

UDC 355.4(470:477):811.161.2'272"2014/2022"
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.33.317463

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Bibliographic Description of the Article: Dvorianyn, P., & Teliachyi, Yu. (2024). War and Language: Language Policy Issues of Ukraine in Domestic Mass Media Discourse (2014 – 2022). *Skhidnoevropeiskiy Istorychnyi Visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 33, 239–252. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.33.317463

**WAR AND LANGUAGE: LANGUAGE POLICY ISSUES OF UKRAINE
IN DOMESTIC MASS MEDIA DISCOURSE (2014 – 2022)**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research* is to clarify the content of the media discourse on the full policy in Ukraine, to identify the main topics covered by the Ukrainian media, and to indicate the analytical and evaluative component of materials on reforms in the field of language policy. *The chronological framework of the study (2014 – 2022) is determined by:* a) the completion of the Revolution of Dignity and the coming to power of the pro-European governments in Ukraine, b) the beginning of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, which forced the Ukrainian government to reconsider traditional approaches to language policy. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of scientificity, systematicity, as well as the use of discourse analysis as an interdisciplinary approach to the study on mass media space. **The scientific novelty:** the content of media discourse on language policy in Ukraine during the current Russo-Ukrainian war has been studied for the first time. **The Conclusions.** Thus, the Ukrainian mass media focused on the language policy issues in Ukraine. The reasons for this were, on the one hand, the importance of resolving efficiently the issue on the ratio of the state

language, the Russian language and the languages of the national minorities in Ukraine for the stability of society, on the other hand, aggravation of this issue under the conditions of the modern Russo-Ukrainian War; the ideological discourse of which included the myth of “oppression of the Russian language”. The Ukrainian mass media during the period under analysis (2014 – 2012) focused on three key manifestations of the language policy: 1) conflicts regarding the abolition of the conflict-generating language law of 2012 (the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law), as well as the development and public adoption of a new law on languages in Ukraine; 2) discussions on the legislative introduction of the language quotas for television, radio, and book publishing; 3) internal and external disputes about the language article of the law “On Education”. It should be recognized that the majority of the Ukrainian media supported the language policy of the Ukrainian governments regarding the establishment of Ukrainian as the state language in Ukraine, although they tried to adhere to objective coverage of events and interpretation of the positions of political forces.

Key words: language policy, current Russo-Ukrainian war, language legislation, educational reform, mass media discourse.

ВІЙНА І МОВА: ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА МОВНОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ УКРАЇНИ У ВІТЧИЗНЯНОМУ МАС-МЕДІЙНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ (2014 – 2022)

Анотація. Мета статті – з’ясувати зміст медійного дискурсу щодо мовної політики в Україні, виокремити основні теми, які висвітлювалися українськими ЗМІ, а також вказати на аналітичну й оцінювальну складову матеріалів, присвячених реформам у сфері мовної політики. Хронологічні рамки дослідження (2014 – 2022) зумовлені: а) завершенням Революції Гідності та приходом до влади в Україні проєвропейських урядів, б) початком повномасштабної війни Росії проти України, яка змусила український уряд переглянути традиційні підходи до мовної політики. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах науковості, системності, а також використанні дискурс-аналізу як міждисциплінарного підходу до студіювання мас-медійного простору. **Наукова новизна:** вперше досліджено зміст медійного дискурсу щодо мовної політики в Україні у роки сучасної російсько-української війни. **Висновки.** Отже, українські мас-медіа надавали особливу увагу питанням мовної політики в Україні. Причини цього полягали, з одного боку, у важливості ефективного розв’язання проблеми співвідношення державної мови, російської мови та мов національних меншин в Україні задля стабільності суспільства, з іншого – загостренням цього питання в умовах сучасної російсько-української війни, ідеологічний дискурс якої містив міф про “утиски російської мови”. Українські ЗМІ у досліджуваній період (2014 – 2012) фокусували на трьох ключових проявах мовної політики: 1) колізії щодо скасування конфліктогенного мовного закону 2012 р. (закон Ківалова-Колесніченка), а також щодо розробки і суспільної ухвалення нового закону про мови в Україні; 2) дискусії про законодавче запровадження мовних квот для телебачення, радіо, книговидавництва; 3) внутрішні і зовнішні суперечки про мовну статтю закону “Про освіту”. Необхідно визнати, що більшість українських ЗМІ підтримували мовну політику українських урядів щодо утвердження української мови як державної в Україні, хоч і намагалися отримувати об’єктивного висвітлення подій і трактування позицій політичних сил.

