (for example, in Ukraine, France, Great Britain there is only one state language; in Belgium state languages are Flemish, French, German; in Luxembourg – French, German; in Finland – Finnish and Swedish; in Switzerland – German, French, Italian; but in Russia, since 1995, according to the law, there were 19 state languages and 10 titles; in Belarus there are two state languages – Belarus and Russian. In India, for instance, 15 languages are mentioned in the Constitution. In countries where there are several state languages, you must know all languages without exception in order to get a state post (Stoikova, 2013).

But why are we speaking about multilingualism and linguistic diversity as a problem? Because together with such concepts as respect for personality, tolerance, openness to other cultures, linguistic diversity of peoples within European countries is one of its key values. Therefore, the activities of the European Community are aimed at encouraging and supporting many languages. With the enlargement of the EU, linguistic diversity has become a new challenge in the functioning of the EU. Overcoming the problems of multilingualism is realized through the implementation of various programs to stimulate language learning, relevant reforms of the educational systems of the EU member states are being carried out. The language policy of the European Union testifies to the crucial importance of language learning in integration processes. The increase in the weight of linguistic policies reflected even in the structure of the European Commission. The issue of language policy in the EU states, especially those relating to the provision of multilingualism, is directly attributed to the competences of the governments of the EU member states (national, regional, local). The main role of the supranational institutions of the European Union in this area is the establishment of a policy that is ensured by cooperation between member states in the field of language construction. In order not to lose their uniqueness, multicolour for EU citizens, special conditions are created in order to give the opportunity to improve the ownership of the native language, study at least two foreign languages, increase their competitiveness in the world labour market, enrich them intellectually. Obviously, language policy in Ukraine should be conducted precisely in the light of the prospect of the European integration. Indeed, becoming a full member of the united Europe our state will be able to exist under the appropriate conditions. First, this is when Ukrainian citizens will have access to EU documentation and reliable information about the European Union. Therefore, as in the European Union, the relevant policy in the sphere of transfers must be implemented in our country. It has long been necessary to

create a powerful translation center for European documentation. Secondly, it must be implemented identical policy of teaching foreign languages to the European one, as it is difficult to imagine being a member of a multilingual community. Integration of Ukraine into the European Union also contributes to the implementation of the EU language policy (Tarasenko, 2010).

The experts concluded that there is no point in defending a language. This, at the end, will lead to protests. On the other hand, scientists consider it impossible to control language diversity.

According to scientists, the ideal model of language coexistence does not exist. But, using the components of various models, it is quite possible to develop your own model in accordance with the requirements of this context. So, our country, Ukraine, should make a decision what will correspond to its historical tradition, heritage, requirements of modernity and the will of the Ukrainian people. Either we will follow the example of countries that are officially monolingual, like France or the United Kingdom, or we will use the experience of officially multilingual states like Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, etc., or our people will choose their own way in the language policy.

**Perspectives** for further developments on this topic. Strengthening democracy and European integration aspirations of Ukraine require the solution of language issues and the introduction of tolerant, legal methods for resolving linguistic conflicts. Revitalization in this area is a prerequisite for the consolidation of a modern Ukrainian society, since many aspects of language use are still not regulated at the state level.

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**Биндас О.М. Проблема мультилінгвізму та мовної різноманітності в Європейському суспільстві**

У статті розглянуто феномен мультилінгвізму та мовної різноманітності в Європі. Незважаючи на виклики, породжені відмінностями у впровадженні політики і практики багатомовності в різних державах, порівняльні дані, представлені в цьому дослідженні, є багатим джерелом для міжнаціонального огляду. Автор наголошує, що разом із такими поняттями, як повага до особистості, толерантність, відкритість до інших культур, мовна різноманітність народів у Європейському суспільстві становить одну з ключових його цінностей. Разом з експертами ми дійшли висновку про те, наша країна, Україна, має прийняти рішення, що відповідатиме її історичній традиції, спадщині, вимогам сучасності та волевиявленню українського народу. Або ми наслідуватимемо приклад країн, які офіційно є одномовними, як Франція чи Великобританія, або скористуємось досвідом офіційно багатомовних держав, як Швейцарія, Бельгія, Канада тощо, або наш народ обере свій власний шлях у мовній політиці.

*Ключові слова:* мультилінгвізм, мовна різноманітність, мова, суспільство, Європа.

**Биндас Е.Н. Проблема мультилингвизма и языкового разнообразия в Европейском обществе**

В статье рассмотрены феномен мультилингвизма и языкового разнообразия в Европе. Несмотря на вызовы, порожденные различиями во внедрении политики и практики многоязычия в разных государствах, сравнительные данные, представленные в этом исследовании, являются богатым источником для межнационального обзора. Автор отмечает, что вместе с такими понятиями, как уважение к личности, толерантность, открытость к другим культурам, языковое разнообразие народов в Европейском обществе составляет одну из ключевых его ценностей. Вместе с экспертами мы пришли к выводу о том, наша страна, Украина, должна принять решение, что будет соответствовать ее исторической традиции, наследии, требованиям современности и волеизъявлению украинского народа. Или мы будем следовать примеру стран, которые официально являются одноязычными, как Франция или Великобритания, или воспользуемся опытом официально многоязычных государств, как Швейцария, Бельгия, Канада и т.д., или наш народ выберет свой собственный путь в языковой политике.

*Ключевые слова:* мультилингвизм, языковое разнообразие, язык, общество, Европа.

**Byndas O.M. The problem of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in the European society**

The article investigates the phenomenon of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in Europe. Despite the challenges posed by differences in the implementation of policies and practices of multilingualism in different states, the comparative data, presented in this study, are a rich source for cross-national review. The author notes that together with such concepts as respect for the individual, tolerance, openness to other cultures, the linguistic diversity of folks in the European society is one of its key values. Therefore, the activities of the European Community are aimed at encouraging and supporting many languages. Obviously, the language policy in Ukraine should be conducted precisely in the light of the prospect of the European integration. Indeed, becoming a full member of the united Europe our state will be able to exist under the appropriate conditions. Together with the experts, we came to the conclusion that our country should make a decision that will correspond to its historical tradition, heritage, requirements of modernity and the will of the Ukrainian people. Either we will follow the example of countries that are officially monolingual, like France or the United Kingdom, or we will use the experience of officially multilingual states like Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, etc., or our people will choose their own way in the language policy.

*Key words:* multilingualism, linguistic diversity, language, society, Europe.

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