Ключові слова: мовна політика, теперішня російсько-українська війна, мовне законодавство, освітня реформа, масмедійний дискурс.

The Problem Statement. The issue on ensuring the language rights of citizens has been one of the key segments in the mass media discourse in Ukraine for the long time. First of all, it is due to another trauma of the Ukrainian society associated with the linguocide caused by the Russian imperial regime and later the Soviet totalitarian regime. Full-scale Russification of the Ukrainians and the national minorities led to the dominance of the Russian language in the public life of Ukraine at the end of the 20th century. The situation worsened due to the inconsistent language policy of many governments of the independent Ukrainian state, as well as the active policy of the Russian Federation towards the spread of the Russian

language and culture in Ukraine. The Ukrainian media, covered various steps taken by the authorities in the field of language policy during the Russo-Ukrainian War, and also gave a voice to the representatives of the expert community, cultural and artistic figures, scholars and politicians, who analysed the language aspects of society and made recommendations regarding the language policy improvement.

The Analysis of Recent Researches. Jonathan Pool, the American political scholar, analysed the issue of “a fair language policy” (Pool, 1991). Juliane Besters-Dilger, the Austrian Slavic scholar, studied the level of presence of the Ukrainian language in education and media at the end of 20th and at the beginning of the 21st centuries (Besters-Dilger, 2007). Volodymyr Kulyk, the Ukrainian researcher studied the language policy of Ukraine as the interaction (or inaction) of the authorities, producers and consumers in 2013. In his opinion, the main and lasting contribution of all three bodies mentioned above is the preservation of status quo, which is characterized by the coexistence of the Ukrainian and Russian languages with the dominance of the Russian language (Kulyk, 2013). The scholar described the “language moods” in independent Ukraine and their relationship with the inconsistent language policy of the state authorities (Kulyk, 2017). Bohdan Azhniuk, the Ukrainian linguist carried out the analysis of the Ukrainian language legislation, in particular on the eve and during the current Russo-Ukrainian War (Azhniuk, 2017). The status of the state language in Ukraine and the emergence of “language conflicts” were revealed by Dominique Arel, Professor at the University of Ottawa (Canada) (Arel, 2017). Nadiya Kiss described the practice of a language activism in modern Ukraine, who under the slogan “language matters,” spoke out against irrational language policies in Ukraine (Kiss, 2020). Laada Bilaniuk, Professor at the University of Washington (USA), studied how language ideologies in Ukraine were linked to broader political and social problems (Bilaniuk, 2017). There were borrowed some methodological aspects of the research from the works written by Vitaliy Telvak and Vasyl Ilnytskyi (Telvak & Ilnytskyi, 2023), Mykola Haliv, Vasyl Ilnytskyi and Volodymyr Starka (Haliv & Ilnytskyi, 2021; Ilnytskyi, Starka & Haliv, 2022; Haliv & Ilnytskyi, 2023). It should be stated that the issue of the “language policy – media – war” triangle in the Ukrainian dimension requires additional research.

The purpose of the research is to clarify the content of the media discourse on the full policy in Ukraine, to identify the main topics covered by the Ukrainian media, and to indicate the analytical and evaluative component of materials on reforms in the field of language policy. The chronological framework of the study (2014 – 2022) is determined by: a) the completion of the Revolution of Dignity and the coming to power of the pro-European governments in Ukraine, b) the beginning of Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine, which forced the Ukrainian government to reconsider traditional approaches to language policy.

The Results of the Research. The Russo-Ukrainian War broke out in 2014, under conditions of which the Ukrainian authorities tried to change the language policy of previous governments, guided by the requirements of the national security and strengthening the Ukrainian statehood. At that time, the law “On the Principles of State Language Policy” was in force in Ukraine, known as the “Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law”. A significant part of the Ukrainian society was dissatisfied with the law and it became one of the reasons for the Revolution of Dignity. On February 23, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine repealed this law, but Parliament’s decision was not put into effect due to the absence of the President, who fled to Russia (Poroshenko nazvav, 2014). President Petro Poroshenko, who was elected in May of 2014, was not also eager to sign Parliament’s decision to repeal the Kivalov-

Kolesnichenko law, considering it erroneous (Poroshenko nazvav, 2014). The pro-Russian media speculated that the cause of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine was the repeal of this law.

At the same time, the media discussed the need to adopt a new law on languages in Ukraine. There was an article "Strynozheni Mova" (November of 2016) in one of the publications on the website "TSN. News", in which the anonymous author stated categorically: Ukrainian is the only unprotected state language in the entire world. He provided the example of the current Polish law, which was aimed at protecting and developing the Polish language and its dialects while emphasizing the need to adopt a new law on language. The presence of institutions was noted, aimed at monitoring the implementation of the language law, as well as sanctions against violators (Strynozheni mova, 2016).

In 2016, the deputies of the Verkhovna Rada made three draft laws on a language issue: 1) "On the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language and the Procedure for the Use of Other Languages in Ukraine"; 2) "On the State Language"; 3) "On Languages in Ukraine". A journalist Taras Marusyk, Deputy Chairman of the Coordination Council for the use of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of life, analysed in detail the emergence and main content of each draft laws in one of his publications. He supported the draft law "On the State Language" personally, since it included the provision on the creation of the Language Inspectors Service (Marusyk, 2017a).

The TSN correspondents conducted their own analysis of the three draft laws, trying to find differences among them. First of all, they noted that in the programmes of the political forces that developed these documents there were quite different approaches to language issues. Hence, the programme brought in by Petro Poroshenko Bloc (BPP), in essence, was about observing Article 10 of the Constitution of Ukraine. The programme of the Svoboda Party declared the need to repeal the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law and adopt the law "On Protection of the Ukrainian Language". The programme of the Solidarity party did not include the language issue at all. The journalists characterized the bill from the BPP as a political declaration. The content of the language bill from the Svoboda Party seemed "vague" to TSN correspondents. They were particularly critical of the use of the concept of "regional (minority) languages," which is not in the Constitution, but is in the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law. There were noted ideas for the creation of certain institutions to protect state and regional languages among the positive aspects of the "Svoboda" bill. The most positive characteristics were given to the bill of the "Samopomich" party, which, however, did not mention the languages of the national minorities, since it was suggested developing a separate legislation for them. A favourable review was given to the suggestion of establishing the Institute of Language Inspectors, whose results were observed in the Baltic nations (Try horishky dlia movy, 2017).

Serhiy Hrabovskiy, a philosopher and writer criticized those political and public forces that oppose the adoption of the new language law on the Radio Liberty website in February of 2017. He accused them of defending the "Russky myr" ("Russian world"), criticized the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law and the idea of bilingualism. In addition, the writer was for the Ukrainization, pointing out the threats from Putin's Russia. According to S. Hrabovskiy, if Ukraine had undergone the processes of Ukrainization since the 1990s, the so-called "Russkaya vesna" ("Russian Spring") would not have had supporters. He considered that the Ukrainian Armed Forces should be speaking the Ukrainian language as it was a particularly important matter. The writer even provided the example of Carl Mannerheim, who succeeded in ousting the Russian language from the Finnish army gradually (Hrabovskiy, 2017).

At the same time, there appeared an article by the famous Ukrainian publicist Vitaliy Portnykov about the destruction of the Library of Ukrainian Literature in Moscow by the Russian authorities. The author pointed at Russia's struggle against the Ukrainian language, schooling, and culture, at the frank, even boorish contempt of the Russians for the Ukrainian language, the desire to marginalize it, to push it out of the city into the countryside, and to associate it with an inferiority complex. The article also included the national invective: "The Russian people supported the chauvinistic efforts of their empire, were the bearers of Russification – and that is why, Russia achieved such a killer success. That is why, the Ukrainian language became the language of the "aborigines" in its own country," wrote V. Portnykov. He also appealed to the Russian-speaking Ukrainian patriots to learn Ukrainian, or at least create conditions for their children and grandchildren to speak this language. The publicist saw Ukraine's cultural issue not in the alleged inferiority of the Ukrainian culture, but in attempts to compete with Russia in the Russian-speaking space. In the author's opinion, the Russian-speaking Ukraine will always be the Russian region, and the Ukrainian-speaking Ukraine will always be a country (Portnykov, 2017a).

In the media a famous writer Andriy Liubka spoke in support of the draft law No. 5670 on ensuring the functioning of Ukrainian as the state language the next day (on February 19, 2017). He emphasizes that the law is aimed at the future, as it is aimed at young people and goals to grow a "crop/breed of the Ukrainian-speaking citizens". The writer emphasizes that the law is designed to create mechanisms through which the Ukrainian language will develop in a globalized world as it was recognized strategically. At the same time, A. Liubka appealed to the Russian-speaking Ukrainians with a request to support the draft new law, as it will allow their children to know the Ukrainian language (Liubka, 2017).

Professor Larysa Masenko drew attention to the continuation of the Russification trends in Ukrainian cities. L. Masenko noted that in many cities the Russian-speaking environment formed during the 1930s – 1980s and it still functions, hence, when entering it, the Ukrainian-speaking people switch to communicating in Russian. The scholar saw the signs of the language conflicts aggravation in Ukraine, commenting on the case in Dnipro, when a saleswoman chased out of a store a Ukrainian-speaking woman, the widow of a soldier killed in the ATO. L. Masenko updated the thoughts of the famous linguist Yuriy Sheveliov about "language in attack" and "language in retreat", criticizing the policy of the Ukrainian authorities for implementing the principle of bilingualism, which is supposed to ensure the consolidation of the country. The scholar made her position clear and spoke out sharply against the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law and gave examples of the language policy in Finland and Israel. It was possible to carry out the Finnishization over several decades, where the Finnish language was almost ousted. In the second country, the authorities managed to revive and establish the Hebrew as a national means of communication for the multilingual Jewish environment. The example of France was also interesting, which did not ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, recognizing it as contrary to the Constitution. Hence, the scholar led to the idea of inexpediency of constantly looking back at this document in the state that strives for the national independence and security. L. Masenko called on the Verkhovna Rada to adopt the law "On the State Language", which provided for the creation of an institution with the function of monitoring the implementation of the language legislation (Masenko, 2017).

The attempts of the pro-Russian forces to criticize language policy in Ukraine, to sow distrust among the Ukrainian authorities, and to denigrate bills on the functioning of the state

language were noticed by the above mentioned T. Marusyk. He determined a semantic and contextual connection between the statements of the Russian politicians and the civil servants (for example, the representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry M. Zakharova) and the pro-Russian “public” activists in Ukraine in one of his articles in March of 2017. The journalist focused on the authors of the Kolesnichenko-Kivalov law and their assistants. He argued that the assistants of these former people’s deputies continue their activities under modern conditions, and some of them spread the Kremlin’s narrative that it was the repeal of the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko language law that led to the war (Marusyk, 2017b).

T. Marusyk also focused on the issue on the certification of the civil servants for their proficiency in the Ukrainian language, in accordance with the amendments to the Law “On Civil Service” (2015). According to it, from May 1, of 2017, the officials had to submit a document on their proficiency in the state language. The journalist criticized the government resolution No. 301 of April 26, 2017, which regulated the organization of certification, highlighting the following shortcomings: 1) the certification was entrusted to authorized HEIs, and not to a state body, for example, the National Agency for Civil Service; 2) the organization of work and control over the certification was entrusted to the Rectors of HEIs (higher educational institutions); 3) the Secretary of the Certification Commission was appointed by order of the Rector from among the HEIs employees, and, hence, depended on the decision of the management. T. Marusyk saw corruption risks in these shortcomings (Marusyk, 2017c).

In June of 2017, more than 80 Ukrainian scholars, writers, journalists, public activists, volunteers, and publishers wrote an open letter in the media, calling for support and adoption of the updated draft law No. 5670d “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language”. There were the following signatories: Dmytro Pavlychko, Mykola Zhulynsky, Pavlo Hrytsenko, Larysa Masenko, Vitaliy Portnykov, Taras Marusyk, Ivan Malkovych, Yuriy Vynnychuk, Volodymyr Viatrovych, Vasyl Shkliar, Serhiy Kvit, Yuriy Makarov, Michael Moser, Yuriy Shevchuk, and the others. In the letter it was emphasized that the updated bill gives Ukraine a chance to form a holistic system for the protection and development of the Ukrainian language. Since the Ukrainian language is an important element of the constitutional order, a factor of the state unity and the national security, its adoption, in the opinion of the signatories, was an urgent duty of Parliament (*Zakon pro ukrainsku movu*, 2017). However, Parliament returned to considering the draft language law only two years later, when the next Parliamentary elections were about to take place. Hence, on April 23, 2019, the letter was published in some media again (*Movnyi zakon*, 2019). The Verkhovna Rada adopted the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language” two days later.

The development of the bill on the functioning of the Ukrainian language did not go unnoticed by the media. TSN correspondents analysed the general provisions of the document before its consideration during the second reading, noting a number of innovations: proficiency in the Ukrainian language by the state officials, creation of the institution of the Commissioner for the Protection of the State Language, formation of the National Commission on State Language Standards, increasing the share of Ukrainian broadcasting on radio and television, the Ukrainian-language films and series on the Ukrainian television, print media, printing by publishing houses of at least 50% of book titles, holding public events in the state language, the service sector communicating in Ukrainian (*Rada hotuietsia*, 2019). A detailed description of the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the above-mentioned

law is presented in an article by a journalist Maria Vasylieva. The author cited quotes of the politicians, who emphasize that language is a matter of the state security (Vasylieva, 2019).

The adoption of the new language law again caused a different, sometimes polar reaction among the public and political forces, which was reflected in the Ukrainian mass media vividly. Soon, TSN reported that the Venice Commission criticized the Ukrainian language law, recommending that Ukraine postpone its entry into force. According to the Commission members, the law does not maintain a balance between protecting the state language and guaranteeing the rights of the national minority languages. (Venetsiiska komisiia, 2019). The opposition deputies and the pro-Russian politicians filed a lawsuit with the Constitutional Court of Ukraine regarding the constitutionality of the new law.

In January of 2021, those articles of the law on the functioning of the state language came into effect, which obliged the service sector to switch to the Ukrainian language. In this regard, a journalist Oleksandr Romaniuk reflected on the readiness of the service sector for language changes in the TSN story on January 15, 2021. In addition, he noted the introduction of the Ukrainian language exams for the officials. Together with the language Ombudsman Taras Kremin, he visited one of Kyiv supermarkets to find out more about the preparation for the the new rules' implementation. It turned out that the administration of the supermarket paid due attention to the language requirements (Romaniuk, 2021).

The media also raised the issue of the need for a separate law on the minority languages. President Volodymyr Zelensky raised this issue in an interview with the media, speaking about the need to regulate legally the rights of the minority representatives in Ukraine at the end of August in 2019 (Bud-yake rishennia, 2019). However, Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine put these projects on hold.

One of the most important issues discussed in the media during the period under review was the issue of introducing language quotas for the radio and television. O. Kurinnyi, a political scholar presented the results of a survey conducted by the "Obozrevatel" website on "Hromadske Radio", which was aimed at the Russian-speaking audience in April of 2016. It turned out that 80% of respondents (the sample consisted of 14 thousand people) supported the use of the Ukrainian language in television and radio. At the same time, 53% of respondents supported entirely the Ukrainian-language content, and 27% supported the introduction of a norm on the use of the Ukrainian language in at least 70% of television and radio (Naselechia, 2016).

On the other hand, the Ukrainian scholars and experts did not always agree to the very formulation of the issue on the language quotas. Hence, the director of the Institute of the Ukrainian Language of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Pavlo Hrytsenko, expressed the opinion that the introduction of quotas would not solve the issue regarding the use of the Ukrainian language. He emphasized that the Ukrainian language had never received the right to function as a state language in independent Ukraine. The scholar called the quota of the Ukrainian language on television and radio a slap in the face of the Ukrainian people. P. Hrytsenko interpreted the use of two languages, albeit with greater opportunities for the Ukrainian, as an "unacceptable model" that leads to "linguistic mutilation". He called the idea of a gradual increase in the Ukrainian language in the information space due to quotas false, because the functional field of the Ukrainian language should not be expanded, but changed. He pointed out the need to create radio programmes in the languages of the national minorities living compactly in a certain territory, but he considered the change from Ukrainian to Russian on the air unacceptable, since this would lead to the involvement of the Ukrainians in the Russian cultural space (Hruzdiev & Hlukhovskyyi, 2017).

In May of 2017, the Verkhovna Rada approved a law according to which at least 75% of the content of the national and regional TV channels must be broadcasted in Ukrainian. A requirement of at least 60% of the Ukrainian-language airtime was introduced for the local TV channels. It was allowed 10% of the text in another language in films, but with the subtitles. A journalist Yana Polianska collected a number of comments from the politicians regarding the new law. Some of them expressed reservations because the monitoring of channels regarding the fulfillment of quotas will take place not daily, but once a week, which will allow them to insert Russian productions at prime time, and the Ukrainian ones at less favourable time. The quotas will be fulfilled formally, but the influence of the Russian content will remain intact. MP Mykola Kniazhytsky notes that the law will be efficient only in a year. During this time, non-Ukrainian programmes, but with the Ukrainian subtitles, will be counted towards the Ukrainian quota. The law was opposed by deputies from the “Opposition Bloc”, who interpreted it as additional restrictions and expressed concern that Soviet films would be broadcast with the Ukrainian dubbing. It is important that Ya. Polianska cited the results of monitoring by the National Council for Television and Radio Broadcasting for March of 2017. It turned out that on some TV channels the percentage of the Ukrainian-language product was extremely low: “Inter” and “Ukraine” – 26%, K2 – 36%, “Enter Film” – 39%. (Polianska, 2017). President P. Poroshenko signed a law on language quotas on television in early June of the same year (Poroshenko pidpysav, 2017).

After that, the issue on the language quotas continued to be discussed in the media for some time. For example, a journalist Vitaly Portnykov discussed the impact of the law on the language quotas on the development of the Ukrainian-language television along with media lawyers Yuriy Krainiak and Ihor Rozkladai. I. Rozkladai pointed out that 10 years earlier, the license of each TV channel provided for the broadcast of at least 75% of the Ukrainian-language content. However, this requirement was later removed from licenses, as there was a “rollback” to the Russian-speaking environment due to the adoption of the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law. According to the lawyer, “we are restoring language justice” nowadays. He provided the example of Poland, where there are also the language quotas, and also emphasized the need for their introduction, especially for the younger generation of the Ukrainians. He rejected the thesis about the alleged oppression of the Russian and other languages in Ukraine, emphasizing that the quotas for the foreign-language products allocated by law are quite sufficient for the development of the language and culture of the national minorities in Ukraine. The lawyer also denied the idea that the quota principle would lead to the loss of part of the audience by TV channels. Yu. Krainiak called the introduction of the language quotas “an inoculation from Russia” and pointed at “the creation of a cultural Ukraine in the form in which it could exist” (Portnykov, 2017b).

The quota approach had effect on the production of TV series on the Ukrainian TV channels. The online publication “Telekrytyka” published the words of Olena Yeremeieva, a producer of TV series and films on the 1+1 Channel at the beginning of 2020, that the Ukrainian language is used mainly in comedy series, since it is “more difficult to adapt” to a genre such as melodramas, which are filmed and shown in Russian. At the same time, the producer of this TV channel, Maksym Kryvytsky, complains that the Ukrainian-language series cannot be sold abroad and are needed only to meet the needs of the established Ukrainian-language quota (Smekh i slezy, 2020). The above-mentioned words provoked criticism in the media, that is why, O. Yeremeieva was in a rush to explain her words, stating that they were taken out of the context (Ukrainska mova, 2020). In July of 2021, the Language

Ombudsman Taras Kremin monitored the law implementation on the functioning of the state language by the Ukrainian TV channels. The monitoring results showed that six TV channels (“Inter”, “Ukraina”, “ICTV”, “Meha”, “NTN”, “K1”) violated the law by showing the Russian-language series and films. The “Ukrinform” agency reported this information, spreading the Ombudsman’s call, which was addressed to TV channels, to comply with the language legislation strictly (Inter, 2021).

The language policy of the Ukrainian governments, as is known, was closely related to the issues in the educational sphere. The results of the External Examination (ZNO) showed that a significant part of the national minorities representatives could not pass the Ukrainian language test in order to enter the Ukrainian higher education institutions. At the end of August of 2016, “Radio Svoboda” journalist Iryna Breza published an article about the issues on the language education of Transcarpathian schoolchildren, 27% of whom were unable to pass the External Examination (ZNO) in the Ukrainian language with a minimum passing score. The results of graduates of certain schools were impressive, 80% of whom did not pass the tests in the Ukrainian language and literature (Breza, 2016).

The initiative of the Ministry for Education and Science of Ukraine, headed by Liliia Hrynevych, was aimed at correcting the unsatisfactory level of students’ knowledge at schools with the languages of instruction of the national minorities, which was not left behind by the media. The Ministry for Education and Science sent a letter to the educational institutions, in which it was emphasized that pedagogical and scientific pedagogical employees must use the Ukrainian language in those institutions where the educational process is conducted in Ukrainian back in October of 2016. It was allowed, in addition to Ukrainian, to use the language of the national minority in the institutions with the languages of instruction of the national minorities (Minosvity vymahaie, 2016).

According to the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, which was adopted in May of 2017, the educational process could be conducted in the language of the national minorities at the level of the state primary school, but from the 5th grade, the volume of studying all subjects in Ukrainian should be increased. Immediately, the media reported on the foreign countries admonitions regarding the language component of the educational process in Ukraine. It should be noted that such concerns existed earlier: L. Hrynevych reassured the public, emphasizing the preservation of the national minorities’ rights to receive education in their native language back in April of 2017. At the same time, she made a remark that the national minorities’ schools often do not provide good knowledge of the state language (Hrynevych: shkoly, 2017).

The Ukrainian media recorded the international reaction to the Ukrainian law on education carefully, reporting, for example, the negative reaction of Poland, Moldova, Russia, Romania. The Ministry for Education and Science of Ukraine had to use the media to dispel the fears of foreign partners. Deputy Minister P. Khobzei noted on the air of the “Hromadske Radio” on September 7 of 2017 that there were 5 Polish schools in Ukraine, 176 Hungarian schools and about the same number of the Romanian schools, 1 Slovak school, which will continue to operate. The Ukrainian language legislation meets the requirements of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Chy zmozhut, 2017).

The Ukrainian media covered various positions of the Ukrainian politicians, experts, cultural and artistic figures on the language aspect of education in Ukraine. Hennadiy Moskal, the Head of the Zakarpattia regional state administration, called on President P. Poroshenko to veto the law on education and return it for revision to the Verkhovna Rada on September 8, 2017. According to the official, the law contradicted the European Charter for Regional

Languages and violated a number of bilateral agreements between Ukraine and neighbouring states. He spoke out against the restriction of the languages of the national minorities and at the same time spoke about the protection of the Ukrainian language (Moskal zaklykaie, 2017). Taras Marusyk, a language expert and member of the Public Council for the Protection of the Ukrainian Language, on the other hand, supported the Minister for Education L. Hrynevych, who stated the constitutionality of the language norms in the law on education, since they were transferred from the Constitution of Ukraine. T. Marasuk emphasized that the new law guarantees people belonging to the national minorities the right to education in their native language in preschool and primary education institutions. The right to education in their native language is also guaranteed at the secondary school level for the representatives of the indigenous peoples. The expert considered a different approach to the indigenous peoples and the national minorities to be justified and even positive. The statements of the Romanian and the Hungarian officials were interpreted as interference in Ukraine's internal affairs by him (Kostiuk, 2017).

The statements of the Ukrainian educators disseminated in the media were quite eloquent. For example, the director of school No. 147 in Kyiv, Serhiy Horbachov, supported the language norm of the law on education in general, although he emphasized that the situation of bilingualism is typical of many countries. He saw the reasons for the sharp criticism from Hungary and Romania in the fact that both countries are "accustomed to educating children at the expense of the Ukrainians", who cannot socialize in Ukraine. Natalia Shulha, an expert from the "Reanimation Package of Reforms" group, addressed the students' parents, who were against the language norm of the implemented law. According to her, a child's access to a higher education should not be restricted, as due to their limited proficiency in the Ukrainian language, it becomes an obstacle to the educational and career self-realization of graduates of schools with languages of the national minorities (Tymoshenko, 2017). The journalists asked teachers about practical aspects of implementing the language provision of the law after President Poroshenko signed the Law "On Education". The Principals and teachers of the Romanian and the Russian schools supported the language article of the Law "On Education" generally (Moskvychova & Pautov, 2017; My zhyvemo, 2017).

On the other hand, there were heard the protests of both pragmatic and historical legal format in the mass media. In particular, the opinion was expressed that Russian-speaking taxpayers have the right to receive education in Russian in state educational institutions. There were also appeals to the history of the Ukrainian language legislation. Hence, one of the residents of Kyiv recalled the norms of the Third Universal of the Ukrainian Central Rada (Council), which spoke about four state languages (Tymoshenko, 2017).

However, the unfavourable outcomes of Transcarpathian school graduates on the External Assessment (ZNO) in the summer of 2017 once again aided the advocates of the language article of the Law "On Education". A journalist Oleksandr Havrosh provided examples of a poor performance. External Assessment (ZNO) in the Ukrainian language was failed by 63% of school graduates in Berehove district, where 75% of the population is Hungarian. In some cases, schoolchildren cannot even fill out an application for the External Assessment (ZNO) in Ukrainian on their own. O. Havrosh explained the changes that would be implemented in accordance with the new law, and, importantly, provided an example of similar approaches in the European countries. According to him, there is a similar system in Slovakia, where, in particular, in the T. Shevchenko Ukrainian gymnasium, several school subjects are taught in Ukrainian, all the rest in Slovak. Hence, the journalist called for "taking care of your

own interests, not your neighbours”, and also noted the following: there are approximately 150 schools (i.e. on average, one school per 1 thousand population) for 150 thousand Hungarians in Transcarpathia; in contrast, there is not even one class for five thousand Ukrainians in Hungary. The situation is even worse in Russia, where for several million Ukrainians there is not a single educational institution with the Ukrainian as the language of instruction. There is only one Ukrainian-language educational institution for 51 thousand Ukrainians in Romania, i.e. the T. Shevchenko Lyceum in the city of Sighetu Marmatei, while there are 150 schools with Romanian as the language of instruction for 150 thousand Romanians in Ukraine. Another statistic published by O. Havrosh was also interesting: almost 75% of graduates of schools in Berehove district failed at the Mathematics examination tests during the External Assessment (ZNO), and 71% failed at the English language examination tests. But they studied these subjects in Hungarian and passed the External Assessment (ZNO) in this language as well. Hence, the journalist noted reasonably that the level of education in the Hungarian-language schools left much to be desired. The decrease in the number of students in the Hungarian-language schools causes concern, since the Hungarian minority is gradually emigrating from Ukraine. According to O. Havrosh, the Ukrainian state should not care about training personnel for Hungary, but instead take care of its own interests (Havrosh, 2017).

The Venice Commission supported the language component of the Law “On Education” in December of 2017, making certain recommendations (in particular, to exempt private schools from new requirements regarding the language of instruction). A detailed and analytical article dedicated to the decision of the Venice Commission and the prospects for the “language confrontation” between Ukraine and Hungary was dedicated by the editor of “European Pravda” Serhiy Sydorenko in December of 2017. He noted that Ukraine did everything possible to reach out to the Hungarians, while Budapest chose a position of information isolation (Sydorenko, 2017).

The Conclusions. Thus, the Ukrainian mass media focused on the language policy issues in Ukraine. The reasons for this were, on the one hand, the importance of resolving efficiently the issue on the ratio of the state language, the Russian language and the languages of the national minorities in Ukraine for the stability of society, on the other hand, aggravation of this issue under the conditions of the modern Russo-Ukrainian War, the ideological discourse of which included the myth of “oppression of the Russian language”. The Ukrainian mass media during the period under analysis (2014 – 2012) focused on three key manifestations of the language policy: 1) conflicts regarding the abolition of the conflict-generating language law of 2012 (the Kivalov-Kolesnichnek law), as well as the development and public adoption of a new law on languages in Ukraine; 2) discussions on the legislative introduction of the language quotas for television, radio, and book publishing; 3) internal and external disputes about the language article of the law “On Education”. It should be recognized that the majority of the Ukrainian media outlets supported the language policy of the Ukrainian governments regarding the establishment of Ukrainian as the state language in Ukraine, although they tried to adhere to objective coverage of events and interpretation of the positions of political forces.

Acknowledgements. We express sincere gratitude to all members of the editorial board for consultations provided during the preparation of the article for publishing.

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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*The article was received January 17, 2024.
Article recommended for publishing 29/11/2024.*